



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

---

# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

**Volume 151 No. 373**  
Thursday, November 21, 2024

---

Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



## **CONTENTS**

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 21, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

---

*Prayer*

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)  
[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 15 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I move that the third report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, presented on Monday, April 25, 2022, be concurred in.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Sturgeon River—Parkland.

Today, we are discussing a report from the public safety and national security committee about guns and gangs, and frankly, we have been on this for quite some time. We began this study over three years ago, and boy oh boy have things gone downhill since then regarding gangs, guns and gun violence in this country. In fact, over the last nine years of the Liberal government, gun violence has gone up 116%, despite all of the announcements and all of the promises. We see that every day in the headlines.

Violent crime has doubled in the past nine years. Sexual assaults are up 75%. Sexual violations against children are up 120%. Canadians may be wondering why their once safe neighbourhoods have become havens for criminals. Why do we keep hearing announcements from the Liberals that something will be done about gun violence yet it is getting worse?

One of the reasons is the soft-on-crime legislation the Liberal government continues to bring forward. In 2019, the Liberals

brought forward Bill C-75, which was specifically to reform the bail system. Members may have heard about the bail system from police and premiers across the country, because in the last few years, police associations, police unions and premiers from every political stripe have been screaming for change from the Liberal government. Of course, that has been falling on deaf ears.

They are demanding bail reform because it is exhausting our police services. They are unable to keep up and keep our communities safe because of the catch-and-release policies brought forward by Bill C-75. They are rearresting the same repeat violent offenders every other day, who are apparently going without being held accountable under the current Liberal government. We can see that right in the legislation. The aim of Bill C-75 was to bring forward the least onerous conditions for bail. In essence, it made bail the default position for violent repeat offenders.

That was in 2019. Here we are a few years later, and the impacts of that legislation have really come home to roost. Gangs and those committing violent gun crime in our communities are getting off scot-free in the revolving door of the so-called justice system under the Liberal government.

That same year, we saw Bill C-83, which made changes to the parole system so that it was least restrictive. Some people may wonder what all these things mean. These are legal terms. Unless they are a Crown prosecutor, it is difficult to understand them. For Bill C-83, I will talk a bit about what the Harper government was doing. Remember that under the Harper government, violent crime went down 26% and there was a decrease in gun violence in Canada. However, since the Liberals have come in, there has been over a 50% increase in violent crime and, as I said, over a 100% increase in gun violence.

If we look at Bill C-83, we see the priority for parole. Again, this is about violent offenders in jail with reason: They have committed atrocities in neighbourhoods, have hurt innocent people, have used guns illegally and have been involved in gangs causing crime and chaos in our streets. Under the Harper government, the parole parameters were as follows:

the Service uses measures that are consistent with the protection of society, staff members and offenders and that are limited to only what is necessary and proportionate to attain the purposes of this Act

*Routine Proceedings*

The number one priority under Harper, under a tough-on-crime government that saw a decrease in violent crime among parolees, was for Correctional Services to use “measures that are consistent with the protection of society”. Under Bill C-83, under the Liberals, this was changed to the following:

the Service uses the least restrictive measures consistent with the protection of society, staff members and offenders

The first priority became the least restrictive measures. That is important in a legal context. That signals to the Parole Board, corrections, judges and lawyers that the priority is the least restrictive measures.

Bill C-83 also facilitated, as we have heard, the movement of folks from maximum to medium to minimum security. For example, with Paul Bernardo, we have heard a lot about this in the last year. Bill C-83 helped facilitate his move from maximum security, where he should spend the rest of his days, to medium security. This bill has further permitted actions like that.

These bills have an impact. We debated them. The Conservatives fiercely fought these bills. We said this was going to happen and, of course, it did happen.

Since I have been elected, Bill C-5 has passed, in 2022. This bill, astoundingly, had soft-on-crime measures for criminals committing violent acts with guns. It removed mandatory prison time for individuals who commit drive-by shootings, robbery with a gun and extortion with a gun, or who discharge a firearm with intent to injure or use a firearm in the commission of an offence. All of these things had mandatory prison time. Someone who did a horrible crime and endangered their neighbourhood and community would go to jail for sure. They would be removed from society for a while, and rightly so, but Bill C-5 took away that requirement and, in fact, codified house arrest for a number of offences, like sexual assault. Someone can rape someone and serve their sentence in the comfort of their home. The priority of the Liberal government in bill after bill is making parole and bail easier to get for violent offenders and having less accountability and less jail time for people who commit gun crime.

We now have police associations across the country calling out the Liberals for their lack of action. Actually, that is not true. They have done a lot of things, have they not? They have done a lot of things on guns, but what they have not done is gone after the people responsible for gun violence. They have gone after people like me and the colleagues behind me, law-abiding citizens with firearms, which have been in Canada since its inception. They are part of our heritage of hunting and sport shooting and competing in the Olympics, and represent national pride.

That has been the target for the Liberals over the last nine years, people like us, innocent, law-abiding Canadians. They are the least likely to commit crime. Why is that? They are heavily vetted by the RCMP. They are tested. They are trained. We should take pride in our system, which ensures that only lawful, responsible people can own firearms. That is how it should be, yet those people have been the targets and punching bags, repeatedly, of the Liberal government.

Over and over, the Liberals fought election platforms targeting these people. Our hunters, like Grandpa Joe with his hunting rifle, have been the number one target of the Liberal government over the last nine years. Gang violence is up, violent crime is up and gun violence is up, and meanwhile, legislation after legislation is coming after lawful gun owners. That is going to cost the taxpayer billions of dollars.

We know about the Liberals' so-called buyback program, which is a misnomer because they are not buying back anything but confiscating lawfully owned property from lawful Canadians. So far, their confiscation regime has not taken one firearm from the hands of criminals and has already cost the taxpayer \$100 million. It will purportedly cost, when all is said and done, as high as \$6 billion. That is to go after Grandpa Joe while the Liberals, with their legislation, let criminals in and out of jail, with no jail time in many circumstances, and out early if they do finally get to jail for committing violent gun crime.

That is the priority of the Liberal government. That is why we are in this situation today. Those in Brampton, for example, see headlines every single day. The police, who are on the front lines risking their lives every day to protect society, saying goodbye to their families in the morning and praying that they come home, have to face these gangbangers every day. They know them on a first-name basis because they have arrested them so many times.

What are the police saying? They are saying that 85%, minimum, of the firearms and handguns smuggled in from the United States are being used in crimes. That is where the problem is coming from: violent criminals smuggling guns into Canada from the United States. We need to do better at our border. We need to ensure that police are being invested in. We need to ensure that legislative tools are being put in place that finally hold criminals accountable after getting off scot-free over the last nine years.

Ultimately, we will have a lot of work to do should the Conservatives get into government in the next number of months. Priority number one is going to be to stop the crime, cut taxes, of course, and finally make life more affordable. Stopping the crime is going to be a top priority for our government, finally holding criminals accountable. That is our mission, and we will fulfill that for communities and keep them safe.

*Points of Order*

• (1010)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we just heard what the leader of the Conservative Party has instructed his Conservative caucus to talk about: crime in our communities. It is consistent with much of the misleading information that the Conservative Party puts on social media virtually every day. The bill the member is so critical of, the bail bill, is a bill the Conservative Party voted in favour of. It is the very same bail bill that provinces in all regions of the country supported.

I am wondering if the member can reflect on whether the Conservative Party today, because it might have flip-flopped on this, still supports the bail reform legislation that was brought forward by the government not that long ago, the bail reform bill that she herself voted in favour of.

• (1015)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, unfortunately, the member for Winnipeg North was not listening to my remarks. I was talking about Bill C-75, which was passed by the Liberals with support from the NDP in 2019. That is what caused all of the mayhem that police are now having to deal with. The member is talking about Bill C-48. Bill C-48 was a seven-page bill in contrast to Bill C-75 that was 200 pages. It was a measly effort for the Liberals to say they were doing something about bail. That passed well over a year ago and it obviously has done nothing to help.

In fact, if the member does not believe me, as he is saying I am spreading misinformation, let us hear from the Toronto Police. I will just conclude on this. The Toronto Police Association, which represents 8,000 police officers, said, “Our communities are experiencing a 45% increase in shootings and a 62% increase in gun-related homicides compared to this time last year. What difference does your handgun ban make when 85% of guns seized by our members can be sourced to the United States?” It continued with, “Your statement is out of touch and offensive to victims of crime and police officers everywhere.” That is what the police say to the Liberal government.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her speech. The Standing Committee on the Status of Women is currently studying this increase, this femicide epidemic. Yesterday, former senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu came to testify, and I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about Bill S-205.

My colleague spoke about violence against women, but we do not understand why, in Bill S-205, the maximum period of good behaviour was reduced from 2 years to 12 months, when, for some criminals, this is an extremely critical period of time. This is precisely the time when they harbour animosity towards their former spouse, and that can last more than 12 months. Reducing this maximum period from 2 years to 12 months is only one of the ill-advised measures adopted when we finally voted again on Bill S-205.

[English]

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her hard work on FEWO. Certainly, she brings up a lot of good points about Bill S-205. I was proud to sponsor that on behalf of

Senator Boisvenu, who has since retired but certainly made it his life's mission to protect women from violent offenders and abusers.

The member has pointed out a number of things that happened at status of women last year by Liberal and NDP members who looked to gut the bill. Really, the goal of that bill was to ensure that an abuser, an intimate partner, who is a life threat or a physical threat to a woman and her children, was held accountable. What ended up passing was one good step, but there were many provisions to be tough on those abusers, to keep them away from the people they violate and abuse, that were gutted by Liberal and NDP members. That is just another example of them going soft on the criminals at the cost of the victim's safety. We can go on all day, in fact, about what they have done.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, let us talk about them thinking people are soft in the head when they figure people have no memory. Tony Clement stole \$50 million of border security money to buy gazebos in his riding that left us open to handguns coming in. Stephen Harper cut 1,100 CB-SA positions to allow handguns in. Crime prevention programs were cut under Stephen Harper. This party has manipulated and falsified information to scare people while they supported criminals and while Tony Clement was taking money, which should have protected people, to buy fake boats and create fake lakes all across Muskoka. He did not even get re-elected.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, it is really interesting to hear the arrogant tone from that member when every step of the way he has voted in favour of soft-on-crime legislation that has cost the lives of women, children and innocent people across this country because of his efforts to support the Liberals.

\* \* \*

## POINTS OF ORDER

## DECORUM

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member is very aware of the rules, but to accuse a member of being responsible for the murder of women is very inexcusable. I would ask the member to withdraw and apologize to the House.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member knows full well that she is not to attack individual members personally. I would ask her to withdraw and apologize.

• (1020)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Speaker, it is difficult to apologize for something that is true. The member has voted in favour—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** We have a point of order.

*Points of Order*

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Madam Speaker, when the Speaker asks someone to withdraw a heinous remark like that, they do not get to debate. She either withdraws and apologizes or you do not recognize her.

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, on the point of order, I believe, if you check the records, you will find that the member for Kildonan—St. Paul said that the member voted for legislation that caused this. She did not say that he caused it. I believe you need to check the record on this.

**Ms. Laurel Collins:** Madam Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. The member accused another member in this House of being responsible for the deaths of women and children. That is inexcusable. The member needs to withdraw and apologize unequivocally.

**Mr. Richard Bragdon:** Madam Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. It was because of the Liberals and the NDP bringing a bill that led to the murder of women and children.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I sat here listening to this and clearly heard the member talking about how the hon. member from the New Democratic Party was responsible for the deaths of women. That is something that absolutely needs to be withdrawn. It is so unacceptable.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will allow two more points of order. At the end of the day, given the information that is going back and forth about what was exactly said, I will take the time to review the tape and come back to the House.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Madam Speaker, this is a classic case of if people shout enough then quorum gets interrupted.

The ruling was that you asked the member to withdraw, not to debate. Under Standing Order 18 and *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, chapter 13, you asked the member to withdraw. Now you are saying that it is okay not to withdraw if we debate it. Therefore, I would ask you to go back and check Hansard for what you said. You asked her to withdraw. She refused—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry. The hon. member's mic was cut off unexpectedly.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Madam Speaker, you asked for a withdrawal, so you cannot decide later to allow this debate. You asked for a withdrawal. The member has refused.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a similar point of order. My point is around procedure.

I have listened to similar points of order in the past, and the practice, if not the rule, has been that when the Speaker makes a ruling on a point of order, that ruling is dealt with prior to hearing other points of order. What happened in this case is that you heard the point of order, you ruled on it and then heard several other points of order, some of which possibly were points of debate on that point of order. Therefore, if you reverse your ruling on the point of order and do not require the withdrawal and apology, I think it sets a very dangerous precedent for this House and we are going to continue to decline into disorder in debate, which is not serving anyone. There-

fore, I would ask you to follow your first ruling and uphold the rules of the House.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. Despite the attempts to silence a strong Conservative woman in this House, I would note yesterday that the Speaker in the Chair did entertain from the New Democratic Party a challenge to a ruling that had been made the previous day. Therefore, the precedent was set yesterday that a ruling could be in fact challenged. It was the NDP that championed it yesterday, so let us let the member, my colleague from Manitoba, finish her speech. If the other members of this place are offended by the consequences of their votes, then they can enter into it in the context of Qs and Cs or debate later on, but let us get back to work so we can stand up for victims.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Again, I want to indicate that, given the points of order that have been raised, I took the hon. member's word because I did not quite hear what the hon. member had indicated. I will review the video, given the points of order that have been raised, and will come back to the House and advise the members of what has transpired from that video. I hope this is good.

I still have people rising on this point of order. The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

• (1025)

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Madam Speaker, you are given the authority to ensure order in this House. You required that the member for Kildonan—St. Paul withdraw and apologize for her reprehensible comments. I hope you will stay with that ruling. It is a clear violation of Standing Order 18.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** As I indicated, I will review the tape and will come back to the House either way.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Madam Speaker, out of respect for the House, I want to understand. If the Speaker asks someone to withdraw, but enough members of her party cause mayhem in the House then she does not have to withdraw. If that is the case, then we understand the rules of the House, so that is the ruling that we are working with under—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I appreciate the hon. member. As I indicated, given the additional points of order that have been made on this issue, I will endeavour to get the exact wording that was said. I will come back to the House shortly. We are looking into it right now.

The hon. member was finishing up her response. I would just ask members to please be judicial in everything that they say. The hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul has maybe 20 seconds to finish.

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to end my remarks commemorating Karolina Huebner-Makurat, who was shot by a man out on bail in Leslieville, Toronto.

There are many women who have been killed by people out on bail. That member voted for softer bail legislation. That is on him. If he is not comfortable with it, then maybe he should do something about it and stop supporting the Liberal government.

**Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC):** Madam Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberals are not worth the crime or the chaos that they have unleashed on Canada's streets. This study on gun and gang violence was conducted back in 2022, two years ago. In rereading our common-sense Conservative recommendations and conclusions that were made at that committee and in that report, I see that everything we said at the time has come to pass. Liberal policies have done nothing to stop gun crime in this country. The legacy of the current Liberal government will be a weak justice system, the absence of good enforcement and a border that is leaking smuggled guns and stolen cars as it never has before. In fact, violent gun crime has increased by over 100% since the Prime Minister took office with the current government.

Now, the Prime Minister has been saying that he will ban the firearms of law-abiding Canadians while completely ignoring the crime wave that his government has unleashed with its soft-on-crime policies. After nine years, committing a crime and getting away with it has never been easier.

Professional organized criminals are taking note; they are taking full advantage of the government's soft-on-crime policies. Canada has become a massive exporter of stolen cars and a net importer of illegal firearms under the current Liberal government. At one time in 2022, there was a vehicle being stolen every five minutes in Canada, and we know what these stolen vehicles are used for. They are used to fund organized crime and international terrorism, as well as to finance the purchase of drugs and guns, which are wreaking havoc on our streets.

These sophisticated, industrial-level organized criminals are targeting Canada precisely because of the soft-on-crime policies of the government. Auto theft is not a victimless crime, despite what some have said. It is a crime that costs all Canadians because our insurance premiums go up; moreover, as we increasingly see, these desperate criminals are carjacking people's vehicles in broad daylight. In fact, in some cases, vehicles are being stolen with children sitting in the back seat. It is an absolute disgrace. Why does it only take \$1 billion in insured losses in our auto-theft sector for the government to finally start taking action?

Conservatives have been consistent in calling out the Liberal government's abysmal record. In fact, back in 2022, at the public safety committee, we had the then chief of the Toronto Police Service come to testify about the government's gun buyback programs.

I asked the chief of police, "If the government's policy was that they wanted to buy hard drugs off the street [in a drug buyback] as

### *Routine Proceedings*

a means to reduce the proliferation of drugs on the street, would that be an effective tool to get hard drugs off the street?"

This is what Chief Demkiw said: "I do not believe it would be an effective tool."

To that, I responded, "Then why should it be effective for gun policy?"

His response was:

I would not suggest it was effective for gun policy. The City of Toronto's experience is that guns that are being used in crime are not from law-abiding citizens. They're guns being smuggled from the United States. Those engaged in handling those firearms are not law-abiding, licensed gun owners; they are criminals with no firearms licence.

That is coming from the Toronto chief of police. The Liberals have now squandered \$70 million, and they are promising to spend over \$1 billion more on this gun confiscation program. They have yet to seize a single firearm. Conservatives, experts and frontline police officers have all said that this is a flawed approach to crime on our streets.

Let us talk about this border under the Liberals. Conservatives have repeatedly said that this gun confiscation regime was useless. Taxpayer money needs to be spent on the technology and the manpower to secure our borders. The brave men and women of the CBSA have not been given the proper support by the government. At the public safety committee in 2022, the CBSA union representative said, "not only is Canada's ability to prevent smuggling lacking, but its capacity to gather reliable and sound data is also inadequate." That is after nine years of the current Liberal government.

The Liberals can come here and talk about what the Conservatives did, but they have had nine years to take action, and this is what the CBSA union is saying today. Moreover, the representative said, "[T]here's...a zero per cent chance that any illegal weapons entering the country via rail will ever be found." There is a huge gap at our border.

Canadians have lost faith. As we saw with numerous alleged cases of terrorists who crossed our borders in this past year alone, we have seen ISIS-inspired terrorists evade our borders. United States border statistics have shown that, in 2023, there were 484 matches on the U.S. terrorist watch-list at land ports of entry along the Canada-U.S. border. Since 2017, these numbers have gone up by 123%.

● (1030)

How many more of these terrorists are being allowed to cross the border from Canada into the United States? Why is Canada not taking action to protect our border and to assure our ally that we are taking the necessary actions needed not only to protect Canadians but also to protect our allies?

*Routine Proceedings*

With crime and chaos skyrocketing, police unions have come out publicly. I have never seen such a thing. It is quite unprecedented. They have taken the step of calling out the government's failed record. I am just going to quote some of these police experts. We have the chief of Peel Regional Police, who said that "90 per cent of...firearms that we seize are directly traced back to the U.S." and that "the remaining 10% are likely also from the U.S." He also said, "The availability of firearms has just saturated the community".

The Surrey Police union is saying, "The federal handgun freeze fails to address the real issue: the surge of illegal firearms coming across our borders". The Toronto Police Association says, "What difference does [their] handgun ban make when 85 per cent of the guns seized by our members can be sourced to the United States?" The National Post says, "Peel Police are seizing an illegal gun...every 30 hours — an 87 per cent increase over the year prior."

People can maybe say that they like the government's intent, but if we are judging it by the outcome of this policy, it has been an abysmal failure. In fact, back in 2022, when we had the previous minister of public safety come to committee, he was more concerned about Canadians who are going to the RCMP and the Canadian firearms program and getting their firearms licence than he was about stopping organized criminals from smuggling guns over our border and committing crimes in Canada. That just shows us what the priorities of the Liberal government have been after these last nine years.

Liberals prefer to go after law-abiding hunters, sport shooters and indigenous hunters rather than the real criminals, whom they are giving softer bail sentences to. They are cutting minimum sentences. They are not doing anything to stop the flow of illegal guns over our border or that of stolen vehicles leaving our country.

The Prime Minister's radical catch-and-release policies are allowing repeat violent offenders to avoid jail. Since the government passed Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, which gave a high priority to releasing repeat violent offenders and took away mandatory jail time for certain violent crimes, a crime wave has been unleashed across this country as a result.

Data shows that, in 2022, 30% of people who were murdered in Canada were killed by somebody who was out on bail. The outcome of these Liberal policies is shocking. Regardless of what we think about the Liberals' intent, the outcome has been an abject failure. Experts at committee have also said that 68% of car thieves in Ontario spend under six months in jail. These are the ideal conditions for organized criminals, who are carrying out violent crime on our streets, and our communities now offer a low risk but a high reward for criminals.

In conclusion, in 2015, our country was far safer than it is now. We have become a huge exporter of stolen vehicles. We have also become an exporter of fentanyl. Canada has become the top exporter of fentanyl to the country of Australia. It is absolutely shameful. Canada is becoming a playground for organized crime, and criminals are using our country's lax laws to commit mayhem, bringing crime, death and destruction across the world. This was not the case before the Prime Minister came into power, and it will not be the case after the Conservative government gets into power.

We are going to axe the tax, fight the crime, get rid of the corruption and make our streets safe.

With that, I would like to move an amendment.

I move:

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

"the third report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, presented on Monday, April 25, 2022, be not now concurred in but that it be recommitted to the committee for further consideration, with a view to studying the rates of violent crime which have remained unacceptably high in the 31 months since this report was originally tabled, and updating the recommendations with proposals to stop the crimes which are creating far too many preventable tragedies, provided that, for the purposes of this study:

(a) the following be ordered to appear as witnesses, for at least two hours each, at dates and times to be fixed by the Chair of the committee, but no later than Tuesday, December 17, 2024:

(i) the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs,

(ii) the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada; and

(b) it be an instruction that the committee

(i) hold at least four other meetings to receive evidence from law enforcement, victims' representatives, stakeholders and experts, proposed by the members of the committee,

(ii) invite representatives of the following organizations:

(A) the Toronto Police Association,

(B) the Surrey Police Union,

(C) la Fédération des policiers et policières municipaux du Québec,

(D) the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, and

(E) the John Howard Society of Canada, and

(iii) report its findings to the House by Friday, February 28, 2025.

● (1035)

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

Questions and comments, the hon. deputy government House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am fully aware of the insanely busy agenda going on right now at SECU, as well as the games that Conservatives are currently playing there. In particular, they have been filibustering and introducing motions to prevent one thing, which is the study on foreign interference by India and Russia. By introducing the amendment in the House, the member is trying to get an order from the House to direct the committee to do even more work so that the Conservatives can further prevent that study from occurring.

Can the member please stand up and explain why the Conservatives do not want to have the study on foreign interference conducted?



• (1040)

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Madam Speaker, it is quite telling that we have a Liberal member over there who is unhappy that Conservatives want to do more work. That is what we are here to do: We are here to talk about the issues that are important to Canadians. All the issues that the member cited are important to Canadians.

However, if the Liberal government set out to implement a series of justice and public safety policies designed to increase the rate of death and murders on our streets, as well as the numbers of violent criminals, stolen cars and smuggled firearms, it is doing an excellent job. The Liberals have increased crime and made our country less safe. It is going to take a Conservative government to fight the crime in this country, to bring back common-sense public safety and justice policies. These policies will ensure that repeat violent offenders stay behind bars so that Canadian streets, Canadian children and Canadian vehicles are safe, and Canadians can walk our streets again. Not that long ago, Canadians felt safe in this country; however, after nine years of the Liberal government, that has changed, and it is a tragic thing.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague spoke about stolen vehicles. I met with people to discuss this issue, and they raised the following question. How could we better use technology in the ports to more easily determine what is in the containers? How can we make sure that there are more technologies in the ports to make it easier to discover stolen vehicles? This possible step towards a solution was suggested by several associations I met with to discuss this issue.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about this.

[*English*]

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for bringing up that question. Technology is absolutely going to be essential in the fight against not only smuggled guns but also stolen vehicles. However, we cannot view technology as a crutch or an entire solution when we have a policy that lets repeat violent offenders or repeat car thieves out on the street in months. Humans are very capable of adapting to situations, and I worry that whenever we do bring in a new technology, there will be a very smart criminal out there trying to find a way around it.

Yes, we need to implement new technologies; however, we also need to do the very basic thing, which is to keep these repeat violent offenders, these repeat car thieves, behind bars. We also need to get people out of a life of crime, especially children, who are very vulnerable to being recruited into crime. We need fewer criminals, and then we will not need the technology as much. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that we have a technological approach, but we also need a strong criminal justice approach. That is what a common-sense Conservative government promises to do.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, for my colleague from Sturgeon River—Parkland, recommendation 20 in the report states, “That the Government of Canada allocate additional human and financial resources to the Canada Border Services Agency to enable them to better investigate and apprehend those attempting to smuggle illegal firearms into Canada”. The Harper government cut 1,100 CBSA officers, and our

### *Speaker's Ruling*

southern border is of considerable importance right now, particularly in the context of the incoming Trump administration. The NDP has called for the reinstatement, the hiring, of those 1,100 border officers that Canada so greatly needs.

Will the Conservatives and the member stand with us to call on the government to hire back those important workers?

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Madam Speaker, I would just ask members to look at the public accounts from the time. Conservatives were investing in our border. We were supporting our border agencies and giving them the technologies and the support they needed.

However, I think it is also somewhat of a simplistic solution to say that we need to hire more people. Of course if there are people who are ready and willing to do the job, then we need to give them an opportunity to do the job, but we are facing a recruitment and retention crisis across this country in the military, in the RCMP and at CBSA.

We do not need simplistic slogans about how we are just going to hire 2,000 more people to fill jobs. We need actual solutions that are going to result in better recruitment and more retention. We also need force multipliers to give those people who are continuing to work all the tools they need to complete the job so they can do the job that two people, three people or four people did previously. That is a solution we need, as well as hiring new people.

\* \* \*

• (1045)

### POINTS OF ORDER

#### DECORUM—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I just want to remind members that if they are not being recognized to please not shout out their questions or comments. It is very difficult to hear what members are saying, even if they are right beside me.

Before I go to the next speaker, I do want to come back right away to the House on the points of order that were raised. I thank everyone who contributed. I said that I would review what was indicated. I have reviewed, and it is clear that what was said was not directly attributed to the member; it spoke about legislation. However, it did solicit some disagreement in the House. I just want to indicate to members to please be judicious in how they say things in the House, to try to prevent disorder.

I have ruled on this, so I hope that members are not challenging the Chair.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am not challenging your clarification. What I am asking for is clarity so we know in the future how procedures are going to take place in the House. The practice in the past has been that when the Speaker makes a ruling and asks a member to withdraw and apologize, the matter is dealt with prior to hearing other points of order. What happened today was that you made a ruling, waited a few moments, entertained several other points of order and then chose not to enforce your previous ruling.

I think this is a very dangerous road for us to go down, and I take my Conservative colleague's point that there has been precedent for this just recently from the Speaker. It does not matter which party is proposing the point of order. I think we need to uphold a situation where the Speaker's ruling is respected and enforced in the moment. If that is not going to be the case, then we are certainly going to increase points of order in the wake of other points of order so we can argue our points and try to overturn the Speaker's ruling.

I do not think that is a productive way for the House to proceed, so I would ask for clarity from the Table and from you as to how we are going to proceed in the future.

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Madam Speaker, on the same point of order, I think you have made the absolute correct ruling in this case, but the fact is that the point of order in your ruling would not have been necessary at all if the member for Timmins—James Bay had not misinformed the House and attributed a false statement to my colleague. I am happy to apologize—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** That is a point of debate, and the hon. member knows full well that he should not say indirectly what he cannot say directly.

Sometimes during debate, words are used or context is put. Again, it is an interpretation, and that is the case in this instance.

To the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, it is not unusual for others to raise points of order in an attempt to clarify what was said. I indicated I would review the video and Hansard, which I did. I happen to have it. It says that the member voted in favour of soft-on-crime legislation, so it was about the legislation itself. As I indicated, this has caused disorder in the House, so I would ask members to please be judicious in what they say.

Again, as I indicated, this is based on the additional information that was provided to clarify what was said. I always try to take what members say they have heard. In this instance, it is an interpretation.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising on a point of order. I hope it is not to challenge the Chair.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Madam Speaker, it is not a challenge to the Chair, and I respect your ruling, but what you just read was not the issue. The fact that I vote for legislation or do not is a fundamental issue of the House. My concern was having been accused of the murder of women and children, so whether I vote for certain legislation or not was not the issue for which a retraction was asked.

I am very concerned that the Speaker is putting on the record and repeating something that I was not contesting. It was not whether it was legislation; it was about being accused, which I think is really

vile, of coming into the House and supporting the murder of women and children. It is a simple question.

• (1050)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would again say that it is in the interpretation. It is clear by what was actually said to me that there was an interpretation piece, but it did raise disorder. I have asked members to please be judicious in what they say.

The matter is now closed.

Resuming debate, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

\* \* \*

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today not necessarily surprised. I somewhat anticipated the Conservative Party's being consistent with its ongoing weeks and weeks of the multi-million dollar game the leader of the Conservative Party has chosen to play because of his personal self-interest and the interests of the Conservative Party.

Conservatives are not concerned whatsoever with what is happening to the real lives of people in our communities throughout the nation. I find that disrespectful. Ultimately, no matter how the Conservative Party performs inside the House of Commons, I can assure people following the debate that whether it is the Prime Minister or any other member of the Liberal caucus, we will continue to be focused on Canadians, understanding and appreciating the issues that are so vitally important.

Whether it is on issues surrounding affordability, on issues surrounding the legislation we are trying to bring through to protect children from online harm, or looking at ways in which we can shift responsibilities from military courts to civilian courts in order to protect the interests of sexually abused individuals, the government's focus will continue to be on advancing the interests of Canadians.

Having said that, it is very disappointing that the Conservatives have chosen to raise this particular report and then, after moving the motion, have moved an amendment that ultimately would have the report take priority over a very serious issue that the leader of the Conservative Party has been going out of his way to avoid.

The leader of the Conservative Party says he wants accountability; however, that accountability applies only to every other political entity and definitely not to the leader of the Conservative Party. Members would know full well that the public safety committee is attempting to deal with the issue of foreign interference, raising two countries in particular: India and Russia. The Conservative Party, under the instruction of the leader of the Conservative Party, is doing what it can to prevent that debate from taking place.

Conservatives do not want the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to be dealing with the issue of foreign interference. It is a very serious issue; we think of an individual Canadian having been murdered in Canada, extortion taking place in communities in Canada and political interference taking place in Canada, including in the leadership of the Conservative Party. In the leadership that the leader of the Conservative Party won, there are serious allegations of foreign interference.

There are all sorts of very serious issues in which the Conservative Party does not want accountability. This is highlighted in the leader of the Conservative Party. He is the only leader of the House of Commons today who continues to refuse to get the security clearance necessary in order to protect not his party quite frankly, even that would be good, but the interests of Canadians. He is putting his interests ahead of the interests of Canadians when it comes to foreign interference.

The question is why. What is the Conservative Party of Canada, in particular the leader of the Conservative Party, so scared of? What is the background of the leader of the Conservative Party? Is there something there that Canadians need to know? Is the reason he has chosen not to get the security clearance that he knows he is not going to be able to get the clearance? The reason the Conservative Party is trying to give to fool Canadians is absolutely bogus; there is no merit to it whatsoever.

• (1055)

Today, we now have a motion to amend, to make the public safety committee a priority, to stop the debate on the issue. They do not want us to be talking about international foreign interference. What is driving the leader of the Conservative Party to refuse to get that security clearance?

I should say that I will be sharing my time with the member for Oakville North—Burlington.

I can tell members that it is very upsetting to see the way the Conservative Party, over the last number of weeks, has conducted itself. People should not be surprised because Stephen Harper was the individual who was found to be in contempt of Parliament, and the leader of the Conservative Party was his parliamentary secretary. We know that Stephen Harper was his mentor in many ways. Today, we see the leader of the Conservative Party instructing the Conservative Party, the official opposition, to not only filibuster the House but also prevent a very important debate from taking place at the public safety committee.

Recently there was a story that was published on CBC. I would like to quote from it because it is important for Canadians to understand the degree to which the leader of the Conservative Party loves to have control. It says:

### *Routine Proceedings*

After two years of [the leader of the Conservative Party] as their leader, many Conservative MPs say they are much less free now than they were before his arrival.

The man who promised during his leadership run to make Canada “the freest country in the world” maintains tight control over the actions of his caucus members.

That is the type of control we are seeing today. Here is one of the comments in the article from a Conservative: “He’s the one who decides everything. His main adviser is himself ... The people around him are only there to realize the leader’s vision.”

This should be mandatory reading for all Canadians who want to understand the type of leader the leader of the Conservative Party is. He talks about freedom, but we have the example of how he has punished Conservative MPs in tangible ways for advocating for things, such as housing, in their own communities. MPs in the Conservative Party do not bring issues to the leader. It is the other way around. The leader of the Conservative Party has it backward.

The purpose of an MP is not to communicate messages from their leader. It is the opposite. We are supposed to be taking the pulse of our communities and bringing it to the attention of our leader. This story, which was updated on November 20, is worth the read because it gives us a sense of who the leader of the Conservative Party really is.

He needs to stop the filibuster. He needs to have more accountability for what is taking place. I would challenge the leader of the Conservative Party to have a debate on this issue in detail and not just have the slogans and the bumper stickers, which he is exceptionally well known for. Rather, let us get into the substance.

Let us see the leader of the Conservative Party get the security clearance, and if he is not going to get the security clearance, he should tell Canadians why. What is in his background that he is hiding from Canadians? That is what it is. He needs to come clean with Canadians, stop playing this political game of personal self-interest and start dealing with the interests of Canadians. He needs to allow the House and the committees to do the fine work that we know can be done in serving all Canadians.

• (1100)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, if we want to talk about MPs who had a history of being Ottawa’s voice back in their communities, Ralph Goodale was exactly that. We now have a fine colleague here from Regina—Wascana, who is the voice for the people of Regina—Wascana here in Ottawa. He has done a fantastic job, in stark contrast with Ralph Goodale, who was the Liberal mouthpiece back into Saskatchewan.

When we talk about what Conservatives are going to do, we are going to make sure we have more colleagues like my friend from Regina—Wascana here in this chamber when we are all said and done. That is how it is going to work.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, we all know that is not true. Members can just read the story I referenced. Here is another quote from it: “Some elected officials feel they come to caucus ‘to be told what to do and what to think’”. If Conservative MPs do not say the slogans, they are in trouble. They are obligated with in their caucus.

*Routine Proceedings*

There are members of the caucus staff who monitor the things MPs do. If they talk to me nicely outside of the chamber, they can get in trouble. The Conservative leader says not to talk to MPs unless they are in their own political party. This is the mentality of a tight ship and a bubble of one. Stephen Harper had a tight bubble, but this is a bubble of one.

I encourage members to read the article. There is a lot of merit to it. It is what Conservatives are saying about their own leader.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague is a bit off topic this morning. He addressed other topics related to public safety. However, I would like to circle back to this morning's topic, which we have discussed at length, and that is the increase in crime, in particular against women.

This morning, a lot of my questions relate to that, because the Standing Committee on the Status of Women is currently studying the epidemic of violence against women. We are talking about collaboration. The Bloc Qu b cois proposed splitting Bill C-5 so we could take a bit more time to properly study crimes against women, given that the bill had a few problems.

When it came time to collaborate on the issue of women's safety, why did the government refuse to split Bill C-5 so that we could study crimes against women more thoroughly to help prevent them?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, whether it was the issue of banning assault-style firearms, other gun control measures or beefing up supports in different areas to support women in all regions of the country, we have been doing that, and we will continue to do so going forward. There is a great deal of compassion and interest about the issues the member raised, and the minister is open to having that dialogue. If there are ideas to improve the legislation, obviously we would be very interested in doing so. Over the last nine years as a government, both in majority and minority, we have clearly demonstrated our willingness to accept good amendments to legislation that would improve it.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague that we are wasting a lot of time in the House.

I asked him a question the other day about the international war crimes in Gaza and what the government is going to do. This morning, the ICC indicted Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant for war crimes against humanity. Canada played a huge role in Rwanda with Rom o Dallaire and the war crimes there, and also in Srebrenica and Serbia, but now we are seeing nothing from the government.

Now that international war crime indictments are being brought against Benjamin Netanyahu, what will the government do? Will they support full sanctions? Will they support the International Criminal Court? Will they ensure we bring these criminals to the Hague?

• (1105)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, as I indicated when I originally answered the question, I have absolute and full confidence in the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the fantastic work she has done working with our allied countries and being aware of what is happening around the world. I fully support the actions the government has taken to date. I think it is important that Canada and the government continue to monitor the situation and work with our allied, like-minded countries to ensure we move forward.

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to contribute to this debate on the concurrence of a guns and gangs study that I was pleased to be part of at the public safety committee.

I am reflecting back on how, since just two years ago, times have changed. That study, which was on something that could have been quite controversial, ended up being one for which we had agreement amongst the members of the committee. We produced a report that the Conservatives actually agreed with when we tabled the report.

I find it surprising now that, here we are, two years later, and we have rhetoric and nonsense coming from the Conservative Party of Canada on a report that I am really proud of. At the time, I think that all of the members were very proud of it, especially of the way we were able to come together on an issue that is impacting our communities. Young people are joining gangs because of poverty and addiction. We know, and the report reflected this, that investments in communities can make a difference for these young people in whether or not they end up in the criminal justice system.

I am really disappointed that, once again, the Conservatives are trying to derail our current studies at the public safety committee. We are studying India and foreign interference, through which a Canadian was killed on Canadian soil, as well as Tenet Media and Russia's influence on misinformation in our country. This is something the Conservatives have tried to do repeatedly during both those studies. Today, they are trying to derail those two studies again. Twice we have had Conservatives move motions, once when we had the social media companies in to testify on Russia and once when we had national security experts there, and they were moving motions on completely unrelated topics.

These are issues that are impacting Canadians' lives. It seems like the Conservatives, much like their leader, who refuses to get the security clearance necessary to review, do not really want to study foreign interference. They make a big deal about having an interest in it, but they really do not.

There is a lot of revisionist thinking going on in this place as well. Bill C-83 passed, and I was proud to be part of the committee when we passed that bill, but the Conservatives keep referring to how the Liberal government brought in the least restrictive measures. It is funny that, when that bill went through committee, Conservatives did not oppose that clause, which was introduced by the NDP. Conservatives did not oppose the least restrictive clause on Bill C-83 when it went through committee.

*Routine Proceedings*

However, now, with the revisionist history that has happened over the years, the Conservatives seem to think that they did. Perhaps they want to go back to just check the record of when that bill passed.

I am reading a book right now called *Indictment* by Benjamin Perrin. He was the man who shaped Stephen Harper's tough on crime policies as a special adviser and legal counsel to the prime minister. I want to read a quote from his book. He said, "In fact, I'd like to officially replace the term 'tough on crime' with 'stupid on crime.' It doesn't work. It makes us less safe, while costing a ton of taxpayers money." To paraphrase former prime minister Harper's top guy on crime, he is saying tough on crime is tough on taxpayers and stupid on crime.

The Conservatives like to talk about how they want to keep Canadians safe, yet, time and time again, they have opposed smart gun control measures when we have brought them through the House. In Bill C-71, there was a clause that ensured that firearms would be forfeited to the Crown in cases of domestic violence.

I had a friend whose husband was abusing her, and he was a firearms owner. When she went to court, the judge said that he had to give up his guns. Do members know where those guns went? They went to his brother because there was no requirement at the time that those guns be forfeited to the Crown. My friend lived in fear because she knew that her husband knew where those guns were. We changed that through Bill C-71, something the Conservatives have said they are going to repeal. If my friend were to go to court today, those guns would go to the Crown, not to her husband's brother.

● (1110)

In Bill C-21, we put in three clauses to make women safer: subsection 6.1, which would make an individual ineligible to hold a firearms licence if they are subject to a protection order or have been convicted of an offence involving violence; subsection 70.1, which would oblige a chief firearms officer who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a licensee may have engaged in domestic violence or stalking to revoke the licence within 24 hours; and subsection 70.2, which would automatically revoke the licence of an individual who becomes subject to a protection order and requires them to deliver the guns to a peace officer within 24 hours.

In my opinion, that keeps Canadian women safer. It is unfortunate that the party opposite wants to revoke Bill C-21, which includes those provisions. It also includes provisions around assault-style weapons, something that was used at Polytechnique Montréal, and that anniversary is coming up on December 6. The Conservative Party still refuses to acknowledge that the individual who killed those women on that day was a legal gun owner at the time, much like the person who went into the Quebec City mosque and killed and injured people.

When we were studying Bill C-21, Blaine Calkins showed up in committee. Sorry, the member for Red Deer—Lacombe—

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the hon. member referred to an hon. colleague by their personal name as opposed to the name of their riding, which we do not do here.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry, but I did not hear that. Unfortunately, I was having a side conversation with the Clerk to clarify something.

The hon. member just withdrew and recognized that she should not have done that. I would remind members not to use the first or last names of parliamentarians.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, the member for Red Deer—Lacombe, during the committee meeting, claimed that I equated hunters with the Danforth shooter, which is not what happened.

We had passed a clause unanimously, including with the support of the Conservative Party of Canada, to require a firearms licence to buy magazines. The hon. member spoke at committee to say that people travel 200 to 300 miles and pay between \$5,000 and \$20,000 to go on an elk hunt. If their magazine was not working, we were going to prevent them from going into town, buying a new magazine and going out to shoot that elk. Well, if they do not have their licence with them, then they are not supposed to even be using their firearm. Not only that, which I brought up to the hon. member, but Reese Fallon, who was killed on the Danforth, did not have a choice. If we had had that clause in effect, maybe that shooter would not have been able to go and get a magazine without a licence.

Conservatives like to talk about bail, but they forget to mention who is responsible for the administration of justice, and that is the province. I am going to talk about Ontario and my community of Halton region.

In 2017, a new courthouse was announced for Halton region. Construction was supposed to start in 2019, and it was supposed to be completed a year ago. Right now, the courthouse in Halton region is full of mould and asbestos. Juror interviews are being done in the cafeteria because there is no place to do the interviews. Things are not passing through those courts, and people are getting out because the court system and the province cancelled that courthouse. As soon as it was elected, the Ford government cancelled it. The provincial jails are triple-bunked, so judges do not want to send offenders to jail. We need to be working together on this, and the Province of Ontario needs to step up.

I would like to move an amendment to the amendment:

That the amendment be amended by replacing the words:

a) "Tuesday, December 17, 2024" with the words "Monday, February 24, 2025"; and

b) "Friday, February 28, 2025" with the words "Monday, March 31, 2025".

● (1115)

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

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

*Routine Proceedings**[Translation]*

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague and I worked very hard on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to make Bill C-21 a good bill.

This bill had a huge number of regulatory measures that were to come later, and we placed our trust in the government when we passed it. We hoped that the government would quickly adopt the regulations needed to make the bill strict enough. Unfortunately, that is not really what happened.

We passed the bill and are still awaiting several regulations, namely those that could protect women against domestic violence, as well as those relating to the assault-type weapons still on the market, which can still be found in homes and in the streets.

The government wants to move forward with the firearms buy-back program. However, it is easy for a citizen with a prohibited weapon to sell it to the government, take the money and go buy another one. Why is it that there is still no advisory committee in place to determine what to do with these weapons?

*[English]*

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question. She is someone I have had the privilege of working closely with on this issue. I know we would not have been able to do what we have done on gun control without her support and assistance.

I want to assure the member that all of the things she mentioned remain a priority for the government. I continue to push the government to get these regulations put in place as quickly as possible and to ensure we are moving forward on all of the things we promised in Bill C-21.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for her speech, as well as for all of her work standing up for women and the protection of children, both here in Canada and around the world.

I want to ask her to respond to some of the comments her colleague made in this debate. The member mentioned he has the full support of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. This morning, the International Criminal Court said Benjamin Netanyahu and his former minister of defence are being called as war criminals. Canada has played an important role in the past when it comes to bringing war criminals to The Hague to face trial.

I would like to know if this member and the Liberal government are going to stand up for human rights and for international law? Will they respect the ruling and play a role in ensuring we see justice here in Canada and around the world?

- (1120)

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, like my colleague, I also have confidence in the Minister of Foreign Affairs. As the hon. member knows, I am one of her parliamentary secretaries.

The situation in Gaza is absolutely horrific and we know a diplomatic solution is one that is going to resolve the issues that are hap-

pening there. The ruling just came out this morning and I know we will be reviewing it.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a question about this concerning subamendment moved to our amendment on this issue of debate today. Our amendment is calling on the public safety and national security committee, which the member and I are both part of, to review in detail the situation of crime and bail going on in this country, given what we are seeing day in and day out in the headlines about violent crime committed by those out on bail.

I have concerns because the member's subamendment, in essence, pushes off the responsibility of committee to look into the violent crime surge we are seeing, and I am just not understanding why she does not value the public safety committee studying this right away. I know we have a lot of priorities. There are a lot of competing important priorities at committee, but surely, given what we are seeing, to push this off by months is, frankly, not responsible.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I find that quite rich. We are studying foreign interference by Russia and India. The hon. member wants to do a study on violence against women and the rise in crime. The National Police Federation, the RCMP union, has come out and talked about the provinces and territories needing more resources, that all governments should invest in community bail enforcement and that “jurisdictions using [a justice of the peace] to preside at bail hearings should establish a standard qualification...which [is] based on education and legal background”.

My goodness, Ontario is appointing JPs who do not have a legal background. Is it any wonder those JPs are not making decisions that are in the best interests of citizens?

*[Translation]*

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to talk about this issue, although we discussed the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security's report years ago. It was when the Bloc Québécois proposed to discuss the increase in gun violence. At the time, gun crimes were being committed in broad daylight next to day care centres in cities like Montreal. There had been a shooting in a library. In short, a lot of events led us to determine that we needed to talk about the issue with some urgency. The parties worked really well together to have the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security conduct a study on the matter.

*Routine Proceedings*

We then did an exhaustive study in committee, and a report containing 34 recommendations was released in April 2022. That was a few years ago, when the Hon. Jim Carr was chair of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. We salute him. We miss him. All that to say that, rereading the various recommendations this morning, I was disappointed to realize that most of them, although the report was published in 2022 and a major firearms act has since been passed, were never implemented by the government. That is really too bad.

I welcome the opportunity that we have today to once again talk about the Conservatives' idea, because it still seems to be a hot topic. There has not been much of a decline in violent gun crime in recent years, at least not since this report was tabled, so it is a good idea to talk more about this issue and to put more pressure on the government to do something about it.

Earlier, I mentioned to the parliamentary secretary that Bill C-21 was indeed a step in the right direction, but that there are a lot of regulations attached to it that have not yet been finalized, even though these are important regulations that could have a positive impact on people's lives, especially the lives of women who are victims of domestic violence. Red flag and yellow flag provisions can provide better protection for these women. It is important to put these measures in place. We worked hard in committee to create these measures, but they have not yet been implemented.

It is the same thing with all these models of firearms that are still available on the market. People still own assault-type firearms, and they are still in circulation, even though the government banned many of them a few years ago. Some models are extremely similar. As I was saying to my colleague earlier, it does not make sense to me to set up a gun buyback program when people who own a gun on the banned list can hand it over to the government, take the money in return and go out and buy another gun that is basically the same. Why set up a buyback program if that is what is going to happen?

Let us go with a complete ban. Let us sort out the guns that could be used for hunting, because some of the firearms that we identified during the study of Bill C-21 might be used for hunting. What we proposed to the government at the time was to set up an advisory committee. Why should this be a political decision? We suggested leaving it to neutral experts from all fields to study the matter. We were talking about nearly 500 models that are still out there, and maybe a dozen models that could be used for hunting. We were saying that we should ask these experts to provide recommendations to the government so that the government could then act on them, and that this would then be an opportunity to set up a more serious buyback program instead of taking taxpayers' money just to allow someone to go out and buy a different model.

I will come back to this in more detail, but I also want to talk about the list of 34 recommendations adopted in April 2022. I have to say that we worked well together in committee, and it is quite rare to get unanimity on any topic at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

• (1125)

It was nice to see all the parties agree that the government should do more to make progress on the firearms violence file. The com-

mittee made very good recommendations. I will mention a few of them.

In particular, we wanted to improve data collection about firearms smuggling. This is a very big report. It discusses legislative changes concerning assault-type weapons, as well as illegal firearms trafficking at the border. In particular, it mentions the border crossing at Akwesasne and the collaborative efforts between the various police forces. It also deals extensively with the tracing of firearms and the training of law enforcement officials in this area. In particular, it recommends ongoing training for RCMP officers. Many of the recommendations in the report relate to tracing.

We wanted the Government of Canada to make an effort to divert young people away from gang culture. That is very important. We need to implement preventive measures to reach young people, often from disadvantaged communities, who might be attracted by criminal gangs and commit crimes. It is all related. When we talk about firearms trafficking, about gun violence, we can assume that it is related to drug trafficking, human trafficking or even auto theft. We also discussed that aspect extensively. These are criminal activities that finance other criminal activities, including firearms trafficking. We asked the government to do more to prevent this type of criminal activity. In particular, we asked the government to broaden the national crime prevention strategy by adding more measures. We also asked that it hold a national gun and gang summit in Ottawa. That has not happened, despite the fact that it was recommended in 2022.

Take auto theft, for example. A few months ago, when I raised the issue in the House of Commons, the Conservatives were on board because it is a widespread phenomenon, particularly in Montreal and Toronto. The government wanted to act quickly and launched a national summit on auto theft, which appears to have yielded results. I visited the port of Montreal and the Canada Border Services Agency site nearby. We saw that the police, Équité Association and the Canada Border Services Agency were working together to search containers. We saw how it all works.

Sometimes when we raise issues in the House of Commons, we think it might have an impact on real life. It is interesting. I figure that, if it works for auto theft, why would it not work for gun violence and gangs? A national summit is always a timely idea, and it allows everyone to sit at the same table and talk about what to do next. That is still a useful recommendation that can be implemented any time with little expense. It is always good to establish communication between all the stakeholders.

*Routine Proceedings*

We also asked the government to tackle the illegal drug trade. As I said earlier, there is still a connection to the opioid epidemic, which leads to things like gun violence and illegal tobacco sales. All these things are related. It is important to bulk up police resources to fight gang violence. People often talk about how important it is to have more officers who can do this work. It is the same with indigenous policing. I talked about the Akwesasne police earlier.

Indigenous police services have been seeking recognition as essential services for years now. They want more resources so they can do their job. I am not targeting that particular indigenous nation at all, but everyone knows this is a very strategic location between Quebec, Ontario and the United States where there is a lot of trafficking. Many people can intervene in that territory, but they have to work together, and they have to work with the Akwesasne police. The report called for enhanced funding and collaboration. Simply put, it called on the Government of Canada to give them the means to achieve their objective of taking action against trafficking in guns, drugs, tobacco and humans.

● (1130)

We see it with migrants who try to come in as part of an irregular arrival. Some have died trying to cross at this very spot. Increased control is really key.

The government was asked to “investigate the need for enhanced border surveillance of international commercial rail operations and ocean freight shipping operations.” The Bloc Québécois produced a supplementary report to this study. Our recommendation was to improve recommendation 19, by pointing out that it is not just a matter of investigating the need, which is quite broad, but rather of strengthening border surveillance.

Many, many, witnesses appeared before the committee. Several of them, including the president of the Customs and Immigration Union, told us that containers arriving by rail and ship are very poorly monitored. If someone can hide cars in there, they can certainly hide firearms. That is why there must be increased surveillance. We asked for that recommendation to be tightened up a little. That is why we included it in the Bloc Québécois supplementary report.

Recommendation 20 called on the government to “allocate additional human and financial resources to the Canada Border Services Agency”. It is a bit ironic, then, to see that hours of service are being reduced at 35 border crossings in Canada, including 10 in Quebec. The media reported it this week. Meanwhile, the President-elect of the United States, Mr. Trump, is threatening to deport millions of people. Understandably, these people may try to cross irregularly into Canada, because there is a loophole in the safe third country agreement that allows them to come to Canada. If they remain undetected for 14 days, they can make a refugee claim at a border crossing or on the Government of Canada's website, with a perfectly regular application.

In other words, people are being encouraged to break the law, enter Canada illegally and then submit a perfectly legal application to remain in Canada. Meanwhile, our integration capacity is already stretched to the limit. That is definitely the case in Quebec, and we

are starting to hear other provinces say that it is getting difficult for them to properly receive these individuals as well.

We are telling the government that it needs to pay attention. We are hearing reports that the next U.S. government intends to deport millions of people, but we have no plan for the border. For years, we have been saying that there needs to be more staff, more human resources, but now the government is saying that it is going to reduce operating hours and staff numbers at certain border crossings, including strategic crossings at the Canada-U.S. border. It worries us a bit to hear that.

This morning, I had a meeting with the Minister of Public Safety and I raised this issue with him. If the staff are being reassigned, where are they going? Is the government planning to deploy them to another part of the border to prevent this scenario? I asked the minister that question in the House several times, and he said that everything was going well for now and that when a crisis does arise, it will be dealt with then. That is the problem with this government. Instead of anticipating problems and crises, it waits until the problem blows up in its face before taking action. It is always just a little too late. That is too bad. As far back as April 2022, when it released this report, the committee was already recommending that additional resources be allocated to the Canada Border Services Agency. That still has not been done. In any case, that is what the Customs and Immigration Union is telling us.

Recommendation 22 calls on the government to “develop a standardized schedule and definitions of prohibited firearms within the *Criminal Code* of Canada, with an emphasis on simplicity and consistency”.

The government decided to do the exact opposite with Bill C-21 by proposing an evergreen definition of prohibited firearms. It is difficult to explain what that means in lay terms, but it basically means that the government is prohibiting firearms that do not yet exist. Those that are already in circulation can remain in circulation, but new firearms that are created will be prohibited. As a result, manufacturers are deciding not to create firearms that meet those criteria. They are already getting around the law. In my opinion, this shows that the government's approach did not do much good.

We were forced to adopt that proposal because the previous one was even worse. The government proposed adding a list of just over 1,000 firearms to the *Criminal Code*. With an endless list of firearms, making changes to the *Criminal Code* would have been a total nightmare. Although there does not seem to be one perfect solution, that one was far from ideal. As I was saying, firearms that can be extremely dangerous, that can be used for malicious purposes, are being left in circulation.



*Routine Proceedings*

We know there are law-abiding people out there. That needs to be said. For years, there have been gun owners who have done everything that was asked of them and who take good care of their firearms. They are not a problem for society. We always hear the argument that it is the illegal guns, criminals and street gangs that cause trouble, but the honest gun owners who pay the price. That said, when someone chooses to own a firearm, they have to be aware that there are regulations around gun ownership and that they have to be careful.

• (1135)

That is why I think it is always good to have regulations and laws for people who decide to keep an object in their home that is capable of taking someone's life. However, it is true that it may seem contradictory to leave the door open for criminals and gun traffickers and always go after law-abiding gun owners.

The government's approach was to lump them all together. Even though some of these weapons were used for hunting, the government included them in its bill to ban them. People told the committee that indigenous communities have used firearms like the SKS for hunting for years. Even though mass murders have been committed with SKS rifles, it does not necessarily follow that this weapon should be banned. That is why we asked the government to create an advisory committee with independent experts.

I remember that when I got home after Parliament rose in June 2023, I wrote an email to the Minister of Public Safety's team to recommend individuals and experts who could be part of the advisory committee. I was told that it was coming and that they would take my suggestions, so I was hoping it would come soon, but it has been radio silence since then. It has been a little over a year.

Members will recall that there was a cabinet shuffle about a month later, in July 2023. I understand that this can lead to delays, but nothing has happened to this day. Some groups are still sounding the alarm. In fact, I am meeting with PolyRemembers later today, and they say that they have only received half of all the things they were promised.

I want to come back to the infamous gun buyback program. It is a good idea, but if a person can sell their gun to the government and then buy another one that does exactly the same thing, the whole exercise was pointless, and taxpayers' money was spent for nothing. There is still a lot that needs to be done.

Earlier this week, the Police Association of Ontario wrote a letter to the Minister of Public Safety and the Minister of Justice. The leader of the Bloc Québécois received a copy. The letter mentions that a significant number of illegal guns are making their way into Canada. We need to look into that. So many gun-related issues remain to be addressed.

I like the new Minister of Public Safety. I trust him. The two of us have good conversations, but since he took office, it seems like things are not getting done. It is too bad, because we, the opposition, did our part in the parliamentary legislative process. Whatever we could do, we did. Now the ball is in the government's court. Addressing this issue will require regulatory measures that only the government can take, but the government is not budging. That is too bad, because the government was elected and re-elected on the

promise of improving gun control. Soon it could lose power, and the issue will remain unresolved. It is too bad for the people who believed its promise, like women of PolyRemembers, who have been fighting for nearly 35 years now. They will not get to see these much-touted regulations take effect. It really is too bad.

• (1140)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned the member opposite's efforts in contributing to this whole issue, and I appreciate that. While I do not necessarily agree with everything, I appreciate many of the things she has put on the record.

The question I have for her is related to the Conservative Party using this two-year-old report to try to prevent the public safety committee from studying the issue of Russian and Indian foreign interference. There are all sorts of agenda items that could be before the public safety committee. Based on her experience, no doubt the issue we are talking about today will, in fact, come up with time.

On the issue of foreign interference, her leader did get the security clearance and only one leader has not and that leader has now instructed his caucus to prevent this study from taking place by moving the proposed amendment. Could she provide her thoughts on that?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, it is abundantly clear that the Conservatives' intention is to hijack the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security's agenda, either with this motion or another one. Every time our committee meets, they move that we talk about something other than the two studies on the agenda, namely Russian disinformation in Canada and Indian interference or India-Canada relations. I am having a hard time understanding why the Conservative Party does not want to discuss these issues.

At the same time, it is becoming a partisan sideshow when it really should not be. Foreign interference is an extremely serious issue for our democratic institutions, particularly since an election is imminent. We do not want to go through the same thing as last time. I get the feeling that this is giving the Liberals the opportunity to repeat ad nauseam that the leader of the Conservative Party still does not have his security clearance. Unfortunately, the two parties are turning this into a partisan sideshow that I do not want to be a part of.

*Routine Proceedings*

• (1145)

[English]

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, earlier in the member's speech, she talked about CBSA and the borders. I had an Order Paper question recently with respect to what the Liberal government would do with borders. CBSA is in fact looking at changing the hours of service at multiple border crossings across the country. In particular, it is looking at the amount of cars crossing our borders.

If we look at the situation in rural Saskatchewan, rural Canada where our small towns are, that will be the first border crossing the government will be looking to make changes. It will also make it easier, in some cases, for gun smuggling and other nefarious activities to happen at these smaller crossings, simply because the government is going to be heavily focused on trying to shore up Windsor and some of the bigger crossings. However, it will be at the expense of the small rural crossings.

What does my colleague have to say about those kinds of changes?

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, I too wonder about the decision of the government or the Canada Border Services Agency to reduce hours.

What I was told this morning by the minister's office is that it is the United States that wants to reduce its operating hours, and Canada has to go along with it because the next administration is a little unpredictable. Canada does not want to upset it. That is the reason I was given. If Canada is giving in to all of the United States' demands, we have an interesting four years ahead of us.

There may be businesses in ridings with border crossings that will be penalized by this decision. Reducing operating hours penalizes individual and business travel.

It is troubling, especially at a time when we need more staff at the border and at border crossings.

[English]

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is strange to hear that the Conservatives are worried about a reduction in hours at the border when a Conservative government cut 1,100 border security officers. Since then, we have been pushing the Liberal government to rehire them. It seems to have a lot of money when it comes to spending on the Trans Mountain pipeline, \$35 billion; \$18 billion in fossil fuel subsidies; hundreds of millions of dollars to consultants like McKinsey, but it cannot afford to invest in our border security to ensure illegal weapons do not come into Canada.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, it is a little ironic to hear the NDP say that the government is spending too much money. This morning, we learned that the government will be spending \$5 billion to make the NDP happy so it will not vote to topple the government. The \$3 billion to help seniors between the ages of 65 and 74 was far too much, but \$5 billion to secure the NDP's support is totally fine.

I hope that this measure will come with environmental demands from the NDP. We often hear NDP members criticize the government for not doing enough to combat climate change, but I never saw anything about the environment in any of the agreements between the government and the NDP.

I hope that is coming.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as I listen to my colleague, I cannot decide which expression is more apt: "they are not walking the talk" or "it feels like Groundhog Day". I want to pick up on my colleague from Victoria's comment about cuts to border services.

I worked as an assistant during the Conservative era a few years ago, and I remember fighting for the member I represented, who had border crossings in his riding. We saw the impact of the cuts coming, so we had discussions with the CBSA union at the time.

Next week, as part of a study on femicides at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, we will be hearing from PolyRememberers. Every time, we go through the same game, we get re-elected, and every election, we see announcements on the issue of better gun control. We are going to hear from the members of PolyRememberers, who are going to reiterate their message and their demand for gun control, more than 35 years on.

There is no question that a lot of guns are coming in through the border, but I want to figure out what measures or recommendations we could propose in our study. There are so many that need to be put in place. My colleague gave a whole list them in her speech.

Which one is the most important and most urgent to put in place? What should be the biggest takeaway from a study on femicide and gun control?

• (1150)

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, it is pretty simple. The government's next move appears to be implementing a buyback program for banned firearms. That is what we have been asking for, but it is a half measure insofar as there are still assault-style firearms circulating on the market that can do the same things as those on the banned weapons list. We need to get the job done right.

It is easy. The government has the ability to implement regulations banning these weapons. That should happen before a buyback program is put in place. I would not be surprised if that is what PolyRememberers asks for at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. It is one of their main demands. This week, its members spoke with the mayor of Montreal, Valérie Plante, who is once again asking that the government implement the recommendations and regulations tied to Bill C-21.

I would say that is the most pressing point.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a very short question. The member was just talking about banning assault-style firearms. Could she point to the definition of that anywhere in legislation or anywhere in the Government of Canada, or even offer her own definition of what she means by that? I have been trying for over five years to get an answer to that question, and the government has none. It does not exist. I think it is a misnomer meant to confuse Canadians. We should talk about the capabilities and capacity of firearms, not about terms that do not mean anything other than to people who are trying to divide Canadians.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, my colleague is right. The Government of Canada does not seem to have a definition for assault rifles or assault-style military weapons. It is hard to define. I get the impression that that is why the government decided to adopt an evergreen definition, because it was unable to truly define what it was. That is how we end up with these problems. The government is unable to define things.

It is the same thing when it comes to the environment. The government talks about inefficient subsidies for oil companies. Can anyone tell me exactly what an inefficient subsidy is?

I do not think that any subsidies are efficient when they are given to companies that make billions of dollars in profits every year. It is kind of the same problem with gun control. The government is unable to define things as they are.

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am honoured, as always, to rise in the House for the issue of violence, gun violence and protecting communities.

I would like to start by telling Kaylie Smith, 16 years old, from Cobalt that we love her. She was the victim of a horrific trauma and an attempted femicide recently in our community of Cobalt. I want to thank first responders, police and everyone who came out for Kaylie. She is going to make it, but what struck me after that horrific violence was how our community came together, not in rage but to understand that we have to be there to support one another. We love Kaylie; she is going to make it.

The issue of guns and safety is one of the favourite political Punch and Judy shows that I have seen over my 20 years in Parliament. My Liberal and Conservative colleagues get their straw men up, jump up and down, and throw rocks and slogans. Today, we are debating a report that is two years old. It is a great report; it is a powerful report, but nobody has wanted to act on it until now. It is about interrupting government business, so suddenly we are dealing with the issue of guns and gangs, something we need a strategy on.

I want to talk about how this plays out in northern Ontario, where we are seeing levels of gun violence that have never existed before. It is a complex issue how we have gotten to this place. A triad of damage has been done to rural Canada that has caused the unprecedented level of violence we are seeing.

When I say violence, I am talking about young gang members who are coming into very small communities, like Kirkland Lake and Timmins, up the James Bay coast, to prey on people suffering from addictions. We dealt with the Hells Angels 10 years ago. They were organized gangs; they were big gangs, but what we are dealing with now are gangs that have a certain level of chaos. When I talk to frontline workers and OPP officers I have known for years, they say they just want to survive and get home at the end of the day. That is not something we have ever heard in northern Ontario before.

First responders do not know what they are going to see when they go on a trauma call. I have talked to frontline mental health workers who, when they are going into homes to try to keep someone alive, often need flak jackets and backup because they do not know if there are gangs there; they do not know what they are going to see.

We can take a very simplistic approach and blame the Prime Minister from Papineau for his soft-on-crime agenda, and then get a couple of Conservative bumper stickers that say we are going to fight the crime, do the time and axe the wax, all that talk, or we can talk about how we are in a situation that has made our communities vulnerable to chaos and predatory violence.

It begins with the walk-away that began under Brian Mulroney, which was then totally delivered by Paul Martin with his walk-away on housing. When I was younger, I worked with men coming out of prison. I worked with refugees. I worked with addicts on the street. The first step was to get them into housing, and the first housing we got them into were crappy boarding houses in the crappy neighbourhoods in South Riverdale. If we could get them in there and sobered up, just for a month, we could get them on the list for social housing.

I remember my good friend Robert, who had one of the worst levels of addiction I had ever seen. I did not think Robert would make it to the end of the month, but we finally got him into housing. Robert had caused an enormous cost to the health system. Every night we were at emergency wards, psych wards or detox clinics. We got him into safe housing in a rotten boarding house. We got him into safe housing in the public system. Robert lived for the next 20 years and never went to the hospital again.

That was from the public investment in housing, and the great lie—

• (1155)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères is rising on a point of order.

*Routine Proceedings*

[Translation]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Madam Speaker, I just want to know if there is quorum in the House.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will ask the clerk to count the members present.

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** We now have quorum.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Madam Speaker, I was speaking about the policies that we had in place up to the time of Brian Mulroney and Paul Martin, when we had investments in public housing. We were then told the great lie of Paul Martin, who delivered that lie with a straight face, that the private sector would step up and build all the housing we need. It did not happen and people began to fall through the cracks. How did that lead to where we are today? It was a slow-moving hurricane. Slowly, year by year, the housing crisis and the homeless crisis got worse, to the point we are at today, where 235,000 Canadians face homelessness.

That was the first part of the undermining of our communities. The second part was the opioid crisis. We know that it started with Purdue Pharma and the licensing of OxyContin, which was first licensed in the mid- to late 1990s in Canada, despite the fact that there was a massive increase in opioid per pill. It should have been in a restricted category but it was not. Why was OxyContin so key? It was not until about 2008 or 2009 that we began to see serious devastation in our communities. That was 10 years into the opioid crisis in Kentucky and West Virginia, with mass lawsuits being launched against the predatory practices of Purdue Pharma after its 10-year track record of abusing this supposed medicine.

The government at the time, under Stephen Harper, paid no attention to what was coming over the border. I remember that in 2008-09, people were beginning to get addicted. People going to the doctor because they had a wrist problem and people who went to the dentist for wisdom teeth were being given OxyContin. We began to see people becoming addicted who would never have been addicted before. People did not go on the streets and get heroin in our little communities, but they got OxyContin and became addicted. By the time the federal government stepped up and banned OxyContin, which was around 2011-12, we already had a massive problem of opioid addiction across demographics that had never suffered something like this before.

That is when fentanyl came in. I remember the very first fentanyl death in our region. I remember that young man; I remember his family. We were so unprepared, because, again, there was nobody at the federal government level at the time, under Stephen Harper, paying attention to what fentanyl was doing.

At this stage, we have had over 21,000 opioid deaths in just the last four years. It has cut through every community in our country. Every community has suffered. We have a rising homeless population and have a rising addiction problem. Fentanyl and the other drugs that come with it have created an incredibly destabilized situ-

ation at a time when government was walking away from mental health services and at a time when government was not there for the people who needed supports.

That leads us to the crisis of the abandonment of mental health and basic programs, the opioid crisis and the inability to get people into safe housing, many of them in the population aimed at by the gangs that have become increasingly violent and dangerous. We need a strategy that addresses this and we do not have a strategy. What we get from the Conservatives are bumper sticker slogans. They say they are going to fight the crime.

Then there is what we have heard again and again in testimony. Myron Demkiw, chief of police of the Toronto Police Service, talked about the need for safe supply and wraparound services. The member who lives in the big house Stornoway has been lighting gasoline fires all over the opioid crisis in all our communities, claiming that safe supply means the Prime Minister is giving out drugs on the street, which is an absolute falsehood. We do not need slogans and incendiary language. We need solutions. We need to keep people alive. That is number one. We also need to give the police the tools to go after predatory gangs.

• (1200)

Something that I have not heard from the Liberals is the ability to target the gangs who are coming in, and to get them out. It is certainly one of the issues that has been raised to me in the first nations communities of the north. People want the ability to police and protect their communities. When someone suddenly comes into a fly-in community, who has never been there before and is selling fentanyl, community leaders want the power to say, "Buddy, you are out the door; we are not even going to let you off the plane."

In fly-in communities in the north, we can get on a plane to get into Fort Albany or Attawapiskat or Neskantaga with our bag, and we can be carrying as much fentanyl as we want. We cannot get on an Air Canada plane with a bag without being searched. What I have heard in Treaty 9 is that people want Transport Canada to give them the authority that if someone is flying into one of the fly-in communities they have to go through security searches so that they are not carrying guns and fentanyl. This is a straightforward thing. It is about keeping people safe.

I want to be able to go home to the communities that I represent and tell police officers who have done 35 years of service in small-town Canada that they can go home at the end of the day and be safe. I want to tell our frontline workers that when they go out on a call, they should not need a flak jacket; they should not need two OPP cruisers outside the door because there are predatory gangs who have taken over that housing complex. That is the reality in small-town Canada, and solutions are not being talked about; what is being talked about are the excuses.

*Routine Proceedings*

One of the things that I find very concerning is that my Conservative colleagues' solutions only work if we all live by the fact of having no memory. I remember when Vic Toews was the minister of public safety. Some members may not remember Vic Toews. He was convicted of violating the Elections Canada Act. That is a black mark and Stephen Harper made him pretty much top of the justice department anyway. He brought in the legislation that was going to force telecoms to create backdoor routes into every Canadian cellphone so he could spy on them. The Conservatives accuse this Prime Minister of spying on Canadians. This Prime Minister is an absolute amateur compared to what Vic Toews was going to do, which was a total violation of civil liberties of every single Canadian so he could listen in on their phone calls. That same Vic Toews, of course, then was found guilty of breaking conflict of interest guidelines for hustling gigs for groups that were "seeking relief against a decision in which he had been involved as a minister of the Crown." Let us talk about dodgy.

I mention Vic Toews because he also stood in the House one day and accused the opposition members that they were either on the Conservatives' side or the side of the child pornographers. This was at a time when he was cutting 1,100 jobs from border security. They were the people whose job it was to keep out fentanyl gangs, guns, predators and child pornographers. Let us remember that Jean-Pierre Fortin, who was the national president of the Customs and Immigration Union, stated that because of what the Harper government was doing on cutting border security, "more child pornography entering the country, more weapons, illegal drugs will pass through our borders, not to mention terrorists, and sexual predators and hardened criminals." That does not fit on a bumper sticker, but that was the fact and that was the reality of what the current Liberal government inherited because of the Harper cuts. Vic Toews, at the time, said that was all fearmongering.

Vic Toews cut the intelligence unit on border security in half. How were we going to defend ourselves against international criminal gangs when he cut the intelligence service? He cut the sniffer-dog teams. That is a no-brainer. Sniffer-dog teams are not all that expensive, but sniffer-dog teams will tell us where the drugs are. Stephen Harper did not care. He fired those people because it was going to save some money.

Therefore, when the Conservatives say that they would get tough on the crime and they would take on the blah-blah, let us remember what they did. Let us remember how they cut the police crime prevention programs that helped communities support themselves so that they could keep the gangs out and support their communities.

Let us remember Tony Clement. There was \$50 million in border security that he hoovered into his personal office to give out. What did he do?

• (1205)

He paid for a sunken boat. That was not a good use of money. There were the Muskoka gazebos; he was building gazebos all over the rural parts of his riding. He built a fake lake. Muskoka has the most beautiful lakes in the country, except for those in Timmins—James Bay. There was Tony Clement. The lakes were not good enough. He had to create a fake lake. I remember Steamboat Tony. He was another one who went down in ethical flames.

We are not even going to go through all the famous dark ethical violations of the Harper government. I mention Tony Clement because Stephen Harper thought it was a great idea to take money for border security to keep Canadians safe and give it to Tony Clement to buy sunken boats in Muskoka. Imagine what is going to happen under the guy who is living in Stornoway, if he ever gets in.

The other thing that I find really concerning is we have these serious issues of gun violence and gangs that we have to focus on. The Liberals have dropped the ball a thousand times on these issues. I want to be able to go home to Northern Ontario and tell our frontline workers and families who are suffering from addictions that they can be safe, and that our communities are never going to be bases for this kind of violence.

I cannot assure them of that now, and it worries me. It worries me when I have seen what is happening to communities that have always had each other's backs and have looked out for each other. Communities cannot do it on their own. If we talk to the municipalities anywhere in the north about the homeless crisis, they are going to say, "Where's the federal government?" When we talk to the communities about the opioid crisis, they are going to say that what the member who lives in Stornoway has been saying is like pouring gasoline on their efforts of keeping people alive.

If we talk to the police in Timmins or the OPP, they are going to say that we cannot arrest our way out of this crisis. It is complex. I am proud of the people on the front lines in my region, like the Mushkegowuk Fire Keepers who walk the streets of Timmins to keep people alive and safe. That is a program we initiated in Timmins—James Bay. It should be a national program, in the indigenous urban regions, people on the streets keeping people safe. They deserve better than this political Punch and Judy show.

Rather than talking about these issues, this morning the Conservatives were talking about Grandpa Bill's hunting rifle. That is a total falsehood. I am a gun owner. My wife is a gun owner. Imagine the member for Stornoway out in the bush. He is saying, "They're going after your turkey gun." No, they are not.

The government is going after the assault weapons that have killed people. It is going to go after handguns that are coming over the border. In the latest falsehoods, from the guy who used pictures of Serbia and Malaysia as Canada, and hunters from Oklahoma, they said they were going to defend Pa and Joe Jr. going out with their orange hats. That is a total falsehood. We have freaking fentanyl gangs in our communities that need to be dealt with. The government is not going after Grandpa Joe.

*Routine Proceedings*

That is the misinformation that is coming from the Conservatives. The Liberals, with their Punch and Judy show, do not even remember how to punch anymore. I need to be able to go home to our communities and say that we will keep people safe, we will keep families alive and we will restore balance with those wraparound services that the police have talked about.

• (1210)

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague spoke about the Conservative record when it comes to crime in this country and the cuts that they made.

I am curious to know whether the member also shares my concerns about the Conservatives being disingenuous with this concurrence motion. This report is from 2022. Why did they wait two years? Is it the fact that they are not having any success at committee and would like the House to reprogram the schedule at committee? They do not want to talk about foreign interference with India, or the fact that their leader refuses to get a security clearance. They do not want the mayor of Brampton, Patrick Brown, who may answer questions about the Conservative leadership race, summoned.

Why did the Conservatives wait two years to bring forward this concurrence debate?

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, one of the fascinating things is that we have only one leader in the history of Canada who cannot get a national security clearance. If he could, he surely would, right? He surely would. This is a no-brainer, so what is it about him?

Then we start to find serious CSIS allegations about the interference in the leadership that brought down Erin O'Toole, who I actually think would have been a good prime minister, in order to get this guy into the role. On his job history, I am not going to say he worked at Dairy Queen because I have been called out for that. He may not have worked there. In my riding, if someone wants to volunteer at a lunch program, they have to get a security clearance.

If someone is under investigation for Chinese interference, for the Modi government interference, they are going to name, blame and shame and do everything else. The guy cannot get a security clearance, because if he could get a security clearance, he would have, so I want to know what is in the closet. I would like to get a peek in there. What is in the closet in Stornoway that he is hiding from?

• (1215)

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member is always entertaining, and he always gets to make up some of his facts. Let us talk about that. He is looking at the number of jobs that were cut from the CBSA by the previous Harper government, which cut 1,000 jobs from 14,000 to 13,000 and then put them right back to 14,000, where it continued until two years ago.

If the facts were on the table as opposed to the rhetoric, would he readjust his speech to actually say, yes, it has been this way since 2008 and that is the way it has continued and the way the govern-

ment has continued, or would he continue with the nonsense rhetoric he is spewing in the House of Commons?

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I do not take the personal attacks personally because I know the truth hurts. If one is a Conservative and faces the truth, it must be a shocking thing. If the goddess of truth came down painted purple and danced all over the desks of the backbench of the Conservatives for three straight weeks, none of them would notice, because they would not know what truth looks like.

Here is the issue: \$50 million and Tony Clement for his Muskoka steak knives, for his gazebos. That was border security money. Those were facts, and did Tony get demoted? No, but I am not going to go into what brought down Tony Clement, just like I am not going to go into what brought down Vic Toews. Dean Del Mastro went to jail. He was the then prime minister's parliamentary secretary. They all thought it was great to cut money from keeping people safe in order to raise sunken boats in Muskoka and create fake lakes in one of the most beautiful, not as beautiful as Timmins—James Bay, places of lakes in Canada.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, in which he talked about something that is indeed worrisome. We are once again taking a step backwards at a time when we are talking about the fact that a lot of guns and drugs are getting across the border and when we should be strengthening border measures. My colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia spoke at length about this in her speech.

Like my colleague, I commend Mr. Fortin, who I had the opportunity to meet many times when I was a political attaché and we worked together to fight the cuts to border services. That was when a Conservative government was making cuts, but the current Liberal government should be more concerned about what is happening at the border. We are talking about guns and tainted drugs. That is a big deal. We know that there is also another challenge on the horizon. I was interviewed about this last week, in fact. The mayors of the border towns are concerned about the migrants who are coming. They are worried.

What message are we sending when we cut border services at the very same time? I share my colleague's opinion, but I would like to know why, with all these challenges, we are still facing cuts when we should be investing more?

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. Clearly, we need to protect our border. There are problems with street gangs, with illegal drugs. However, in light of Trump's election, it is critical that we protect our border and put a plan in place to protect Canadian values from the impacts of Mr. Trump and his negative approach.

[*English*]

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, time and again, the hon. member rises to pay tribute to the constituents of Timmins—James Bay. He did that in his opening remarks, reflecting on the senseless gun violence in his community.

*Routine Proceedings*

I will do the same today. On January 1, 2014, 10 years ago, Marley Rowe was murdered in a senseless act of violence. His mother, Sherri, his children, his brother, his family and extended community continue to grieve him.

However, in this discussion, the hon. member provided, for the first time, a compelling reason as to why we are dealing with the senseless rise in gun violence. The member talked about the social determinants of health. I referenced the work of Professor Dennis Raphael, who talked about housing, including health and mental health, income, education, employment and food security.

Could the hon. member talk about the continuum of the social determinants of health, which actively need to be addressed prior to any type of tough-on crime policy? We have seen that failed policy in the United States. Could he talk about the social determinants of health and how they impact violence in our communities?

● (1220)

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague represents the great city of Hamilton. My hometown is Cobalt, with just over 1,200 people. We see it in the microcosm.

I can name the young people who have died from violence or died from the violence of addictions. We just lost a beautiful young man who had been in my youth group. From day one, it felt like there was a black mark, because there were no supports. There were no supports for his family. There were no supports for him to get into proper training to raise his kids. These are the people who end up being victimized by predators. Any smart society would support them so that we could keep them safe. Once we keep them safe, we can keep the predators out.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the mobile youth services team in my community of the Capital Regional District. This important program supports youth. It diverts youth from gang exploitation. The program has been doing incredible work in Victoria and the surrounding region.

Unfortunately, it has reached a crisis point. It is calling on the government for stable, five-year funding. Unfortunately, with a lack of leadership from the Liberal government, it means that the program has reduced its teams. It means that children who are at risk of gang exploitation are more vulnerable.

Could the member speak to the importance of the government stepping up and funding the teams on the ground that are going to address the intersecting crisis of homelessness, opioid addiction, the toxic drug supply and gang influence.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I have such enormous respect for the work of the mobile youth services team in Victoria, like I have enormous respect for the Mushkegowuk Fire Keeper Patrol. We have asked the government to stop the blah blah and support the people who are keeping people alive. This is a no-brainer. Time and again, we hear the talk, but the government refuses to support those who do the work on the ground. We need to have that support. This is what keeps people alive and communities safe.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr.

Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

This December 6 will mark the 35th anniversary of the Polytechnique massacre in Montreal, a tragedy that forever marked my community. Fourteen women were brutally murdered with an assault weapon simply because they were women. This event remains a poignant reminder of the dangers posed by hatred, especially when coupled with easy access to firearms like the Ruger Mini-14, a semi-automatic weapon created for the battlefield, not for our streets.

As Quebec and the entire country prepare to commemorate this sombre anniversary, we must work to strengthen our gun control laws, our laws governing assault weapons and handguns. We should not be putting these weapons back on our streets, as Conservative members are incessantly calling for. I do not know about my colleagues, but I do not want an American-style gun culture and neither do the survivors or the PolyRemembers activists. I will continue to work with them every day to make sure of that.

Let us be very clear. There is still work to be done and I am determined to continue to do that work. We need to work for stronger gun control, not just to honour the memory of victims, but also to prevent other tragedies, like the one that occurred at École polytechnique, and to take real action to protect the lives and safety of all. That is our duty as a federal government. We do not want any more mass shootings.

● (1225)

[*English*]

I was born and grew up just a few blocks away from Polytechnique. The night that 14 women were gunned down, in 1989, I was just a little kid. I was waiting for my dad to come home and he did not. It was late and getting dark and I waited by the door. It was before everyone carried around cellphones. By the time he did get home, I saw the look on his face. He was there that night, outside Polytechnique, watching as bodies were taken into ambulances. When I asked why and how, no answer was forthcoming. What does one tell a little girl about a femicide?

When I was first elected, I promised my community I would make stronger gun control a priority in my work in Ottawa, and I did. Our government has since banned 1,500 models of assault weapons, including the gun that was used 35 years ago at Polytechnique. I support PolyRemembers' call to finish the job that was started.

*Routine Proceedings*

Assault weapons belong on the battlefield, not on our streets, despite the fact the Conservatives are desperate to bring these guns back into our communities. By doing the gun lobby's dirty work in Parliament, they show their true colours. They are weak on security and soft on crime.

They are also weak when it comes to securing our border, including by voting against more funds for border enforcement. Our police and border officials have been very clear on multiple occasions that the measures we implement to strengthen our border are key to keeping back the flow of illegal guns coming into our country. When the Conservatives talk about the importance of protecting our borders, they should remember that they cut funding for the borders when they were in power. Since then, our government has invested nearly \$1.5 billion in border enforcement and security, as well as border policing.

We are investing in gang prevention strategies. We increased the RCMP's capacity to trace gun crimes and to build a national system that allows for the flagging of the illegal purchasing of firearms. We also provided the RCMP and our border agency, the CBSA, with additional resources at the border to target firearms smuggling and trafficking.

We have signed 82 agreements with municipalities and indigenous communities to stop gun violence before it starts and to help stem the flow of illegal guns crossing our borders.

Two years ago, we banned the importation, sale and purchase of handguns. That means handguns are not allowed through our borders. That means the law does not allow stores to sell handguns. It means people cannot go out and buy handguns. Handguns are not used for hunting; they are used against other people. They are getting into the hands of our young people through gangs. They are getting into the hands of people who are scared and feel they need to be packing one in order to feel safe.

Statistics show that the proliferation of guns does not make people more safe; it makes people less safe. Handguns are used in more than half of violent crimes involving firearms. The Conservatives like to talk about police, selectively quoting from some police unions, but we know that the head of the police chiefs has supported our gun control measures and our ban on the sale and importation of handguns.

I do not think we can close our eyes to the reality just south of our border. For the third year in a row, gun violence is the leading cause of death among children and teens in the United States. This is not the culture we want to import into Canada. As a mother, it is sickening to me to think that the Conservatives and the leader of the Conservative Party are promising to flood our streets with dangerous weapons.

*[Translation]*

In 2017, a man stormed the Quebec City mosque with a handgun. He took the lives of six innocent people and wounded five others. I had the opportunity to visit the mosque. Even many years later, the pain is still just as great, just as heavy.

We owe it to them to do everything in our power to prevent other horrors of this kind. That is why we banned the sale, purchase and

importation of handguns across Canada. When I walk the streets of my community, when I am out and about in Côte-des-Neiges, mothers stop me and share their concerns with me. They are feeling the increase in gang and gun crime. They want to get more guns off our streets, not put them back on the streets, as the Conservative Party is asking every day and as the Conservative leader has promised to do if he is elected.

It is for the safety of our communities and the safety of our children that we are working for stronger gun control here in Canada.

● (1230)

*[English]*

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have worked closely with the hon. member at committee studying the impacts of social disorder and disruption. I want to offer the member the opportunity to reflect on how the social determinants of health are required to help reduce criminality, reduce violence in our communities and help offset the impacts of the mental health crisis or drug use that, ultimately, fuel gun violence.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure of working with the member opposite in committee and I know that he is committed to the safety and security of our young people.

I have witnessed the alarming rise in mental health issues, particularly among young Canadians. I have also seen, with my own eyes, that gang violence is on the rise in my community. One thing that I feel is so important about the Liberal government's strategy is that it involves both enforcement and prevention, and prevention is key.

In order to invest in our communities, we need to believe that government funding is appropriate for non-governmental organizations, for the organizations supporting our young people and that they are there for them in their time of need. I know we can count on the NDP's support in that regard.

*[Translation]*

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the way I see things right now, they are not walking the talk. Let me explain. My colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia gave a speech earlier explaining all the work that has been done by the Standing Committee on Public Safety on the issue of better gun control and on Bill C-21. One problem with the buyback program is the definition issue.



My colleague clearly explained that there is something that is crucial. I will also address this issue when PolyRemembers appears before the Standing Committee on the Status of Women next week for a study on femicide. The Standing Committee on Public Safety made a rather important recommendation about enlisting a committee of independent experts to provide a more informed opinion to clearly define and determine which firearms should be prohibited and which are indeed used for hunting only. This will require people who are truly independent. My colleague has been waiting for such a committee to be set up for over a year and a half. She even sent the Minister of Public Safety some names of people who could join it. This is important. Right now, things are stuck and this definition is one of the reasons.

Can we get moving and take action?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Mr. Speaker, obviously, we still have work to do to finish what we started.

However, I would have liked the Bloc Québécois to stay strong when things got a little tough in committee. When we debated Bill C-21, the Bloc Québécois remained oddly silent, although we would have liked them to support the amendments we brought forward at the time.

I hope to be able to work with the Bloc Québécois and PolyRememberers. I heard that a meeting finally took place between the Bloc Québécois leader and PolyRememberers just today. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues.

• (1235)

[English]

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we know that under the NDP-Liberal government there has been the decriminalization of hard drugs and there has been the proliferation of government-funded injection sites.

Can the member tell me the correlation between gang violence and the moves the government made in regard to drugs across this country, what the connection and the correlation is between violent gun-related crimes and the use of drugs in our country, which they have legalized?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Mr. Speaker, when we proposed funding programs that would prevent gang violence, the Conservatives voted against it. When we proposed other measures in order to ensure greater security in our communities, the Conservatives voted against them. Essentially, the Conservatives have voted even against investing in greater border security.

The Conservatives come today and talk about the importance of making our communities safer. I would invite them to stop speaking out of both sides of their mouth. If they believe in greater safety, then they should believe in keeping our borders secure. If they believe in greater safety, then they should believe in taking guns off our streets instead of putting them back on them.

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Shefford is rising on a point of order.

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that my colleague's comments are a bit biased. I am surprised to hear

### Routine Proceedings

her say that, because only a short while ago, members of her own party were recognizing the work—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is a point of debate.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

[English]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Outremont for splitting her time with me. I appreciated her comments and what she has provided today in terms of the substance of the issue and the report, which is a very important report. She spoke very passionately about why that is and the deep connections the issue has to her community.

I am going to spend my time talking about why I think we are even debating the report today in the House. In order to do that, I have to set the context of what is currently going on at the public safety committee. Members of the committee, except for the Conservatives, are trying to undertake a study on foreign interference by Russia and India. The Conservatives on the committee have been using tactic after tactic, by introducing new motions or by filibustering at times, to prevent any study on foreign interference from occurring. They have been successful at times and unsuccessful at others.

What the Conservatives have done today is really interesting. The report was tabled in the House by the late Jim Carr, who was the chair of the committee at the time, on April 25, 2022, over two and a half years ago. What is even more remarkable is that it was not even a contentious report; the report was adopted by the public safety committee unanimously. Everybody agreed to it.

For those watching at home, I will say that reports are brought to this place and tabled all the time. Very rarely do they get brought into a motion of concurrence like this, but it is happening today. Anyone following the proceedings over the last couple of months would have noticed, quite frankly, that the Conservatives have been doing this a lot lately in order to just interject new ways to slow down Parliament and make it very difficult for it to function, if not bring it to a complete standstill.

What makes the matter interesting is that not only did the Conservatives use the concurrence motion to do this but they also brought a report that was introduced in the House over two and a half years ago and was voted on unanimously. Then they put forward an amendment that clearly they had no interest in when the report was tabled, because they would not have otherwise voted for the report unanimously.

I did challenge the individual who moved the amendment. In the amendment they brought in when they introduced this, they have added a whole list of things. First, they want to send the report back to committee, a unanimous report that was sent to the House two and a half years ago. They say they are not happy with it and they want the committee to look at it again.

*Routine Proceedings*

The Conservatives want the committee to hold four more meetings, to bring the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs to committee and invite the Toronto Police Association, the Surrey police union, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and John Howard Society of Canada to attend. Why this is important is that an order of the House, which would be made through the motion, would direct the committee to do the work. The committee would then have to stop everything it is doing and undertake the direction of the House.

I bring colleagues back to how I set the stage at the beginning of my speech as to what is going on at the committee. The Conservatives cannot get away with what they are trying to do at committee by preventing the study on foreign interference, so they are now using an opportunity to amend a unanimous consent report from two and a half years ago to direct the committee to undertake new work, which would further delay the work it is supposed to be doing on looking into foreign interference.

We must ask this question: Why would the Conservatives dig up a two-and-a-half year-old report and put a huge amendment on it to force the committee to do all this work to avoid talking about foreign interference from India and Russia?

• (1240)

At the same time, the Leader of the Opposition refuses to get a security clearance. Every other leader of a political party of the House has a security clearance. They use the information they obtain when they get that security clearance to make sure they can keep their members safe, their party safe and all Canadians safe. The Leader of the Opposition is the only political party leader who refuses to even apply for a security clearance. Why is that? We also know that there have been reports that the Conservative leadership contest through which he was elected was interfered with by foreign agents.

This is what we know: We know that the Leader of the Opposition refuses to get a security clearance or even apply for it. We know that it is alleged that the Conservative Party was interfered with by foreign actors, and we know that the Conservative members on the public safety committee are willing to dig up a two-and-a-half-year-old report that they voted on unanimously and moved massive amendments to, to force the committee to do new work so they can avoid continuing on with the study on foreign interference. I think I do not need to elaborate or to take any kind of liberties in terms of drawing a conclusion; most people can draw the conclusion on their own.

What is the Leader of the Opposition hiding? There is something in his past that he knows would prevent him from being able to get a security clearance, and Canadians have a right to know what that is, so I am very concerned not only with the lengths to which the Leader of the Opposition is going to hide whatever it is in his past, but also with the members of the public safety committee, because they are complicit when they help him do the work to hide it.

We should not be surprised by any of this, because the Conservatives are good soldiers, at least after they get caught, because we know that 18 or 19 of them were sending letters behind their leader's back to the government, looking for help. However, we do know, based on a recent report from November 20, that:

After two years of [the Leader of the Opposition] as their leader, many Conservative MPs say they are much less free now than they were before his arrival.

The man who promised during his leadership to make Canada “the freest country in the world” maintains tight control over the actions of his caucus members....

Some elected officials feel they come to caucus—

and it is a Conservative MP who said this

— “to be told what to do and what to think”....

That is not freedom; that is the Leader of the Opposition's telling his MPs what to do, and only he gets to say. He is telling the four members who sit on the public safety committee to not let the study go forward on foreign interference as it relates to India and China. He does not want them to study the issue, because he is so afraid of what might come of it.

Conservatives, if they genuinely had nothing to hide and if they genuinely had an interest in protecting this country, would ensure that the study at the public safety committee can proceed so the truth can be found out so all Canadians can know what we are dealing with, especially as we approach an election.

• (1245)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech that was full of passion and rhetoric. However, I would like to bring him back to the topic at hand.

My colleague is upset about the fact that we are just now debating the committee report from two years ago, but I am not sure whether he listened to the speech by my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

In her speech, my colleague more or less said that, despite the fact that the report was adopted unanimously by all the parties and therefore by the government, most of the recommendations it contains have not yet been implemented.

Obviously, organizations such as PolyRemembers are getting anxious and wondering how this government, which claims to be there to protect women, is not doing what it should.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, what is most telling about the fact that the first question came from the Bloc is that no Conservative member in the House chose to stand up to ask me a question on what I was talking about.

To answer the member's question, reports come to the House all the time, as he knows. Some reports get a lot of their details from committee embraced and taken on by the government through forms of legislation and other policy. Some take more time and some take less, but that is the whole point of a report coming from committee. It comes from committee to be tabled for the government's consideration. That is the whole point of committee work.

Like the member said, some of the recommendations have been taken up. Some of the other ones he wants to continue to push forward. I would encourage him to do so at committee. The committee can say that it has been two and a half years and it is time to study this again to provide an updated report.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will rise to address my colleague across the way when he says nobody asked what he was talking about. Let me ask, what the heck are you talking about? This is a fantasy you spew in the House of Commons that there is all kinds of conspiracy behind the scenes in what Conservatives are trying to do.

We are trying to get things done in the House. We would like you to stop impeding government so we can have documents to get things done and we can make the House of Commons work for Canadians. Now, you can dream up all kinds of excuses about why we are doing that, but we are trying to help you govern here in the proper way a democracy can happen.

Will you please tell us what the heck you are talking about in your dreamscape?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member for Calgary Centre if he was talking directly to the Chair or talking directly to the hon. member. Members must go through the Chair when asking questions of individuals in the chamber.

The hon. deputy House leader has the floor.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I am not dreaming up conspiracy theories. I am just laying out the facts, which are very clear. The Conservatives do not want anything to happen in terms of a study on foreign interference at the public safety committee. They are stopping that from happening. The Leader of the Opposition refuses to get his security clearance. That is a second fact. Another fact is it has been widely reported that foreign actors interfered in the Conservative leadership.

That is all factual information. I leave it up to the public to draw their own conclusions, but I imagine we are all going to end up at the same place. This member says, “We are trying to help the government govern,” but anybody who has been watching this for any longer than 30 seconds over the last two months will know that is completely untrue.

• (1250)

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting point the member raises, and I think it is a valid one, about the shenanigans that happen from time to time at committee by the Conservatives using this place to try to direct our committees on these endless witch hunts. However, I am curious, because we did rise for a unanimous consent motion to have a special committee on India, and it was the member for Winnipeg Centre who opposed when we thought we had unanimous consent of the House.

Why did they do that when we could have been in a special committee dealing with this, given the seriousness of the allegations that came out from the RCMP on October 21?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, my guess would be, why do we need a special committee when we already have multiple committees that could look at this? For example, the public safety committee is trying to look at this. Nobody from this side is trying to avoid looking at the issue. Conservatives are literally blocking the ability to do that. The foreign affairs committee could also look at it. I imagine we would get the same response.

To answer the member's question about the unanimous consent motion more specifically, it has been a long time. Let us bring back the unanimous consent motion and try to table it again. Perhaps he will have more success this time.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am here today to talk about the report “A Path Forward: Reducing Gun and Gang Violence in Canada”, which was prepared by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

This report was tabled in April 2022. It has been two and a half years, but it has yet to be adopted. We are here today to debate it. The Conservative Party tabled an amendment to allow this report to be reopened. It should be noted that this study was done—

[*English*]

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I said Winnipeg Centre when clearly I meant Winnipeg North, and I would not want that to reflect poorly on the Hansard. I withdraw “Winnipeg Centre” and I replace it with “Winnipeg North”.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order. Just as a reminder to the member, I would invite him to introduce the motion again.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:** Mr. Speaker, I rise here today to speak to the report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security entitled “A Path Forward: Reducing Gun and Gang Violence in Canada”.

This report was completed and tabled in April 2022, two and a half years ago. Now we want to debate and vote on this report. However, the report is no longer valid, given that a lot of information about public safety has changed in the past two and a half years. When we look at what was proposed in the report, it is important to first note that the report was not unanimous and that the three opposition parties all presented supplementary reports. The initial report, although lengthy, was not good enough for all the parties.

That is why we brought forward an amendment today calling for this study to be reopened in order to complete it and obtain much more up-to-date information on the public safety situation and the criminal use of firearms in Canada. We also need information on the rise of street gangs in cities across Canada.

We need to talk about this. We have known this for a long time, but, for the past nine years, it has always been clear to us that the Liberals and public safety are not synonymous. Measures were taken. Each time, the government said it was making investments, but the fact is, the right hand was spending money while the left was amending the Criminal Code to reduce the law's impact on criminals.

*Routine Proceedings*

Consider Bill C-5, which was brought into force, and Bill C-75. Among other things, Bill C-75 allows criminals to be arrested and released multiple times in the same day. Bill C-5 allows criminals to serve jail time at home watching Netflix instead of in a penitentiary, where they belong. The public figured that out pretty quickly when these bills came into force. Most police services and victim protection groups have said it makes no sense. The report was tabled two and a half years ago, and nothing has been done about it since. Meanwhile, the government has enacted bills that have made the public safety situation in this country even worse.

The report contains a number of recommendations. One of them calls on the government to acknowledge the fact that a public safety problem exists. This is unbelievable. The idea that the committee would have to tell the government to wake up because we have a problem is disturbing enough.

On top of that, a huge number of witnesses who appeared before the committee clearly told us that the gun crime problem was not caused by registered gun owners. Representatives of the Toronto Police Association, the Toronto Police Service and police associations in Quebec and across the country told us the same thing. We have been saying this for a long time, and the witnesses confirmed it.

Unfortunately, the main report neglected to take the police recommendations into account. The Conservative Party had to draft a supplementary report to highlight the various recommendations made by these organizations, which clearly explain that street gangs and criminals are using trafficked guns arriving mainly from the United States. They say that over 80% of crimes involve guns that are not registered anywhere and were purchased illegally. That is the real problem. That is the main problem right there.

Rather than tackling the main problem, the recommendations call for guns to be taken away from all Canadians who have firearms licenses. This led to the infamous 2020 ban, which sought to take away all firearms. The Liberals and the Bloc Québécois were scaring Canadians by saying that law-abiding gun owners were criminals. Meanwhile, real crimes are being committed in the dark, behind the scenes. That is the problem.

I have a firearms licence myself, and I own guns. I am a law-abiding citizen and my guns are registered. I have been vetted. I am a member of a gun club. I do what I have to do. All gun owners are law-abiding citizens. However, the thugs on the streets of Montreal who drive around with guns hidden in their cars did not buy their guns at a firearms retailer. They bought them on the black market. They commit their crimes with these weapons, and they do not care.

• (1255)

It is important to understand that it is going to cost at least \$3 billion to buy back the firearms that law-abiding citizens, who are doing nothing wrong, have at home. We could take that money and invest it in control mechanisms for the police, for the border, so that we can work with Akwesasne to check what is illegally entering the country. Unfortunately, that is an area where there is a lot of gun trafficking. The reserve abuts the U.S. and Canada in both Ontario and Quebec. We need to focus our efforts on gun control. That is where we need to put our energy and money. We should not be buy-

ing back firearms from law-abiding citizens, hunters and sport shooters who have done nothing wrong.

We have been talking about this for years. We are not even close to reaching an agreement. I do not know why my Liberal, Bloc Québécois and NDP colleagues cannot understand this logic. Instead of saying that this is what we should do, they are trying to scare people. We need to crack down on criminals. That is where we need to focus our efforts and investments. That is the situation with gun control.

Arms trafficking is another issue. We are talking about crime on the streets, especially the rise in gang crime. Even the Hells Angels are afraid of these criminals. They are incredibly violent and dangerous. Every police force and victims' group will say that this is the biggest problem. I introduced Bill C-325, which was unfortunately blocked by the Liberals and the NDP. Its aim was to undo the legislation that came out of Bill C-5. That law is completely stupid. When criminals on the streets saw it, they rubbed their hands together with glee and thanked the Prime Minister because now they can go about committing crime without the least bit of concern. At worst, they will serve a prison sentence at home. They will take a little break, drink a beer, watch Netflix, and then go back out on the street. They will not be out of commission for long. That is what is happening; we predicted it.

We said during debate that this was what was going to happen, as in the case of Bill C-75, and it is happening. It is happening now. None of the studies that were done prior to Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 mention it. That is why we need to reopen the committee's study. We need to confirm what has been happening for the past two and a half years, since these two laws were passed and came into force. Crime has skyrocketed. If we do not, the current report might as well just sit on a shelf. It is really not up to date. Things have changed, and that is because the government has implemented completely stupid measures.

When it comes to firearms, Conservatives think that law-abiding citizens, sport shooters and hunters who have a licence and who are monitored should be left alone. First, Canada's laws are very strict. It is very complicated to own a gun. People who do own guns obey the law. Measures already exist. They are already in place. Why is the government attacking these people?

Second, we have to go back to the criminal side of things, strengthen the criminal laws, undo the laws that came out of Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, restore order in the Criminal Code to allow judges and police officers to do their work and apply justice that is reasonable and makes the streets safer. It is simple, really. The rest is political gobbledygook that I do not understand.

I was the Conservative Party public safety critic for three years. I heard people, Liberal and NDP colleagues, say all sorts of things. I wondered what planet they were living on. We are not dealing with the same reality. We might say that there are virtual realities in Canada. We do not all have two feet on the ground.

Let us come back to the report and the recommendations. The Conservatives' supplementary opinion was essentially what I am saying today. That is what we want. That is what police services want. The victims' groups I met with, who supported my Bill C-325, do not understand what the government, backed by the other parties, has done. They want us to restore order to this country.

It is simple. Change the law. Restore order. Instead of buying back firearms from law-abiding citizens, put money into border control to help police services do their job. That will solve the vast majority of the problems in this country.

• (1300)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the whole issue today is about how the Conservative Party, quite frankly, is using the House's authority to prevent the public safety committee from dealing with foreign interference, in regard to both India and Russia. I find that very shameful.

At the end of the day, the leader of the Conservative Party is hiding something. There is something he is not telling Canadians. I would like to see individuals like Patrick Brown appear before the public security committee. I know one of my colleagues has brought forward the suggestion that we have a summons issued for him.

Is this one of the reasons the Conservative Party today refuses to allow that standing committee to do the work necessary on foreign interference? Why are the Conservatives interfering, in the interest of their leader, to prevent Canadians from knowing what the Conservative Party is hiding?

What in the leader of the Conservative Party's background is causing him not to be able to get the security clearance?

What is the Conservative Party so afraid of? Is it that the leadership was influenced, that its own leader was involved in foreign interference?

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:** Mr. Speaker, for the past few weeks, the Liberals have been engaging in outright harassment on a matter of national security. It would be very easy for them to fix the problem by disclosing the names of those involved in foreign interference. We would know where we stand.

However, the Liberals would rather use this issue to make baseless accusations against the Conservative leader, when they are the ones at fault. They are making things up because they do not want to talk about the real problems. The real problems are the ones I was just talking about a few minutes ago. Street crime is up 90% in this country since 2015. Guns cross the border very easily because there is no real control; the Liberals would rather spend money on buying back firearms from law-abiding owners. Millions of dollars have already been spent on this, and soon it will be billions.

The Liberals are just trying to draw attention away from the real problem, which is their gross incompetence over the past nine years.

### Routine Proceedings

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

The question is on the amendment to the amendment.

• (1305)

[English]

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

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

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

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

#### FOSSIL FUELS

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present four petitions.

The first petition is on air pollution. The petitioners recognize that fossil fuel consumption is a public health issue, causing 34,000 premature deaths annually in Canada. They highlight that Canada restricts advertising for tobacco, gambling, alcohol and pharmaceuticals to protect public health. Fossil fuel advertising misleads the public about the health harms of climate change, delaying climate action and the transition to cleaner energy.

To protect public health, the petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to ban fossil fuel advertising, sponsorship and promotion.

#### AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by nearly 5,000 petitioners.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to look at the issue of emissions from the agricultural sector in Canada; these emissions are second only to those of oil and gas. The petitioners note that reducing animal food consumption can help meet our climate targets.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to educate Canadians on plant-based diets, source more plant-based foods in federal programs and support sustainable farming.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition is on international human rights.

*Privilege*

The petitioners note that Canadians are calling on the government because Canadian companies are contributing to global human rights abuses and environmental harms. Protesters, particularly indigenous peoples and marginalized groups, face violence overseas because of the actions of Canadian companies and those companies involved in Canadian supply chains. Canada encourages but does not require companies to prevent these harms. The petitioners are calling on the House of Commons to mandate companies to prevent harm in their global operations, assess their impact, provide remedies and face consequences for negligence. Affected individuals should be allowed to seek justice in Canadian courts.

• (1310)

## PARENTAL ALIENATION

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the final petition is on parental alienation.

Petitioners describe how parental alienation is a discredited theory used in family courts to undermine survivors of family violence and undermine children's wishes. It has disproportionate impacts on the safety of women and children. The petitioners note that over 250 feminist and women's organizations, along with the United Nations, are urging the government to legislate protections against parental alienation claims in family courts. This would provide supports for survivors of gender-based violence. They are calling on the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to amend the Divorce Act to protect against these claims in parental disputes.

## DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by many Canadians. They are bringing to the attention of the House the fact that the RCMP has reported that the Government of India has interfered in Canada's elections. It has also murdered, threatened and extorted Canadians on Canadian soil. The petitioners find it deeply troubling that the Leader of the Opposition continues to decline to get a security clearance, and they feel as though he is not doing his job in terms of protecting his members and Canadians. Therefore, the signatories of this petition are calling on the leader of the Conservative Party to get his security clearance and take action to help stop foreign governments from interfering in Canada and targeting Canadians.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 20 consideration of the motion, of the amendment as amended and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Don Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in this place to speak out and defend the interests of not just the people of Toronto—St. Paul's but also all of Canada. These are the Canadians who are not Liberal insiders and did not profit from the largesse of the government in its misallocation of capital through the Sustainable Development Technology Canada program.

I am standing here today to address an issue that has left Canadians poorer and that has left Canadians shaking their heads and questioning the direction of the Liberal government, which has failed our environment. The government has failed to be accountable; most importantly, it has failed the people of Canada. However, the NDP-Liberal government members sit upright in their respective seats as if there is nothing to see here.

In fact, there is less than nothing to see here. There is a vacuous void of taxpayer dollars, which have vanished into the pockets of friends and insiders. For years, the Prime Minister has positioned himself as the champion of the environment, saying that his government works hard to fight climate change. He continues to claim that he has lowered emissions while investing in Canada's economy, but can we guess what? The Liberal government tries to gaslight Canadians into thinking it is leading the way on climate action, but it actually cannot even hit its own emissions targets.

The only thing Liberals seem to be investing in is their own pockets and their own futures, at the expense of Canadians. I campaigned for this role because I am worried about the finances of this country and what they mean for our children's futures, our children's children's futures, the futures of their kids and so on. The NDP government, led by the Prime Minister, has demonstrated a lack of financial—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I know the member is brand spanking new, and we are looking forward to the NDP government, but that will be in 2025. It is not an NDP government. He needs to correct the record because he—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are venturing into debate.

The hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Mr. Speaker, in his earlier comments, the member for Timmins—James Bay used the term “total falsehood”, which I think may be unparliamentary. I am not certain of that, but if it is, it would be a good idea for him to withdraw it.

● (1315)

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a whole bunch of reasons I should not have heard this at all.

The hon. member for Victoria.

**Ms. Laurel Collins:** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order that my hon. colleague from Timmins—James Bay raised, when inaccurate information is repeatedly put on the record, which has been the case with the Conservatives time and time again, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, chapter 3, says, “It is impossible to codify all incidents which might be interpreted as matters of obstruction, interference [and so on].... However, some matters found to be prima facie include the...provision of misleading information”, which I think this is an example of now.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will have a look at that and come back if I need to.

The hon. member for Toronto—St. Paul's.

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government, supported by the NDP and led by the Prime Minister, has demonstrated a lack of financial acumen, with the case in point being the mismanagement of the green slush fund. The green slush fund, with its mismanagement, waste of tax dollars and rewarding of friends and insiders, represents the overall style and approach to governing by the Liberal government.

I am new here, as we have just heard, and I may never have been in government. This was well pointed out by the Minister of Housing a few days ago as he answered a softball question posed by the member for Don Valley East in an unsuccessful attempt to throw me under the bus. The tenor of the question was about my commitment to the people of Toronto—St. Paul's because I did not advocate for a \$471-million transfer to the city to increase housing. That \$471 million is about \$40,000 per home that the city state it could build. Let us remember that number. The fact is that after that \$471 million, housing starts have declined in Toronto. Where is the accountability?

That means wasted money and misallocated resources, resulting in a drag on GDP. It is the same result from the same government, and that is bad for the people of Toronto writ large and bad for the people of Toronto—St. Paul's. However, we have a solution to the loose-wallet Liberal largesse: Let us cut the GST on homes under \$1 million. The quick math is that on a home of \$800,000, a buyer would save \$40,000 from a GST cut, which is the same amount the city got for the decline in starts. Who wants the money? Is it the people or the government? Unlike the Minister of Finance and unlike the housing minister, who prefer to give money away to projects with dubious outcomes, I have a background in finance, so I know what the math says: The buyer of that \$800,000 home will save somewhere between \$100,000 and \$150,000 over the term of a 25-year mortgage. That is the power of common sense and a GST cut.

Let us now return to the pressing issue of the slush fund. Sustainable Development Technology Canada was a federally funded not-for-profit organization whose purpose was to invest and support the development of new green technologies for a better environment. Fulfilling this purpose and supporting sustainable innovation would have been a great opportunity for the Liberal government to follow

### Privilege

through on its promises to fight climate change. However, instead of a well-managed, respected organization to help Canadian companies develop sustainable green technologies, we have a Liberal green slush fund, a multi-billion dollar boondoggle filled with corruption, devoid of accountability and, most troubling of all, with no regard for the people who funded it: hard-working Canadian taxpayers.

We have heard countless promises from the Liberal government to take bold action on climate change and green innovation, but as time passes, it becomes clearer that these promises are hollow. The reality is that it appears the Liberals are only interested in making themselves and their friends rich. When the Liberals overtook SDTC, it was never about green energy; it was about lining the pockets of Liberal insiders. As the Auditor General found, Liberal appointees gave 400 million taxpayer dollars to their own companies, involving 186 conflicts of interest. This was only a sample of the total mismanaged capital allocations.

Meanwhile, food bank visits are at an all-time high in my community. Constituents tell me they cannot afford the cost of living. That \$400 million could have better benefited people in St. Paul's and elsewhere who are suffering from out-of-touch Liberal policies. Now the government is refusing to table the necessary documents in Parliament so that the RCMP can thoroughly investigate the corruption and scandal of the Prime Minister's slush fund.

Parliament has been stalled for numerous weeks because the Liberals refuse to hand over the documents. Parliament ordered the documents. Why is there such a lack of transparency surrounding these projects from the transparency Prime Minister? Why are we seeing such a rigorous lack of accountability for how taxpayer dollars are being spent? Well, as one SDTC whistle-blower said in committee:

...I think the current government is more interested in protecting themselves and protecting the situation from being a public nightmare. They would rather protect wrongdoers and financial mismanagement than have to deal with a situation like SDTC in the public sphere.

● (1320)

That is from a whistle-blower. This is not a fabricated scandal. The whistle has been blown by courageous individuals who saw first-hand what was happening.

### *Privilege*

The Liberals do not want the public to find out that instead of investing in our farmers, who know a thing or two about stewarding the land, or supporting innovation that can improve the lives of Canadians, they used this fund as a slush pool for insiders. They do not want Canadians to know that instead of investing taxpayer dollars into the most promising projects and companies, the Liberals' hand-picked and hand-appointed chair and her board funnelled taxpayer dollars to projects and companies that were run by their friends or where they had a financial interest. It seems to me that the green part of SDTC is less about the environment and more about the colour of the cash lining the pockets of their friends.

One of the reasons my constituents elected me, according to what I have heard and am hearing when speaking to them in the community and at their doorsteps, is that I have experience in business. I think about that and I wonder, "What if somebody did this in a properly run public company? What would happen to that person once the paper trail was analyzed?" That person would be fired. It really makes us think: What fate awaits the Liberal government should it just hand over the documents and drive on? This is the kind of situation they teach us to avoid in any business school or ethics class. Perhaps our financial leaders on the other side of the House missed those classes.

Still, the misallocation of money leads to the destruction of capital in this country. This causes a loss of Canadian competitiveness, a reduction in productivity and a decline in GDP. These misallocations compound over time, just like the lost opportunity on the interest we all pay for our government debt, including on this \$400 million. That is at least another \$16 million per year, which could go a long way to solving issues in Toronto like gun crime. Instead, it is a drag on the economy.

Just a couple of weeks ago, StatsCan came out with the news of just how horrible the Canadian economy is under the Prime Minister and how the government's mismanagement has compounded the misery of the Canadian economy. For the eighth time in the last nine quarters, our per capita GDP has declined. It is also the fifth consecutive quarterly decline in per capita GDP. It has now fallen more than any other G7 country since 2019. In my analysis, that is a recession for most individuals, and the average Canadian is worse off.

This is the direct result of higher taxes on capital gains, on energy, on work and on just about everything else we buy. The government is driving out investment by hiking taxes on everything. That is indisputable. The community members I spoke about earlier tell me the same thing. The people I meet in St. Paul's on the doorsteps can see what is happening. In fact, they expressed their dissatisfaction this summer. After three decades, the people of Toronto—St. Paul's have asked for change.

The Greeks had a myth, the myth of King Midas, who was granted the power to turn anything he touched into gold. What a gift that would be. Ultimately, this became a liability for King Midas, as his greed led him to make foolish decisions on what he would turn into gold. His food, for example, turned into gold, so he could not eat; he was hungry. In another section of the Midas story, he becomes fearful of his power and embraces his beautiful daughter, who is immediately transformed into a golden statue. In his despair, he prays to Dionysus, who, to make a long story short, reverses the

spell and all those golden objects are returned to their natural state. Midas went on to share his wealth with all and become a beloved king for the ages.

Unfortunately for the Liberal government, the green slush fund is not a myth and is not so easily reversed. Greed and its dangers were the moral of the Midas story, and what happens when we become beholden to our own selfish interests. As we have here, Liberal insiders turned dubious projects into gold for other Liberal insiders. Now, as with Midas, the Liberals in charge of the gold are finding out it was not, after all, free. The chickens are coming home to roost.

● (1325)

Incidentally, there is another version of the Midas story where he must judge a musical contest. However, when the gods are not happy with his choice of winner, his ears are turned into donkey ears, and he must run around with donkey ears tucked up under his hat hoping that no one will notice them. However, I digress.

The Liberal government's financial incompetence and corruption are causing a weak investment environment. People told me this weekend that they are not investing here because of the brutal tax regime. I am not making this up. Canadians are the ones who are suffering because of it. We on this side of the House believe in fiscal responsibility and that hard-working Canadians deserve to bring home powerful paycheques. We are not here to play games with tax dollars. We believe that if we are going to put our taxpayers' money toward green initiatives, they should be green with measurable outcomes.

At the heart of the issue of the green slush fund, in my view, is public trust. Canadians trust their governments to act in their best interest, to steward public funds responsibly and to be forthright about how decisions are made. When this trust is broken, it is incredibly difficult to rebuild, except perhaps by starting fresh with a new government.

The refusal to release the green slush fund documents erodes this trust. It sends a message to the public that their government is not interested in being transparent and that accountability is a secondary or tertiary concern. When citizens no longer trust their leaders, it weakens the bonds that hold our country together, and the consequences are severe. We are seeing them on a daily basis in our streets. As the SDTC whistle-blowers testified in committee:

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



The green slush fund scandal is not just about a specific pool of money or a single government program; it is about the broader principles of transparency, accountability and trust, which are essential to a functioning democracy. When governments refuse to be transparent, they open the door to corruption and abuse of power, and when governments refuse to release documents that Parliament has requested, they betray the trust that underpins our system.

This is not the Liberals' Parliament; this is Canada's Parliament, the House of Commons, and we must not allow this to happen in Canada. As Parliamentarians, we all have a responsibility to demand better. We must hold our government accountable for its actions and ensure that transparency remains a central tenet of our democracy.

The controversy surrounding the green slush fund and the government's refusal to release key documents is a serious issue that deserves our full attention. It is not just about the management of public funds. It is about the mismanagement of the entire government. It is about the very nature of democracy itself. As Canadians, we must stand firm in our commitment to transparency and accountability. We must demand answers from our government, and we must not accept anything less than full disclosure. The future of our democracy and our trust in public institutions depends on it.

Earlier, I was asked not to call the government the NDP-Liberal government, but that is the way that my constituents and I see the government. It has been directed by the NDP's support of the Liberal Prime Minister. We have called this the NDP-Liberal government in the House for many weeks, and it has not been challenged to any success. I would argue that we should continue to use that recognition.

• (1330)

I will stand up for the people of Toronto—St. Paul's and let them know that, aside from the biggest issues we are seeing in Toronto—St. Paul's right now, which are crime and the cost of living crisis, this is all boiling down to what is happening with the mismanagement of the government. We have seen the umpteen scandals of the government, which come down to mismanagement. There was the WE scandal, the ArriveCAN scandal, the Aga Khan scandal and others, for which we have not seen proper management come forward. With the SDTC, we saw the Liberals hand money out to their friends and insiders when they appointed a hand-picked chair, who had connections to several of the companies inside that book of business.

I want to finish by saying this: We must demand answers from our government. We must not accept anything less than full disclosure. The will of Parliament must be respected. The future of our democracy depends on it.

**Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know the member is new to the House, and I want to welcome him here. What a terrible example we are showing a new member of this House by tying up the House and our government, which has been going on for six weeks now.

The other terrible example that we are showing him is this: Are the members on that side allowed to speak up? We just went through the housing accelerator program. The Leader of the Oppo-

### *Privilege*

sition has told his MPs that they cannot advocate for it. Clearly, there are some across the aisle here who advocated for it, some who did not and some who wanted to but cannot say anything about it. Again, what a terrible example we are giving.

One thing I want to hone in on is what the member for Kingston and the Islands talked about when presenting his petition, which was that the leader of the Conservative Party will not get his security clearance. He has painted himself into a corner. We know that. If any one thing is growing across this country, it is the concern about the leader not getting his security clearance.

I would ask the member opposite to please talk to his leader and give him some advice about getting his security clearance so we can move on and he can protect Canadians and his party.

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, anyone who reads the popular newspapers in the country would have seen the editorial this week that laid the blame for the seizure of Parliament directly at the feet of the government. Therefore, I take issue with trying to put the responsibility on the Conservative Party, when the popular press out there knows and sees what is actually happening here in the House of Commons.

I may be new here, but I can identify a breach of trust when I see one, and this is one we are seeing here with the Liberal government not bringing forth the documents that Parliament asked for.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened closely, and I agree with the issues of transparency, accountability and trust, which is why there is a deep concern with respect to the member who lives in a giant house in Stornoway. The Liberals have said that he will not get a security clearance. I wonder if he can get a security clearance. We saw three times when the Conservatives voted against Ukraine. Now there are serious allegations about Modi.

I would refer to the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, who I have enormous respect for, who explained why the member will not get a security clearance. He said, "security clearances involve a rigorous process that includes...checks on family members, credit and criminal checks and...questions about one's sexual partners or whether they ever used drugs." That is the Conservative member we trust the most who said that that was the reason the member living in Stornoway will not get it.

Every other leader who has ever served this country was not afraid to get it, so would the member tell us what is being hidden in that closet in Stornoway? Will he explain why that member cannot get it? Is it him, or is it his family members? There is something that stinks to high heaven. Even the member for Wellington—Halton Hills calls in the family on this. I think we need to know. Why can he not get a security clearance? Is it because we are looking at the Modi Conservatives?

*Privilege*

• (1335)

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, I also admire our member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

I would direct the member opposite to listen to what his former leader, Mr. Mulcair, said, which was that, if he was in the same position, he would do exactly the same thing. He would not want to be muzzled by—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Rising on a point of order, the hon. member for Victoria.

**Ms. Laurel Collins:** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the Conservatives are taking advice from Thomas Mulcair now.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is debate.

The hon. member for Toronto—St. Paul's.

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, we have had multiple leaders of opposition parties declare that they would also not get security clearance and be muzzled at a time when it would be deservedly better not to do so.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Far be it for me to have to stand up and defend former members, but I do believe that Mr. Mulcair did have security clearance.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is debate.

The hon. member for Shefford.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. One of the things he talked about was the cost of living. It seems to concern him a great deal. At the same time, we have concrete proposals here on the table, in the House of Commons, but nothing can move forward because of the current situation in the House. This will certainly have an impact.

In Quebec, there is no doubt about it. Farmers are telling us that the purpose of supply management is to protect Quebec's agricultural system. That is what feeds us. If we let this go and fail to ensure that everyone in the Senate and the House of Commons works together, the cost of food will be affected. We have to maintain our support for Bill C-282 to protect our supply management.

I introduced a bill that would improve seniors' financial security by increasing old age security for people aged 65 to 74, but they still have not received anything. Why not focus on these concrete solutions to help address the cost of living instead of relying on the kind of electioneering, one-time mini-measures that the government is planning?

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, as we talked about earlier, the seizure of Parliament is at the feet of the Liberal members. If they were to produce the documents, the business of Parliament could get going. We could have a full and wholesome debate on these issues.

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the member for Toronto—St. Paul's. What is astonishing to note is that this is not an isolated incident. This is a pattern

that we have seen from the government, a pattern of corruption and of ethically challenged governance.

Could the member expand further on the history of the Liberal Party and all of the challenges that it has found itself in from an ethical standpoint?

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I have a background in finance, so I see how a lot of these things manifest themselves in the economy and in our decline in GDP. When we see the dollars of the country being mismanaged, such as with SDTC, ArriveCAN and other things, these compound one another.

When we waste \$400 million on SDTC, that is money out the door. That is money that is being added to the debt side of the balance sheet of the country. At today's rates, we are paying another \$16 million a year just on that one thing alone. If we had that money back in our pockets, back in our treasury, members can imagine the good things we could do with it.

I would leave it up to people at home who are watching to think about how they could spend that \$6 million to improve their community. In St. Paul's, I think we would talk about reducing gun crime and other crime on our streets.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's remarks. The other day, his colleague said that there are two reasons Conservatives are engaging in this extended filibuster. The first was to hold the government accountable for these documents, but the second was the added benefit of not allowing any other work to be done in this place. I find that second comment rather troubling.

The NDP wants to get to the bottom of this issue concerning the SDTC documents, but I am starting to think that the best thing to do would be to vote for this motion to send this to committee, where we could call witnesses and get the actual facts about what has gone on.

Does it not seem like that would be a better option?

• (1340)

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, the easy thing to do would be for the documents to be produced. This has been ongoing since the middle of June, and here we are in the middle of November. Many people have had birthdays. We are all a year older. We could have been doing the business of Parliament, but we cannot because we have a government that is not interested in accountability and transparency. Parliament has asked for the documents. The documents must be produced.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member has any concerns about the amount of control the leader of the Conservative Party has over his members. We have heard that there are Conservative MPs who are being tracked and followed, with pictures being taken, and this is reported back to the leader. They have to say the slogans that the Conservatives want them to say. Otherwise, they will be punished, if not directly, then indirectly.

The Conservatives have a leader who continues to feel that he does not have to get the security clearance, even though it would be in the best interest of Canadians for him to do so. He continues to thumb his nose at Canadians and disrespect members of Parliament.

Does the member seriously believe that this is good leadership?

**Mr. Don Stewart:** Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the analysis of the member opposite. I would say that the only people who are following me around are my constituents, and they are asking me when this election is going to happen.

Can we have a carbon tax election? That is the only thing I am getting followed around about.

**Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do not relish the opportunity to return to this debate, but it is important because it is about a thoroughly corrupt government hiding documents that would shed light and transparency on one of the biggest spending scandals in Canada's history. In fact, this green slush fund scandal, which has been laid at the feet of the Liberal government, is far bigger than the sponsorship scandal that cratered the Chrétien government.

This is important because it is about accountability. As my colleague from Toronto—St. Paul's said, it is about accountability, transparency and the responsible use of Canadians' hard-earned dollars, all of which have been wasted by the government and Liberal insiders, who are involved in graft and corruption.

Now, before I delve more deeply into this green slush fund scandal, I did want to chat very briefly and direct some comments to the residents of Abbotsford. This is a community that has supported me for 19 years. By the time I leave this chamber, it will be probably closer to 20 years. They have been very loyal to me. I have been able to win six elections. Each time they have trusted me to represent them with integrity in this House.

I have had the opportunity during that period of time to help shape Canada's trade policy with trade agreements like the European free trade agreement with Canada, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, our trade agreement with South Korea. By the way, that also included negotiating Canada's free trade agreement with Ukraine. It is not a Liberal accomplishment. The original free trade agreement with Ukraine was negotiated under Stephen Harper.

Over those years, I was also able to deliver on a number of infrastructure priorities for my community, for example, the McCallum Road overpass, the Clearbrook Road overpass and the Mill Lake spray park. I was able to deliver on some social priorities, like the youth and gang crime prevention funding that keeps youth out of gangs and violent crime.

However, the biggest ask I have made of the government, and I ask members to take note of this, was that the government step up to the plate and help Abbotsford avoid future natural disasters. As members may recall, back in 2021, Abbotsford suffered through the worst natural disaster in British Columbia's history. The damage was in the billions of dollars. International trade was brought to a halt because goods could not come to and from the Vancouver port, because railways could not get their products to the port. Highway 1 one was completely severed. All this was because of a massive

### *Privilege*

flood in the Abbotsford area on Sumas Prairie. Thousands of livestock drowned.

With billions of dollars of economic activity at stake and with lives at stake, one would think that the government would have stepped up and helped Abbotsford. In fact, what happened is the Prime Minister, as he is wont to do, showed up in Abbotsford. It was time for a photo op. He met with all the business leaders and the political leaders in Abbotsford, and said, "I have got your back."

In fact, let me quote exactly what he said.

We'll be there for the clean up and the rebuilding after the impacts of these extreme weather events. It's really going to be important that Canadians continue to do what we do, which is being there for each other in this difficult situation and we will continue to be.

● (1345)

That is what the Prime Minister said to the residents of Abbotsford and some of the other flood-affected communities in British Columbia. He made a promise to deliver the help residents need to mitigate against future events like these.

More recently, the cities of Abbotsford and Merritt and the Town of Princeton all put in applications for the government to step up to the plate and do what the Prime Minister had promised he would do and deliver the kind of funding required to be able to build diking and pumping infrastructure that would prevent these kinds of events from happening again. The government said no. For anyone watching in Canada, especially the residents of Abbotsford, they must understand that the City of Abbotsford made an application to the federal government for funding to replace and enhance the Barrowtown Pump Station, provide additional diking and strengthen existing dikes so that a massive flood event would not happen again. The Prime Minister said no.

In case any of my Liberal colleagues over there suggest that this promise was never made, more recently, one of the members of the government approached me in a moment of candidness and said, "Ed, we really failed Abbotsford. I am so sorry. We promised to deliver support and we did not." That is at the feet of the Liberal government. It is only one in a host of scandals that have surrounded the Prime Minister and his corrupt, unethical government.

*Privilege*

That is only the tip of the iceberg. Today we are talking about the green slush fund scandal. I want to explain a bit about what that scandal entails. There is an organization called Sustainable Development Technology Canada, which was created to support small and medium-sized businesses that had innovations in the green technology space that would help Canadians become more technologically advanced and environmentally sustainable. There is merit in that. We all want to do our part for the environment. The Prime Minister asked this organization to create a new fund, let us call it the billion-dollar fund, to help young entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized businesses to perhaps expand markets, do further research, develop their products, market their products in a way that Canada could find a way of leveraging our strengths and educational expertise to deliver value for Canadians and at the same time respond to the emergent environmental challenges that our world faces.

Instead of doing what was right, which was to evaluate each application to the green slush fund on its merits, something quite different happened. The Prime Minister appointed a board to administer, evaluate and assess these applications. The directors of the board, who have a fiduciary duty, not only to SDTC, but to the taxpayers of Canada, instead of evaluating these projects on their merits and declaring conflicts of interest when they arose, enriched themselves by awarding these monies to themselves through their own companies.

Remember, this is a government organization that is supposed to administer taxpayer money. It is basically holding this money in trust for taxpayers to make sure that Canadians get value for that money.

• (1350)

Instead of the directors doing their job and discharging their fiduciary duty, they said that they had companies and that they would love to skim millions of dollars off the top to give to their own companies, which would benefit because that would increase profits in the companies. The directors would get dividends and become rich as a result. That is exactly what those directors did. They stole money from taxpayers and funnelled it to their own companies. By any account or standard, that is a scandal. It is corruption and graft of the highest order.

As I said when I spoke earlier, I fully expect that people are going to go to jail as a result of this scandal. Will it be members of this House of Commons who go to jail as a result, or members of the cabinet? We do not know. Will Liberal insiders go to jail as a result of this? We do not know.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. To the best of my knowledge, only one MP has gone to jail, and that was the former Conservative member for Peterborough.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That falls under debate again.

I would remind the hon. member that his time will expire at two o'clock.

On another point of order, the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the member for Abbotsford, who I do not often agree with, has lots of

experience. If he is concerned someone might go to jail, I think we should let him continue to speak.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That was not a point of order either, but I thank the member for the input.

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear these interruptions, because obviously my words have touched a nerve on that side. It is very clear that the NDP-Liberal coalition is really worried about where this scandal is taking it and the government.

What was the Prime Minister's response? There was a request that came from the House of Commons that the government deliver to the House of Commons, to parliamentarians, all the documents having to do with this green slush fund scandal, a Liberal scandal. The Speaker specifically directed the government to deliver those documents. Of course, what the Prime Minister did not want to do was deliver any of those documents, so he did what his government has done so regularly. He engaged in something called "redaction". That is just a fancy word for censoring documents. They took all those documents and they blacked them out, pages and pages of just black. There is nothing, no information of value, to glean from those documents. The Prime Minister then delivered those documents. The Speaker had expressly instructed that those documents be delivered in unredacted form.

What did the Prime Minister do? He thumbed his nose at the Speaker, at the Speaker's chair. The Speaker understands. He is the highest authority in Parliament. There is no appeal from his decision. When he orders the government to deliver documents, there is no appeal from that decision and it must be complied with. The Prime Minister thumbed his nose at parliamentarians and at the law. He thumbed his nose at Canadians. That is why we are in the House and why the business of the House has ground to a halt.

It has nothing to do with obstruction. It has to do with our intent to get to the bottom of this rottenness that has infected the Liberal government. The Prime Minister has presided over the most corrupt government in Canadian history. In fact, one of my colleagues on the Conservative side recently cited statistics that showed that one-third of all major scandals in Canada's complete history, from 1867 until now, had taken place under the Liberal government. It is unbelievable that this should happen in today's day and age.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** That's a lot of scandals.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Yes, it is a lot of scandal, and it is way too much scandal, because it involves billions of dollars of taxpayer money that has been recklessly spent and has been defrauded from taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, we as a country can do so much better. We as a Parliament can do so much better.

When the Prime Minister was elected, he issued mandate letters to each of his ministers, in which he demanded that they be transparent and accountable to Parliament. Now this very Prime Minister is violating the very mandates that he had purported to impose on his ministers.

It should not surprise anyone that minister after minister becomes embroiled in their own scandal, like the other Randy scandal that we have been dealing with in the House, where a minister of the Crown got involved in a shady company, pretended that he was indigenous when he is not, and then got government contracts by pretending his company was indigenous when it is not.

It has been said that a fish rots from the head down, and that is an apt description of the government. When the head of a government, the prime minister himself, is not willing to comply with ethical standards imposed by the law and is convicted on two occasions of conflicts of interest, we can expect that all those on his team will follow suit, and here we are today. We have this scandal, one of dozens of scandals.

We as a country can do better, and surely we as a Parliament can do better.

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1355)

[English]

### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to represent Halifax West, a diverse and growing riding, and I am proud to deliver investments to support the lives of people and improve our neighbourhoods. That includes the \$1.7 million in community revitalization fund money that I secured for local infrastructure projects.

With that money, my constituents are benefiting from better audio and lighting at the Bella Rose Arts Centre; an improved basketball court in Fairview; a newly renovated and accessible Fairview Resource Centre; building upgrades at the Fairview Legion; accessible doors at the Lakeside Legion; improvements to the BLT trail; extensive renovations at the Salvation Army; AV equipment at the Cedar Events Centre; an elevator and accessible washroom at Saint Mary's Cathedral Basilica Foundation; and Upper Hammonds Plains is one step closer to having their own rec and arts centre.

I am committed to continue delivering investments in my constituency.

\* \* \*

● (1400)

### VETERANS

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour Maureen Purvis, the heart and soul of No Stone Left Alone.

No Stone Left Alone was officially launched in 2011 to help ensure an enduring national respect and gratitude for the sacrifice of Canadian men and women who lost their lives in the service of peace.

Maureen's mother, Lillian, was also a veteran herself. When honouring her mom's headstone with a poppy, Maureen's daughters would ask why other headstones did not have a poppy. Thus was

### Statements by Members

born Maureen's mission to see that one day all soldiers' headstones would have a poppy placed in their honour.

This year, 11,000 students from across the country honoured more than 80,000 veterans with a poppy. Maureen and her husband Randall's dedication reminds us of the power of remembrance and the importance of staying connected to our history.

I am proud to work with my predecessor, the Hon. Laurie Hawn, to support Maureen in her selfless work.

I thank Maureen for her commitment in preserving our past and ensuring that for those who served Canada, no stone is left alone.

\* \* \*

### PAKISTAN

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in recent years, Pakistan's democracy has faced some serious challenges, including limited space for dissent, media suppression, judicial manipulation and others. As Milton is home to the largest Pakistani community in Canada, this issue affects many of my neighbours, friends and constituents back home.

Human Rights Watch has noted that the military's strong influence over politics undermines civilian authority and democratic principles. Laws are being used to silence opposition and activists and marginalize groups like women and religious minorities, and many of those are being systematically excluded.

The government's crackdown on opposition parties has led to hundreds of detentions. Under pressure or duress, some political leaders have left their parties entirely. Journalists report being intimidated, harassed and monitored for criticizing the government. Many politicians and journalists have been charged under Pakistan's vague sedition laws and dozens have been tried in military courts, which is a violation of international law.

True democracy in Pakistan and around the world requires more than just elections. It must protect basic human rights, promote inclusivity, respect journalistic independence, freedom of expression and ensure that independent institutions are free from political control. Restoring democracy depends on fostering tolerance and accountability throughout the government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### PHILIPPE BARRETTE

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to mark the passing of one of the great community builders in my region, Philippe Barrette.

*Statements by Members*

Mr. Barrette dedicated more than 30 years of his life to politics. He served as chair of the Lac-Témiscamingue school board, as mayor of the Town of Temiscaming for 20 years, and as reeve of his RCM. I would like to point out that he was a great advocate for our region, and he worked closely with my father on the Abitibi-Témiscamingue district development council.

Mr. Barrette was also involved in the forestry sector for quite some time. He was a driving force behind the creation of the Organisme de bassin versant du Témiscamingue, our watershed organization. He helped create the Parc national d'Opémican, one of Quebec's newest gems. I find it particularly moving that Mr. Barrette was honoured in his lifetime, especially when he received the regional reeves medal in 2023.

I offer my sincere condolences to Thérèse, his wife of 65 years, as well as his children, Lise, Jean and Marc, his grandchildren, and his many friends and family.

I am grateful to Philippe. I will think of him every time I go by the park named after him, in the heart of his beautiful and beloved city. Farewell, Philippe.

\* \* \*

**30TH ANNIVERSARY OF LA SOURCE D'ENTRAIDE**

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 30th anniversary of La Source d'Entraide, a beacon of hope and support in Saint-Lazare.

[*English*]

Launched in December 1993, when a small group of volunteers organized the town's first *guignolée*, or holiday food drive, it has since grown into a thrift store, food bank and resource centre, and serves as a vital resource for those in need.

At the heart of La Source d'Entraide's impact is an exceptional team. Led by Andrée-Anne Lavigne and fuelled by a remarkable team of over 150 volunteers, La Source d'Entraide embodies the very best of our community's values, and its contributions have touched countless lives over three decades.

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

One of these extraordinary volunteers is Monique Gravel, who has volunteered three days a week, every week, for the past 30 years.

On behalf of the community of Vaudreuil—Soulanges and all members of the House, I sincerely thank La Source d'Entraide and its inspiring team. I wish them success as they continue their inspiring work.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is more proof that the NDP-Liberal government is not worth the cost nor the corruption.

The department of immigration is in disarray. Canada's once-respected immigration system is another casualty of the government's failures.

The Liberals have issued a passport to a convicted human smuggler responsible for the deaths of eight migrants, despite a court order forbidding it and the previous confiscation of multiple fake Canadian passports.

The minister will say that it is just incompetence, but here is the reality of his complicity in Canada's broken immigration system. A foreign student, Zain Haq, violated the terms of his study permit, was arrested 10 times, was convicted of mischief and led a foreign-funded rebellion. Facing a deportation after costing our legal system thousands of dollars, the minister intervened to keep him here.

The government members stand up for their friends, even when those friends are convicted criminals. Canadians have seen enough. It is time for an election to restore trust, integrity and effective leadership in Canada.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**LUCIEN FRANCOEUR**

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we recently lost a great Quebec artist. Lucien Francoeur was a legendary poet, an iconic counter-culture icon, a radio host, a French teacher and, of course, a rocker with Aut'Chose. He left his mark on the collective imagination of our Quebec.

He was a proud member of the Outremont community for nearly four decades, having lived there for nearly 40 years. It was a real honour to run into him just a few weeks ago with Carol-Ann and Marie, his neighbour, on the sidewalks of Bernard Avenue, which he loved so much. His delight at seeing his federal MP wandering the streets in a leather biker jacket will remain etched in my memory.

Well known for his rock'n'roll spirit, his charisma and his authenticity, this Montreal "freak" will be sorely missed. Lucien Francoeur leaves behind not only his wife, Claudine, his sister, Carole, his brothers, Donald and Louis, and his daughter, Virginie—herself a poet and professor at the Université de Montréal—but also an entire generation of Quebecers. Farewell, Lulu.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**PROJECT RED RIBBON CAMPAIGN**

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, although progress has been made to reduce impaired driving, it remains a scourge on Canadian society. Every year, hundreds of people are killed and thousands are injured in crashes involving alcohol, cannabis and other drugs. These tragedies are entirely preventable.

That is why Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada's annual Project Red Ribbon campaign raises awareness about impaired driving, especially during the holiday season, a time when the risk is higher.

This year, the campaign honours Jacob Simmons, a young man whose life was tragically cut short in my home province of Prince Edward Island by an impaired driver. Unfortunately, Prince Edward Island also has the highest rate of impaired driving in Canada, despite consistently imposing the most severe sentences in the country.

I encourage all Islanders and Canadians to support this campaign by making responsible choices and wearing a red ribbon to honour victims and survivors of impaired driving. Together, we can create a safer future.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, only the Liberal Prime Minister, with the support of the Bloc Québécois, could manage to further break what he broke while claiming to repair it. I am talking here about Canada's entire immigration system, which was one of the best in the world. The Prime Minister destroyed it. He sacrificed it to satisfy his giant ego. Let us remember the Prime Minister's 2017 tweet that told the entire world that Canada's doors were open to everyone. People heard him.

He increased the number of permits for temporary foreign workers by 154%. He is the federal government leader who issued 211% more permits for international students. He presented a population growth plan that boosted growth by 300%. He opened Roxham Road, which pushed Quebec to the breaking point in the midst of a housing crisis, a cost-of-living crisis and a health care crisis that are hurting all Quebeckers.

In a video, he blames bad actors for his own bad decisions, but guess what? He has no one to blame but himself for the disappointed families, the worried businesses and the chaos within the Department of Immigration. The only bad actor is this Prime Minister, who is supported by the Bloc Québécois.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

[English]

#### CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has made it clear. His vision for Canada mirrors the Mike Harris “common sense revolution”, a revolution that was anything but common sense for Ontario families.

Ontario remembers that under Harris, we saw crucial programs that built stronger, healthier communities slashed without thought, infrastructure neglected and costs recklessly downloaded to municipalities. The result was soaring property taxes, skyrocketing water bills and communities left to clean up the mess.

The Leader of the Opposition now wants to take the same failed approach nationwide, cutting programs like the housing accelerator fund that Canadians rely on, weakening public services and forcing municipalities and families to bear the financial burden, resulting in property tax and water bill increases.

#### Statements by Members

Canadians deserve better. They deserve a government that invests in communities, strengthens public services and supports affordability, not one that revives the reckless Conservative policies of the past that will increase property taxes and water bills.

\* \* \*

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the status of women committee, we heard testimony from Esther, a brave young woman from Nova Scotia. She came to Parliament to share her heart-wrenching story of the murder of her aunt by a repeat offender out on conditional release. She pleaded with the committee and the government to repeal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, which have become known as the catch-and-release and hug-a-thug policies of the Liberal-NDP government.

Although the leader of the NDP claims to have ripped up his contract with the Liberals, he supports these soft-on-crime policies that have led to a 75% increase in violent crimes against women.

Every day the Prime Minister remains in power, it is because of the leader of the NDP, who voted to support the carbon tax 24 times rather than to support women.

\* \* \*

#### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is the breadbasket of Canada. We have the food, the fertilizer and the fuel the world needs. After nine years of the carbon tax coalition, something has changed. Parents are skipping meals and mothers are adding water to their children's milk. In fact, between 2019 and 2024, food bank usage in my province increased by 42.1%. The primary causes are the growing cost of housing and food inflation. By 2030, the NDP-Liberals will quadruple the carbon tax, driving up costs on everything even more.

Canadians know the Prime Minister is not worth the cost. They now see what that cost is. Across Canada, 30% of food bank users are children. In Saskatchewan, that number jumps to 39%, which means 39% are children. The “spend-DP” love the carbon tax and voted to keep it 24 times. The result is that taxes are up, costs are up, crime is up and time is up. Canadians want and deserve a carbon tax election so they can kick these champagne socialists to the curb.

*Statements by Members***HOUSING**

**Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is National Housing Day. The City of Richmond Hill in my great riding of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill received a \$31-million investment through the housing accelerator fund. I advocated for this as the city's MP because it had presented an ambitious housing plan backed by a solid record.

Mayor David West calls this funding essential to removing barriers and empowering builders to create the housing Richmond Hill needs. The Leader of the Opposition now says he would cut this vital program as part of his so-called housing plan, a plan that benefits those who could already afford to buy a home and the developers building new homes. It provides no support to municipalities to ensure builders can and will build the homes that are needed.

He has even barred his MPs from advocating for housing funds for their ridings. This is reprehensible. Our most important role as MPs is to represent our constituents and to advocate for them, but Conservative MPs are being muzzled and told not to do this.

Tomorrow, on National Housing Day, I exhort all Conservative MPs to stand up to their leader, advocate for their ridings and help their municipalities get the support they need to provide the housing their constituents need.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS**

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to recognize the incredible work of members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and to echo two of their calls to action.

I met with IBEW Local 230, which opposes the government's decision to end apprenticeship incentive and completion grants. The grants are set to expire in March, while apprentices across the country are facing rising costs. Without this support, housing and infrastructure projects could face delays, as these workers do vital work across Canada. The IBEW is also urging the federal government to increase all student bursaries, which have remained stagnant for almost 25 years.

Apprentices are the lowest-paid blue-collar workers, yet their overall value and impact on the Canadian economy are monumental. To secure Canada's future skilled labour force, we must remove barriers and invest in workers today.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***FRANCINE LALONDE**

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Francine Lalonde, after whom the Pointe-aux-Trembles lookout was recently named. Francine Lalonde was the first female vice-president of the CSN trade union federation and served as minister of the status of women under René Lévesque. From 1993 to 2011, she was the Bloc Québécois

MP for La Pointe-de-l'Île. As the foreign affairs critic, she advocated for Quebec and independence on the international stage. She also fought for Nathalie Morin, who is being held in Saudi Arabia by her husband against her will, and for Omar Khadr.

Her dedication to fighting for causes such as the right to die with dignity reflects her deeply humanist nature. I am grateful to the City of Montreal for making the Francine Lalonde lookout a symbol of her legacy to Quebec and La Pointe-de-l'Île. I am grateful to Francine Lalonde. We will never forget her.

\* \* \*

*[English]***NDP-LIBERAL COALITION**

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have an announcement. The NDP-Liberal coalition is renewing its vows after a brief two-and-a-half-month breakup. The irreconcilable differences of the NDP and the Liberals have been reconciled by their shared love of pensions and power. We all may love the warm, happily ever after, Hallmark homecoming feel that a reconciled relationship can bring, but while the coalition's renewal of vows may be restoring its fanciful hopes of retaining power, it is leaving Canadians feeling cold and rejected. While the NDP and Liberals are rekindling their old flame and catching up, Canadians are fed up and will not be fooled again.

At what is soon to be a renewal of vows ceremony, when the proverbial question is asked if anyone can show any just cause why the members of the coalition should not be lawfully reunited in marriage, we will all join with Canadians to say yes and to demand an immediate carbon tax election. Then Canadians will get to choose between a hypocritical, high-carbon, high-flying, honeymooning coalition government on the far left and a common-sense Conservative government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime.

\* \* \*

**HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND**

**Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is committed to building more homes faster through the housing accelerator fund. We have signed over 175 agreements to fast-track the construction of over 750,000 new homes across Canada. In my riding of Cambridge, we are receiving \$13.3 million to implement nine local initiatives, including the fast-tracking of municipal lands programs, which will spur over 3,600 new homes. These initiatives will also increase affordable housing by removing the barriers and streamlining the zoning process.



Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition's plan to cut the fund is a disaster. He must stop muzzling Conservative MPs who are simply doing their job, advocating for their communities. Mayors, housing experts and even 18 of his own members of Parliament oppose this plan to cut the fund. I urge him to support our Liberal plan. We need to continue to build homes faster across Canada for all Canadians.

• (1420)

**The Speaker:** Before we continue with question period, I would like to point out to members that the Chair was generous today with many members from all parties who had gone over their 60 seconds. So that we can start on time, I ask all members to be mindful and to try to get their statements within 60 seconds.

The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, violent criminals are first, victims second. That is the Prime Minister's motto. Sexual psychopaths like Paul Bernardo and Terri-Lynne McClintic get to play tennis and live comfortably in lower-security prisons while victims serve psychological life sentences. This happens because of Bill C-83. The Prime Minister says that everybody in jail should be at the lowest level of security possible.

That begs this question: Why does the Prime Minister prefer criminals over victims?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleague knows very well that is not the case. He knows that all members of the House should properly be concerned about victims of crime. I think all members of the House should also be judicious with respect to continually repeating in the House the names of Canada's most heinous criminals. We think, on this side, that is also disrespectful to victims.

Heinous criminals remain in federal prisons where they belong, and our government will always stand up for victims, including by not repeating over and over again in the House the names of heinous criminals.

\* \* \*

### TAXATION

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will say a name: Tori Stafford. One of her relatives wrote to me about what the minister said just yesterday. He said something similarly insensitive. If he were to read the note I got, I think he would be on his feet withdrawing.

The NDP-Liberals want to give a temporary tax trick, while permanently raising the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre. Here is the choice: The NDP-Liberals want to remove the GST on a few things and

Conservatives want to axe the carbon tax on everything permanently.

Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election so we can axe the tax?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is a tremendous day in the House of Commons. Why is it? It is because we are giving a tax break to Canadians so they can buy essential things like groceries, snacks, kids' clothing, kids' boots and diapers, all tax-free. It means the same, starting on December 14, for buying beer or wine to enjoy with one's friends or family. Going to a restaurant and grabbing some takeout will also be tax-free for the holidays.

The best question that the Conservative member can ask his leader is whether this time he will be unmuzzled and unleashed to actually vote for an affordability measure in the chamber.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more than the arsonist pouring more inflationary fuel on the fire. Just this past May, the Prime Minister said that if we send out more cash, "inflation goes up by exactly that amount".

Here is our common-sense solution: Axe the tax for everyone forever, which means cheaper gas, groceries, home heating and everything that is shipped. That is a Christmas present everybody wants.

Will the NDP-Liberals call an election so we can axe the tax?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to hear the member opposite talking about Christmas, because that is what we should be talking about: having a festive season. His leader, unfortunately, was talking about trickery. I thought he was still stuck in Halloween mode.

Here we are talking about the festive season and what we are going to do to make it better for Canadians. We are going to ensure that the toys they buy their children are GST-free. We are going to ensure that the Christmas tree they put up in their home to gather around is also tax-free. That is something I think every member of the chamber should get behind.

However, to date we have no idea whether Conservatives will actually support an affordability measure that helps Canadians for Christmas. Will they?

• (1425)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are not naive. After nine years with this Prime Minister in power, supported by the Bloc Québécois, food prices have risen by 35%. Gas prices are up 50%. Rents have increased by 33%. Mortgage interest rates are up 73%.

The Prime Minister knows full well that this tiny, temporary GST holiday will do nothing to address the affordability crisis. Quebecers want permanent relief, and that starts with a new Conservative government.

*Oral Questions*

When will he call an election to make life more affordable for all Canadians forever?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great day for Quebecers and Canadians.

Today, Canadians realized that the Liberal government has their backs. The number one thing that Canadians talk to us about is affordability. Today, our government is stepping up with a GST holiday that will apply to everyday items to help families in a tangible way. In the spring, we will be there to help workers.

The people watching at home today just want to know one thing. Will the Conservative leader allow his MPs to help Canadians, yes or no?

That is the question on Canadians' minds.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister, who is supported by the Bloc Québécois and kept alive by the NDP, is an expert schemer. In May, the Prime Minister asked if we could send people more benefits, an additional \$1,000 a month. As soon as we do that, inflation rises by exactly the same amount.

What is going to happen after two months is that the Prime Minister's discounts are going to disappear, and inflation is going to take everything out of Canadians' pockets. When will the Prime Minister call an election to permanently axe the tax?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do not need an election for that; we have already done it for Canadians. The answer is clear. On one side of the House, the Conservatives are filibustering. Canadians will see whether the Conservatives have the gumption to stand up for them. What we are proposing today is an affordability measure. It is a measure to help people when they need it, this Christmas, and to help workers in the spring.

Do the Conservatives have the gumption to help Canadians once and for all?

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

**The Speaker:** Before I recognize the hon. member for La Prairie, I would like to remind the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby not to speak unless he has been recognized by the Chair.

\* \* \*

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Mr. Alain Thérien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec's commissioner of the French language released his latest report yesterday.

French is still in decline and, not surprisingly, the commissioner is accusing Ottawa of contributing to that decline. Anyone who goes to any federal department in Quebec can tell right away that the language of work for the federal government is not French. Ottawa is giving bilingual jobs to unilingual anglophones. Ottawa is ignoring its obligation to translate documents into French. Obviously, Ottawa could not care less about French.

The problem is, by disrespecting French, Ottawa is disrespecting Quebec as a whole. Does the government understand that?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question. I will say that, as the new Minister of Official Languages, I am eager to work with my Quebec counterpart. Protecting and promoting our two official languages, including French, is a top priority for our government. That is why we implemented Bill C-13. We have also made historic investments in our action plan to the tune of \$4.1 billion over five years. Our priority will always be official languages, and I repeat that I am eager to work with my counterparts.

**Mr. Alain Thérien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec's French language commissioner recommends that the Government of Quebec question the Government of Canada about the effects of its activities on French language situation in the Gatineau region.

That means that Quebec has to step in and tell Ottawa to stop anglicizing Gatineau and to stop anglicizing Quebec. This government is harming the French language. It is harming its future. It is harming the Quebec nation and its identity. It is harming Quebec. When will it stop walking all over us, all over the French language, and start showing some respect for French, the only common language of Quebec?

• (1430)

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have to be honest. I am a bit offended to hear my hon. colleague say that a woman from New Brunswick, from an official language minority community, is harming the advancement of French in this country. It is quite the opposite. I am very proud to be part of a government that has made historic investments in official languages, and I will continue to work with Quebec to ensure that the necessary investments are made.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for weeks, the NDP has been calling on the government to give a break to those struggling to pay their bills. We proposed a plan to cut the GST on essentials. The Liberals bowed to pressure, but, as usual, they are only working in half measures. We won on groceries and children's clothing, but for only two months. Those needs will not go away in February.

Do the Liberals understand that this help needs to be expanded and made permanent for families who are struggling?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP is waking up. It is Christmas time, and the NDP is waking up. We have long understood that the number one issue for Canadians is affordability. That is why, today, we are introducing a flagship measure, one that will help families. We are doing this because, at Christmas time, people need a helping hand. They need a little extra for the kids, for groceries and for eating out.

On this side of the House, Liberal MPs will always fight for affordability, will always fight for families, and will always be there to say yes to Canadians in their time of need.

[English]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians need relief. While CEOs are raking in billions of dollars in profits, families are getting gouged on things like their heating and cellphone bills, and at the grocery store.

The NDP has called on the Liberals to remove the GST on life's essentials to give Canadians a break. Instead the government responded with a partial version of what the NDP proposed. Liberals let people down and Conservatives want cuts.

Why will the Liberals not give Canadians a real break by permanently removing the GST on life's essentials?

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is tax-free on essential goods for the holidays. That is great news for Canadians. There are also supports for Canadian workers, 18 million of whom will get cash back, which is more good news for Canadians. On this side of the House, we are fighting for affordability measures. On the other side of the House, what do we have? We have partisan games.

How can members opposite claim to speak for Canadians when they cannot even speak for themselves?

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians should hide their wallet. The Liberal-NDP costly coalition is back to break the bank. After doubling housing costs, doubling the national debt and doubling food bank usage, it wants to quadruple the carbon tax scam. The leader of the NDP is too weak, too selfish and too beholden to Liberal interests to fight for the people. That is why he is willing to keep the corrupt Liberal government in power; he has pension tension.

Why not give Canadians real relief by calling a carbon tax election now so common-sense Conservatives can axe the tax for good?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is giving a tax break to all Canadians. That means there is not going to be GST on essential goods, everyday goods like groceries, toys for the holidays and kids' clothing. We know that Canadians are looking forward to this tax break. We know that it is being done responsibly. It will be done for two months.

The question on everybody's mind is whether the Conservative member has checked with his leader to see whether the member will be able to vote for a tax break, or maybe the leader will not let him do that.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, instead of a temporary inflationary pause, why do we not give Canadians a real break and call a carbon tax election now so Canadians can send the costly coalition on a permanent holiday. A common-sense Conservative government will axe the tax on gas, groceries and home heating and bring home lower prices and powerful paycheques.

Let us do it; let us call a carbon tax election so common-sense Conservatives can axe the tax on everything for everyone for good.

• (1435)

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week the media reported that the Conservative leader is preventing members of Parliament in the Conservative Party from advocating for their citizens and for housing investments.

The Liberal government is there for Canadians. We are instituting a tax holiday, a tax break for Canadians when they need it most.

The question on everybody's mind is whether Conservative members are going to be allowed to represent their communities, to represent vulnerable Canadians and to vote in favour of a tax break, or are they going to need to follow their Conservative leader?

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

**The Speaker:** I will ask members again not to take the floor when they are not recognized. I have asked the member for South Shore—St. Margarets to do that on some occasions this week, and I will also ask the member for Calgary Signal Hill to please do the same. We all want to hear the question from the hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South, who has the floor.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians do not have to wonder anymore. The cost of living crisis coalition never really left us. Just a few months ago, though, the NDP leader said, “the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people”. I could not agree more. However, today he flip-flopped; he announced his full confidence in the Liberal Prime Minister.

If the coalition is so sure of itself and its poverty-inducing agenda, why not go to Canadians and call a carbon tax election?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me get this straight. The Conservative members of Parliament talk about reducing poverty and talk about helping Canadians through affordability challenges, but when we have a real thing on the table that would cut the GST on essential goods, they have to listen to their leader and oppose cutting taxes for Canadians.

This is just par for the course for the Conservatives. We know that the guy who supposedly fights for freedom of speech does not want his MPs to speak freely. The real question is this: Will he allow them to vote freely for Canadians and this tax cut?

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, how can Canadians be reasonably expected to see that the costly coalition that got us into this economic quagmire could possibly see a way out? The Prime Minister has increased food costs by 35%. He has increased the cost of gasoline by over 50%. He has increased the cost of mortgages and housing by over 70%.

I have a simple question: When will the Prime Minister allow for real chance, real opportunity and real hope by calling a carbon tax election?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the GST would be removed on essential goods for the next couple of months, and the Conservatives want to vote against it. As we go into the holidays and families are thinking about buying toys and getting Christmas trees, we are offering removing the GST on those very things.

The Conservatives say, “No, do not stand up for Canadians. Do not help them through these tough times.” That is par for the course and their pattern of behaviour. When I look in the dictionary, that starts with an “H” and ends with “ypocrisy”.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are cutting the GST from beer and wine during the holiday season in the hope that people will forget how bad they are, but Canada's food banks do not have time to celebrate. This Liberal government's priorities are all about pandering for votes.

Does the Liberal government understand that Canadians want tax cuts all the time, not just during the holidays?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are offering a tax holiday on groceries, children's toys and children's clothing. That means that starting on December 14, going to a restaurant and having a drink in a glass or even a bottle with family or friends will be tax-free.

Did the Conservative member who rose today check with the Conservative leader to see if he is allowed to vote in favour of this measure?

• (1440)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, child poverty is up in 97% of ridings across the country. One in five children are now living in poverty under this Liberal government.

Instead of inviting us out for “a glass of beer, my dear”, as the song goes, here is a common-sense solution to help families: axe the carbon tax for everyone, permanently. That would make it less expensive to pay for gas, groceries and heating during our Liberal winters.

Will the Prime Minister call an election immediately?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what we will call for is a tax break through the winter and the holidays for Canadians across the country. I had the chance this morning to talk with a dad in my riding, Chris, who told me how much this would save him on diapers and the basics that families need day in and day out. We are moving forward with a tax holiday to support Canadians in these expensive times. I think the question members should be asking is this: Will the Conservative leader allow them to support this for Canadians?

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, at a time when we are calling on the federal government to increase staffing levels at the border in preparation for a possible wave of migration, what a shock it was to learn that Ottawa is reducing its hours of service at border crossings.

On Tuesday, the border services officers' union expressed concern, too. It said: “At a time when all eyes are on the border...it is beyond shortsighted for the Agency to proceed with this reduction of service. To claim that the border is more secure with ports closed more often is like saying that up is down — it's nonsense”.

What does the Minister of Public Safety have to say to concerned border services officers?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been working with the U.S. authorities for months, over a year, in fact, to find the best way to harmonize hours of service at certain secondary border crossings.

This will do two things. In the event that someone shows up on the Canadian side of the border and is not admissible to Canada, it will allow us to send them back to a U.S. customs office that will actually be open. It will also allow the government to reassign border services officers to other border crossings as needed.

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, reducing border crossing hours sends a pretty bad message to everyone but smugglers. It sends the message that the border could be even less secure than it is today.

The message Ottawa should be sending is that it will deploy resources to support the officers and the RCMP. Hunting down human smugglers along the world's longest land border is a game of cat and mouse, and when the cat is away, the mice will play.

When it has gotten to the point that Quebec is sending the Sûreté du Québec to deal with the border in the federal government's stead, is that really a good time to cut back services at border crossings?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, now is the time to support our law enforcement agencies, to support the RCMP, to support border services, and to work with law enforcement authorities in the province of Quebec, as we always do.

This is a joint effort between Canadian law enforcement and our American partners. This is exactly what our government has done from the beginning. We reversed the Conservatives' cuts to the RCMP and border services, and we will continue to invest more to ensure that they have the resources they need to do their important work.

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, people who live near the border in Salaberry—Suroît and Châteauguay—Lacolle all know that smugglers are already one step ahead of the federal government. With the return of Donald Trump, people are even more worried. Cutting the CBSA's hours of service does nothing to reassure the public.

At a time when the RCMP should be stepping up its efforts and we are asking Ottawa to support those efforts, does the government realize how contradictory and disturbing it is to learn that the CBSA is reducing its services?

● (1445)

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what is not contradictory is working with our American partners, as we always do, and supporting the RCMP and the people who work at the CBSA, so they can do the work Canadians expect them to do. That is exactly what we are doing.

I can assure my colleague that reducing the hours of service at certain border crossings is obviously being done in collaboration with the U.S. All staff will stay in the regions, for example in Quebec, to help with emergencies at other border crossings, as needed.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP leader said, “the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for [Canadians]”, but it only took him two months to renege on his word, reaffirm his commitment to the

Prime Minister and his costly coalition and keep Canadians in carbon tax hell.

Today, he reaffirmed that he is committed to and shows confidence in the Prime Minister while he quadruples the carbon tax on farmers, food and fuel. How about a common-sense solution? Let us axe carbon tax on everything for everyone forever.

Will the Prime Minister give real relief to Canadians and call a carbon tax election?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are delivering real relief for Canadians. It is the Conservatives who are trying to make life more expensive when they have an opportunity to help Canadians with the high cost of living. This is unsurprising, because it is from the same party whose leader was delivering donuts to people out here who were protesting, yet this morning had protesters removed by police from his home. The guy who cares about freedom of speech certainly does not like it when people oppose his views.

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. member for Foothills.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is not good when protesters go to anyone's house, not just the Leader of the Opposition's.

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

I am going to ask the hon. member for Foothills to start again.

● (1450)

**Mr. John Barlow:** Mr. Speaker, at a time when two million Canadians are forced to go to a food bank in a single month, when food inflation in Canada is 36% higher than it is in the United States and when 25% of children are going to school hungry, the House leader of the Liberal government is making this a partisan thing about protesters at the leader's house.

The Liberals should be disgusted that protesters are going to any house of any member of Parliament. I hope she will stand up and apologize for those comments.

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am really glad to hear that from my hon. colleague, because no protester should be in front of anyone's house. Except that when the convoy was here, the Conservatives cheered it on in front of so many residents in Ottawa and their homes. They cheered on people who prevented them from going to the hospital, who prevented them from going to the grocery store and who prevented ambulances from arriving at their homes. There is a double standard on that side of the House and we cannot stand for that.

*Oral Questions***CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, despite the foolishness that has been going on, there is a crisis that exists in Canada—

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

**The Speaker:** I ask the member for St. Albert—Edmonton to please control himself in this place or take himself outside of this room.

Everyone, relax.

The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester will start again.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, despite the messy split in September, it looks like Canada's woke NDP-Liberal power couple has gotten back together, and they are coming for Canadians' hard-earned money. Canadians are not fooled by this temporary tax trickery. Nova Scotians are using food banks 53% more now than five years ago. Almost 40,000 Nova Scotians are visiting food banks every month, and 12,000 of them are children. Here is a better and common-sense solution: axe the carbon tax on everything for everyone forever so we get cheaper gas, groceries, home heating and everything that is shipped.

Will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if that member and any member of the Conservative Party of Canada actually cared about affordability for Canadians, they would support the measure to remove the GST on essential items that we are putting forward. It is going to help Canadians over the coming months get through these challenging times.

This is a pattern of behaviour. They say one thing; they do another, whether that is with regard to supporting Canadians through affordability challenges, muzzling their members of Parliament who try to speak up on behalf of their constituents or removing protesters who do not agree with them by using the police. They are completely disrespectful to Canadians.

\*\*\*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this morning, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu, the former Minister Gallant and Hamas leader Deif for crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Palestinian and Israeli civilians have faced horrific violence at the hands of the Netanyahu government and Hamas. Unlike many other ICC countries, the Prime Minister has not been clear and Canadians deserve an answer.

Will the government enforce these arrest warrants and ensure that the victims of these war crimes see the justice they deserve?

• (1455)

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we respect the independence of the International Criminal Court. We will

abide by all the regulations and rulings of the International Criminal Court. That is just who we are as Canadians.

Let me be clear that all parties must abide by international law. We also know that an immediate ceasefire is urgently needed. Hostages must be released. Hamas must lay down its arms. More aid must get into Gaza. The violence must stop.

\*\*\*

**GROCERY INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we may have another price-fixing scandal in Canada. This time it is not bread, but potatoes.

Allegedly, two of Canada's big food companies have been colluding together to jack up the price of frozen potato products. The cost of these products have shot up by 40% over the last two years. CEOs jack up the prices and gouge Canadians.

The Liberals are letting families down, while Conservatives cater to these CEOs who fund their election campaigns.

Will the Liberals investigate this potential price-fixing french-fry-gate by greedy CEOs?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the NDP on that. In fact, it was a Liberal government that reformed the Competition Act. Now, thanks to our government, consumers at home know that we are going to have their backs. We have given new powers to the competition commissioner to investigate. We expect him to use all his power and to make sure that we restore competition in the country every single time.

\*\*\*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know the last couple of years have been particularly challenging and although inflation is continuing to come down, households have not particularly started to feel that. That is why we introduced very important measures today to provide relief to Canadians.

It is yet to be seen whether or not the Conservative leader will allow his MPs to vote in favour of what is so important for their constituents. We know he prevented them from talking about housing money, and he also continually muzzles them from representing their communities.

I wonder if the President of the Treasury Board can help inform the Conservatives why it is so important to vote in favour of this legislation.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, diapers, groceries, prepared meals and essential goods, what do these things have in common? They are all tax-free for the holidays. That is great news for Canadians, as well as the cashback coming for 18 million Canadian workers.

On the other side of the House, what do we get? Filibustering, obstructing, playing partisan games. It is time for the Conservatives to get serious about supporting Canadians.

On this side of the House, every day is a great day to fight for Canadians.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are trying to hide from Canadians that the company owned by the disgraced Liberal from Edmonton Centre is still eligible to get government contracts.

The Prime Minister may believe that his former and failed employment minister is the victim, but the real victims, of course, are indigenous people and the people who were defrauded by his company.

To this point, the Prime Minister has failed to ban Global Health Imports from bidding on contracts with the Government of Canada. Will he stand up and ban it today?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear in the House that the company was not on the list and that indigenous procurement is for indigenous people.

This is an attempt by the Conservative members of Parliament to distract from what is really good news for Canadians today, the fact that we are going to give a break on the GST for essential goods over the coming months and we are going to support 18.6 million Canadians with a Canada working benefit.

The question that remains is this. Will the Leader of the Opposition allow Conservative MPs to vote for it?

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me get this straight. The disgraced former minister, the member for Edmonton Centre, a Liberal, started a pandemic-profiteering business, and that business lied about being indigenous to get government contracts. They are under investigation by the Edmonton Police Service for fraud, and this Liberal government is still allowing them to bid on government contracts.

Now they are saying that they are not on the list for approved indigenous-owned businesses, but what about for any other type of contract? Why is this Prime Minister determined to protect Liberal insiders, and why will he not ban his disgraced former minister from having these contracts?

• (1500)

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said, that company is not on the list for indigenous procurement.

However, yet again, what we see from the Conservatives opposite is that they do not want to talk about the important affordability measures that we have presented today. They do not want to talk about the fact that they are going to vote against and oppose a GST break for millions of Canadians when it comes to essential goods. They do not want to talk about the fact that they are going to oppose a \$250 benefit for working Canadians. They are just not there for Canadians.

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government says that it supports women's equality and reconciliation, but its actions show anything but.

This Prime Minister was very quick to fire the first female indigenous minister of justice because she was not willing to lie for him, yet it took him weeks to fire a minister of employment, a white male, who faked his indigenous identity. Why was it so easy to fire one but not the other?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what is so encouraging, and I would say that it is not often that I find something encouraging from the Conservative Party, but what is encouraging to hear is their staunch support for indigenous procurement. I agree with the Conservative Party that we have to work hard to make sure that indigenous businesses are the ones that actually profit from indigenous priorities. I want to thank the Conservative Party for keeping their eye on making sure that this country ensures indigenous economic success. We will do that together.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is not real reconciliation. It took weeks for this Prime Minister to fire the minister of employment, or to allow him to resign. Real reconciliation, according to the former minister of justice, would have been to fire that minister of employment immediately. She says that she is left to “watch white people play ancestry wheel of fortune.” She says that it is “shameful” and it is “destructive”.

Why did it take the Prime Minister so long to fire the minister of employment when it was so easy to fire a real female indigenous minister?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is great to see so many questions on indigenous priorities in this House. I want to thank the member opposite and hope that she will work with her party to ensure the safe passage of Bill C-61, a clean drinking water act for first nations, which was co-developed with first nations in this country. There are many opportunities for the party opposite to support indigenous priorities, and that is certainly one of them.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]*

## CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to return to the matter of fraud at the Canada Revenue Agency, yesterday, in committee, the minister went on the attack, not against fraudsters, but against whistle-blowers. It makes no sense. She joined in the CRA's witch hunt against its employees.

Without them, we would never have known that taxpayers were robbed of more than \$100 million this year. Without them, we would never have known that the CRA had concealed 30,000 privacy breaches from the Privacy Commissioner. Without them, we would never have known anything, because the CRA is covering it up.

Why is the Minister of National Revenue joining the attack on whistle-blowers?

*[English]*

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are situations that must be denounced. I have to say that our minister and our government have supported Bill C-290, that party's private member's bill. However, there are situations where we are not able to talk about issues, specifically with respect to section 241 of the Income Tax Act, but there are obligations and there are ways in which we are able to have whistle-blowers report what they need to within the CRA, and we are constantly working on these issues.

● (1505)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we need whistle-blowers because this government never fixes anything unless its problems make headlines.

Whistle-blowers are the reason that we are talking about the fraud that the CRA covers up whenever it happens. Whistle-blowers are the reason that we know about the extent of foreign interference. Whistle-blowers are the ones who brought about a crackdown on sexual misconduct in the military after the minister swept it under the carpet. The problem is not whistle-blowers. The problem is Liberals who conceal information. Should we be surprised? It is in their DNA.

Will the minister stop attacking whistle-blowers and start attacking the fraudsters instead?

*[English]*

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the challenge here is whistle-blowers. As I said earlier, there are ways within the CRA that people are able to report whatever misconduct they see. I think the question really is how we protect whistle-blowers. We have obviously supported Bill C-290 from the Bloc Québécois. I wonder if we can support the Conservative Party and its whistle-blower situation going on right now.

\* \* \*

## ETHICS

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the disgraced Liberal MP for Edmonton Centre resigned from cabinet, but as of today, his shady company GHI is still eligible to bid on government contracts, despite the member admitting he lied about his heritage to get dollars earmarked for indigenous businesses in the past. That is on top of being embroiled in conflicts of interest and even allegations of being connected with international drug busts. The government House leader still has not made clear whether or not that company has been banned from bidding on contracts with the government.

Can she give a straight answer here today?

**Mr. Charles Sousa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what is clear is the company in question was not listed as an indigenous company. What is clear is that the company never received a contract as an indigenous company. We have taken many steps going forward to provide for modernization of procurement, transparency and openness. We are working toward supporting Canadians and supporting the indigenous community that require our support, and we will be there for them all the way through.

**Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what do five Range Rovers, two Porsche Cayennes, a post office box co-owned by a suspected drug trafficker, a warehouse full of medical supplies destroyed by arson, millions of dollars in fraud and a company falsely claiming to be indigenous all have in common? The Liberal member for Edmonton Centre. The Prime Minister continues to stand by his MP. He sees nothing wrong with these scandals.

It begs the question: If all this corruption and scandal is not enough to fire a minister, how corrupt do they need to be to get fired by the Prime Minister?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that question has been answered. One question I have is how far the Conservatives are going to go. The Conservative leader wants to take away \$10 a day child care from Canadian mothers. He wants to take away dental care subsidies from our seniors. He wants to take away 750,000 new construction builds from Canadians who want to buy their first home. Now the newest policy of the Conservative leader is to take away the tax break that the Liberal government announced today for all Canadians.

When is it going to end? The Conservative leader would make life more expensive.



### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now that the Prime Minister's minister in charge of Jasper's recovery has resigned under a cloud of suspicion, who is going to oversee the rebuilding of this beautiful community? Will it be the radical environment minister, who ignored warnings for years from forestry experts that the dead forest around Jasper was a powder keg waiting to blow?

Will the Prime Minister assure Canadians he will not put the radical minister, who failed the community by allowing it to burn in the first place, in charge of Jasper and towns like it again?

• (1510)

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member should be ashamed of the previous government's record in the protection of Jasper. How much did it invest in 2011 for fire protection in Jasper? Zero. How much did it invest in 2012? Zero. How much did it invest in 2013? Zero. 2014? Zero. 2015? Zero.

We have invested more than \$60 million in fire prevention in Jasper. The previous government did absolutely nothing.

\* \* \*

### TAXATION

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Leader of the Opposition silences and strong-arms his caucus into being his mouthpiece in their communities, our government is listening to Canadians. What are our neighbours telling me? They have told me that, while inflation is easing, life can still be challenging.

They have also told me that our government has been there to support them through difficult times, but they are worried about the added costs of the upcoming holiday season. Could the Minister of Justice and Attorney General please tell us what our government is doing to put more money in the pockets of Canadians?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are starting off the new year on the right foot. Today we announced that we are giving all Canadians a tax break by exempting the GST and HST on things Canadians care about so that they can buy essentials, such as groceries, snacks and kids' clothing, tax-free. We are also introducing the working Canadians rebate, which will put \$250 directly back into the pockets of working Canadians, 18 million-plus working Canadians.

The question for this chamber is this: Will the members opposite have the courage to stand up to their leader, to free themselves from this gag order he has imposed upon them and to come out in favour of the tax break?

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

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby for the second time today to please not take the floor when not recognized by the Chair.

[*Translation*]

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

### Oral Questions

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the media, a woman from Montreal's north shore had her car stolen twice. To add insult to injury, her car insurance increased to more than \$7,000 a year, and she had to install a TAG tracking system on her vehicles or her insurance application would be rejected. Once again, victims are paying for this government's incompetence. The Prime Minister's inaction on Canadians' safety says a lot more than his long empty speeches do.

When will he wake up?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like all members of the House, we are concerned when we hear stories like that. That is precisely why we are working with law enforcement, for example Montreal's SPVM, the Sûreté du Québec and other police forces in Quebec and the other provinces. We have transferred hundreds of millions of dollars to support this important work. We increased RCMP funding and staffing.

We will keep fighting against what my colleague just described, in other words, a totally unacceptable situation.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, maybe the minister needs more information, so let me tell him that it was reported this morning that, for the second time in 24 hours, car thieves deliberately drove straight at police officers who were trying to intercept them in the Côte-des-Neiges neighbourhood of Montreal.

One of the three criminals in this case, Abdorrahman Tayeb Ali, was already awaiting trial on three separate cases of auto theft, being an accessory after the fact, forcible confinement, assault with a weapon, robbery, break and enter, and uttering death threats.

How many women or police officers need to be assaulted before the Prime Minister brings back real criminal justice?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just to point out the facts, with the investments we have just made and the fact that we targeted border services, what we have seen in Quebec is a 41% decrease in auto thefts. What the member opposite said is important because it touches on the administration of justice at the provincial level by the Government of Quebec.

Are there enough police officers? Are there enough justices of the peace with adequate legal training? Is there enough space in prisons?

*Oral Questions*

These would be good questions to ask Mr. Legault.

• (1515)

[English]

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the NDP-Liberals are not worth the cost, crime or corruption. Last week, I attended a town hall on crime in Summerford, Notre Dame Bay, where the RCMP was also present. Residents told the RCMP it has gotten so bad that they are sleeping with guns next to their beds. The RCMP basically said that its hands are tied by the Liberal soft-on-crime justice system.

Will the Prime Minister call an election and let the people have their say on whether his crime record is good or bad?

**Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, concerns about community safety are concerns that touch all of us in every community. What I would say with respect to combating gun violence in our communities right around this country is that we should look at the Liberal record. What we have done is that we have put a ban on assault rifles. What we have done is that we have put a freeze on handguns. Most importantly, we are investing in our borders to interdict the traffic of arms between different countries, particularly on our southern border. That is important for keeping Canadians safe. That was in place of investments that had been cut by the previous government.

That is the Liberal record. I hope that the Conservatives will get behind basic community safety.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### HOUSING

**Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week, we announced major investments to speed up housing construction in Quebec. The Conservative leader has had a rough couple of weeks because of the outrage caused by his plan to scrap this agreement with Quebec.

Can the minister tell us more about our government's initiatives to build more housing for Quebecers?

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, and I am just as concerned as she is. We know that the devil is in the details. The Conservatives' secret agenda involves cutting funding for the construction of social and affordable housing. It involves cancelling the new \$92-million initiative for Quebec. It involves cutting support for municipalities. The Conservative leader muzzled his members who want to fight for their communities.

Will the Conservatives vote in favour of tax breaks? Today is the day that they can stand up for the interests of Canadians and Quebecers.

[English]

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, rents in Edmonton are rising faster than almost anywhere else in the country. A one-bedroom apartment costs 16% more than it did last year. Working people cannot keep up. These sky-high rents are being caused by greedy corporate landlords who own almost half of all purpose-built rentals, but the Liberals refuse to stand up to them. They have let Canadians down while the Conservatives work to get these CEOs even more.

Why are the Liberals standing by while corporate landlords buy up affordable homes?

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course, it is incumbent on all levels of government to do whatever they can to help all Canadians, including renters. On our side, what have we done? We have lifted the GST costs on the construction of purpose-built rentals and put forward, for the first time in Canadian history, a renter's bill of rights to support renters. We also see the need for more supply. Unfortunately, we have not heard about that from the NDP. That is why we have cooperated with builders across the country. There is more to do, and we will do that work.

I know that the Conservatives would cut every single one of these initiatives. That much is clear.

\* \* \*

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, on November 15, the peace train pulled out of Vancouver station; a cross-country trip raising awareness for peace, disarmament and peacekeeping has now arrived in Ottawa. It asks parliamentarians to press the government: Will we re-establish a centre for excellence for peace and justice where the Pearson peace centre used to be? Will we increase our involvement as a country in peacekeeping and pressing for nuclear disarmament. For God's sake, will we give peace a chance?

**Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her strong advocacy. Canada has long been a proud and significant contributor to United Nations peace operations. Most recently, we pledged \$85 million over three years in continued support of global peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We have also extended and expanded the Elsie initiative to increase the participation of uniformed women in peacekeeping operations. We have renewed our commitment to providing tactical airlift support to UN peace operations, and we are exploring opportunities for a Canadian contribution of a quick reaction force.

It has been a great source of pride for all Canadians that the Canadian Armed Forces has always answered the call for peacekeeping operations. That is why—

• (1520)

**The Speaker:** Question period comes to an end.

I see a number of people on their feet; I assume they are rising for points of order.

\* \* \*

## POINTS OF ORDER

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the past, the Chair has found that words used in this place that can be seen to incite violence are deemed to be unparliamentary. I want to provide context to the Chair. There was a protest that took place at the home of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General. When that occurred, I said, “Protest government buildings and MP offices - absolutely. But the intended target of this demonstration is a family home. This time they stayed outside, but we shouldn’t wait until masked thugs are emboldened. This scene is not acceptable.”

It is never acceptable for people to attend the family homes, the residences of members of Parliament, where their spouses, partners and children live.

Today, during question period, the government House leader used language that could be seen to incite this type of activity, specifically targeting the Leader of the Opposition.

I would ask that you counsel the government House leader to withdraw her comments, to apologize and to condemn the protest that occurred at the home of the Leader of the Opposition, where his wife and children are.

**The Speaker:** I see that the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is rising on her feet on the same point of order.

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I actually welcome those comments from the member opposite. As I said in the second response, I agree with the Conservatives that members of Parliament’s homes should not be protested. I said that all Canadians’ homes should not be protested. I am glad that we have found agreement in this place because I think we can all agree that no one should have to—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

I hate to interrupt the hon. member, but I am going to ask the hon. member for Grande Prairie—Mackenzie to please not take the floor.

A member raised a point of order. Another member was responding. It is important that we hear what the hon. member says. I do not know if the government House leader has anything to finish from before I cut her off.

If the hon. government House leader has nothing else to add, I thank members on this point, and I will review this matter.

The hon. member for Oakville North—Burlington is rising on a point of order.

## Routine Proceedings

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Mr. Speaker, during question period, the member for St. Albert—Edmonton called you a political hack. The disrespect that they—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

As I just asked members to do before, please listen carefully to points of order and to the responses.

The hon. member for Oakville North—Burlington.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Mr. Speaker, I obviously hit a nerve. The disrespect that the party opposite has shown to Parliament and to the office of the Speaker is unparliamentary. It is disturbing, and it gets worse by the day.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask if you could ask him to apologize and withdraw the unparliamentary comment he made in the House.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for raising this point; as with the other point, I will take this under advisement.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1525)

[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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

**The Speaker:** It being 3:25 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the subamendment to the motion to concur in the third report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Call in the members.

• (1535)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 888)

### YEAS

#### Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bibea
Bittle	Blair
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Brière
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin

*Routine Proceedings*

Damoff	Dhaliwal	Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Dhillon	Diab	Block	Boulerice
Dong	Drouin	Bragdon	Brassard
Dubourg	Duclos	Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Duguid	Dzerowicz	Calkins	Cannings
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Caputo	Carrie
Erskine-Smith	Fisher	Chabot	Chambers
Fonseca	Fortier	Champoux	Chong
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Freeland	Fry	Dalton	Dance
Gaheer	Gainey	Dancho	Davidson
Gerretsen	Gould	Davies	DeBellefeuille
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Deltell	d'Entremont
Hanley	Hardie	Desbiens	Desilets
Hepfner	Holland	Desjarlais	Doherty
Housefather	Hussen	Dowdall	Dreeshen
Hutchings	Iacono	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Ilen	Jaczek	Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Jones	Jowhari	Falk (Provencher)	Ferreri
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Fortin	Gallant
Khalid	Khera	Garon	Garrison
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk	Gaudreau	Gazan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Généreux	Genuis
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Gill	Gladu
Lattanzio	Lauzon	Godin	Goodridge
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Gourde	Gray
Lightbound	Long	Green	Hallan
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	Hoback	Hughes
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Idlout	Jeneroux
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Jivani	Johns
Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)	Julian	Kelly
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)	Khanna	Kitchen
McGuinty	McKay	Kniec	Kram
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod	Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Mendès	Mendicino	Kusie	Kwan
Miao	Miller	Lake	Lantsman
Morrissey	Murray	Larouche	Lawrence
Naqvi	Ng	Lehoux	Lemire
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Oliphant	O'Regan	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski	Lloyd	Lobb
Qualtrough	Robillard	MacGregor	Maguire
Rodriguez	Rogers	Majumdar	Martel
Romanado	Rota	Masse	Mathysen
Sahota	Sajjan	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
Saks	Samson	McLean	McPherson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia	Melillo	Michaud
Schiefke	Serré	Moore	Morantz
Sgro	Shanahan	Morrice	Morrison
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Motz	Muys
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sorbara	Nater	Normandin
Sousa	Sudds	Patzer	Paul-Hus
Tassi	Taylor Roy	Pauzé	Perkins
Thompson	Trudeau	Perron	Plamondon
Turnbull	Valdez	Poilievre	Rayes
Van Bynen	van Koeverden	Redekopp	Reid
Vandal	Vandenbeld	Rempel Garner	Richards
Virani	Weiler	Roberts	Rood
Wilkinson	Yip	Ruff	Sauvé
Zahid	Zuberi — 152	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

**NAYS**

## Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan

Viersen  
 Villemure  
 Wagantall  
 Waugh  
 Williams  
 Zarrillo

Vignola  
 Vis  
 Warkentin  
 Webber  
 Williamson  
 Zimmer— 176

### PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment to the amendment lost.

[*English*]

The next question is on the amendment.

The chief government whip.

**Hon. Ruby Sahota:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement amongst the parties to apply the results from the previous vote to this one, with Liberal members voting against.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply the vote and will be voting yea.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

[*English*]

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP also agrees to apply the vote, and we will be voting nay.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Rayes:** Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote, and I will be voting no.

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and will be voting against.

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

(*Division No. 889*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Aboulttaif  
 Albas  
 Arnold  
 Barlow  
 Barsalou-Duval  
 Bergeron  
 Bérubé  
 Blanchette-Joncas  
 Bragdon  
 Brock  
 Calkins  
 Carrie  
 Chambers  
 Chong  
 Dalton  
 Davidson  
 Deltell  
 Desbiens  
 Doherty  
 Dreeshen  
 Ellis  
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)

Aitchison  
 Allison  
 Baldinelli  
 Barrett  
 Beaulieu  
 Berthold  
 Bezan  
 Block  
 Brassard  
 Brunelle-Duceppe  
 Caputo  
 Chabot  
 Champoux  
 Cooper  
 Dancho  
 DeBellefeuille  
 d'Entremont  
 Desilets  
 Dowdall  
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
 Epp  
 Falk (Provencher)

Ferreri  
 Gallant  
 Gaudreau  
 Genuis  
 Gladu  
 Goodridge  
 Gray  
 Hoback  
 Jivani  
 Khanna  
 Kmiec  
 Kramp-Neuman  
 Kusie  
 Lantsman  
 Lawrence  
 Lemire  
 Lewis (Essex)  
 Liepert  
 Lobb  
 Majumdar  
 Mazier  
 McLean  
 Michaud  
 Morantz  
 Motz  
 Nater  
 Patzer  
 Pauzé  
 Perron  
 Poilievre  
 Reid  
 Richards  
 Rood  
 Sauvé  
 Scheer  
 Seeback  
 Shipley  
 Sinclair-Desgagné  
 Soroka  
 Ste-Marie  
 Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)  
 Stubbs  
 Therrien  
 Tochor  
 Trudel  
 Van Popta  
 Vidal  
 Viersen  
 Villemure  
 Wagantall  
 Waugh  
 Williams  
 Zimmer— 149

### Routine Proceedings

Fortin  
 Garon  
 Généreux  
 Gill  
 Godin  
 Gourde  
 Hallan  
 Jeneroux  
 Kelly  
 Kitchen  
 Kram  
 Kurek  
 Lake  
 Larouche  
 Lehoux  
 Leslie  
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
 Lloyd  
 Maguire  
 Martel  
 McCauley (Edmonton West)  
 Melillo  
 Moore  
 Morrison  
 Muys  
 Normandin  
 Paul-Hus  
 Perkins  
 Plamondon  
 Redekopp  
 Rempel Garner  
 Roberts  
 Ruff  
 Savard-Tremblay  
 Schmale  
 Shields  
 Simard  
 Small  
 Steinley  
 Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)  
 Strahl  
 Thériault  
 Thomas  
 Tolmie  
 Uppal  
 Vecchio  
 Vien  
 Vignola  
 Vis  
 Warkentin  
 Webber  
 Williamson

### NAYS

#### Members

Ali  
 Anandasangaree  
 Arseneault  
 Ashton  
 Bachrach  
 Bains  
 Barron  
 Beech  
 Bibeau  
 Blair  
 Blois  
 Boulерice  
 Brière  
 Carr  
 Chagger  
 Champagne

*Routine Proceedings*

Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Dance
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathyssen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Rayes	Robillard
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
Sousa	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi— 177	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.*[English]*

The next question is on the main motion.

I see the hon. chief government whip is on her feet.

**Hon. Ruby Sahota:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement amongst the parties to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting in favour.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply the vote and will be voting against.

*[Translation]*

**Mrs. Julie Vignola:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote. It will be voting in favour and adding the vote of the member for Beloeil—Chambly.

*[English]*

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP also agrees to apply the vote, and we will be voting yes.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Alain Rayes:** Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote and I will vote in favour.

*[English]*

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, the Greens agree to apply the vote and will be voting yes.

*[Translation]*

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

*(Division No. 890)*

## YEAS

## Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff

*Routine Proceedings*

Dance	Davies	Valdez	Van Bynen
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens	van Koeverden	Vandal
Desilets	Desjarlais	Vandenbeld	Vignola
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Villemure	Virani
Diab	Drouin	Weiler	Wilkinson
Dubourg	Duclos	Yip	Zahid
Duguid	Dzerowicz	Zarrillo	Zuberi— 210
Ehsassi	El-Khoury		
Erskine-Smith	Fisher		
Fonseca	Fortier		
Fortin	Fragiskatos		
Fraser	Freeland	Aboultarif	Aitchison
Fry	Gaheer	Albas	Allison
Gainey	Garon	Arnold	Baldinelli
Garrison	Gaudreau	Barlow	Barrett
Gazan	Gerretsen	Berthold	Bezan
Gill	Gould	Block	Bragdon
Green	Guilbeault	Brassard	Brock
Hajdu	Hanley	Calkins	Caputo
Hardie	Hepfner	Carrie	Chambers
Holland	Housefather	Chong	Cooper
Hughes	Hussen	Dalton	Dancho
Hutchings	Iacono	Davidson	Deltell
Idlout	Ien	d'Entremont	Doherty
Jaczek	Johns	Dowdall	Dreeschen
Jones	Jowhari	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Julian	Kayabaga	Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Kelloway	Khalid	Falk (Provencher)	Ferreri
Khera	Koutrakis	Gallant	Généreux
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Genuis	Gladu
Lalonde	Lambropoulos	Godin	Goodridge
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Gourde	Gray
Larouche	Lattanzio	Hallan	Hoback
Lauzon	LeBlanc	Jeneroux	Jivani
Lebouthillier	Lemire	Kelly	Khanna
Lighbound	Long	Kitchen	Kmic
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Kurek	Kusie
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Lake	Lantsman
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada	Lawrence	Lehoux
Masse	Mathysen	Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	Lloyd	Lobb
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Maguire	Majumdar
McLeod	McPherson	Martel	Mazier
Mendès	Mendicino	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Miao	Michaud	Melillo	Moore
Miller	Morrice	Morantz	Morrison
Morrissey	Murray	Motz	Muys
Naqvi	Ng	Nater	Patzer
Noormohamed	Normandin	Paul-Hus	Perkins
O'Connell	Oliphant	Poilievre	Redekopp
O'Regan	Pauzé	Reid	Rempel Garner
Perron	Petitpas Taylor	Richards	Roberts
Plamondon	Powlowski	Rood	Ruff
Qualtrough	Rayes	Scheer	Schmale
Robillard	Rogers	Seeback	Shields
Romanado	Rota	Shipley	Small
Sahota	Sajjan	Soroka	Steinley
Saks	Samson	Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's)	Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake)
Sarai	Sauvé	Strahl	Stubbs
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia	Thomas	Tochor
Schiefke	Serré	Tolmie	Uppal
Sgro	Shanahan	Van Popta	Vecchio
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Vidal	Vien
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard	Viersen	Vis
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh	Wagantall	Warkentin
Sorbara	Sousa	Waugh	Webber
Ste-Marie	Sudds	Williams	Williamson
Tassi	Taylor Roy	Zimmer— 117	
Thériault	Therrien		
Thompson	Trudeau		
Trudel	Turnbull		

**NAYS**

## Members

*Business of the House*

## PAIRED

Nil

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

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 17 minutes.

\* \* \*

● (1545)

[English]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday, I thought it would be a good opportunity to ask the government House leader what the business might be for the rest of this week and for next week as well.

We have been debating a privilege motion, with which the government has chosen to paralyze Parliament through its refusal to comply with a lawfully passed production order wherein the House of Commons demanded that all documents related to the \$400-million green slush fund be handed over to the RCMP so it can conduct a criminal investigation. The government has refused to comply, and as a result of its decision, Parliament has been seized with this question of privilege over that refusal.

As such, my question to the government House leader is this: I understand that she made a big show of some documents being handed over to the law clerk. The law clerk then informed the Speaker and other House officers that some documents were still being withheld and many of the documents that were handed over were still redacted, so I wonder if the government House Leader would tell us if she is finally ready to comply with the House order and allow this gridlock to be solved, and whether there will be any other legislation coming next week or if the Liberals will continue to keep Parliament paralyzed with this privilege motion.

**Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague well knows, it is him and his party members who are keeping Parliament paralyzed because they are obstructing their own motion of instruction. The Speaker very clearly ruled that this matter should be sent to the procedure and House affairs committee for further study. We agree with that. We are just waiting for the Conservative Party of Canada members of Parliament to do the same. In the interim, they continue to filibuster their own filibuster, and we have seen that, because they continue to amend their amendments on this matter, but when they are ready to get back to work, we are here to work for Canadians, and we look forward to that.

[Translation]

As I mentioned last week, we look forward to the Conservatives putting an end to their political games so that the House can move on to studying Bill C-71 on citizenship, Bill C-66 on military justice, Bill C-63 on online harms, the ways and means motion on capital gains and the ways and means motion on charities.

[English]

I also want to inform the House of our government's announcement regarding upcoming legislation to put more money in the

pockets of Canadians through a tax break and a working Canadians rebate. We would be giving a tax break to all Canadians and putting more money directly into the pockets of the middle class. These are important measures to help Canadians pay their bills. We encourage Parliament and all parties to get this legislation passed quickly and unanimously, so workers and working families can get more money in their pockets. We are committed to getting things done for Canadians in Parliament. Important legislation is before the House, and we believe the Conservatives should stop playing obstructionist, partisan games so that MPs can debate those bills.

I would also like to inform the House that the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth will deliver a ministerial statement on Monday, November 25, which is the first day of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

**The Speaker:** The Chair would like to make a statement regarding the current supply period ending December 10, 2024.

● (1550)

Since September 26, 2024, the House has been seized with—

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, interpretation is not working. Even from the time the House leader was speaking, there has been no interpretation on Zoom.

SITTING SUSPENDED

**The Speaker:** We will suspend for a moment while we investigate this issue.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 3:52 p.m.)

● (1555)

[Translation]

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 3:55 p.m.)

**The Speaker:** We will resume.

[English]

The Chair would like to make a statement regarding the current supply period, ending December 10, 2024.

Since September 26, 2024, the House has been seized with privilege motions. As stated in Standing Order 48(1), "Whenever any matter of privilege arises, it shall be taken into consideration immediately." Accordingly, any potential breach of privilege or contempt of the House must be examined without delay.



*Business of the House*

[Translation]

Our practices and traditions also give a privilege motion priority consideration over other orders of the day, based on the long-standing principle that for our House to carry out its work effectively and authoritatively, its rights and dignity must be upheld at all times.

*House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, explains at page 151:

A privilege motion once under debate has priority over all Orders of the Day including Government Orders and Private Members' Business. However, the debate does not interfere with Routine Proceedings, Statements by Members, Question Period, Royal Assent, deferred recorded divisions or the adjournment of the House.... Should debate on a privilege motion not be completed by the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, this item will take priority over all other Orders of the Day at the next sitting.

Members are now familiar with this principle.

[English]

The House also has an undoubted responsibility to grant supplies, which are the sole gift of the House to the Crown, as outlined in Standing Order 80(1). This is the reason estimates are tabled in the House periodically. On Monday, November 18, 2024, the President of the Treasury Board tabled the supplementary estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025. The Standing Orders, notably Standing Order 81(17), prescribe a mechanism to dispose of those estimates no later than December 10.

In addition, the responsibility for the estimates must be balanced with another fundamental principle, that of allowing the opposition to present its grievances, through motions examined during supply days, before the House can adopt supplies. These days are commonly referred to as opposition days. Four more opposition days must be held during the supply period ending on December 10.

Without presupposing how or when the House will deal with its various questions of privilege, as we get closer to the end of the current supply period, the Chair wishes to encourage the House leaders to keep these various principles in mind. I am confident that they can find ways to reconcile these important responsibilities.

I thank all members for their attention.

[Translation]

The hon. member for La Prairie on a point of order.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to ask for your interpretation of the impending conflict with our Standing Orders and procedures that you just raised.

Normally, the Chair does not intervene on hypothetical questions, but this one is becoming more and more likely every day and could have very real implications. As we know, we have two privilege motions before the House and probably a third one coming up. However, we also have to vote on the supplementary estimates that the government has tabled for consideration during the supply period ending December 10, not to mention the four remaining opposition days.

For some time now, many people have been wondering what will happen to the opposition days and the estimates this fall. On the one hand, Standing Order 48(1) states:

(1) Whenever any matter of privilege arises, it shall be taken into consideration immediately.

As you mentioned earlier, page 151 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, explains what this means:

A privilege motion once under debate has priority over all Orders of the Day including Government Orders and Private Members' Business.... Should debate on a privilege motion not be completed by the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, this item will take priority over all other Orders of the Day at the next sitting. It will appear on the *Order Paper* under Orders of the Day before all other orders.

In fact, this has been our reality for the past two months. On the other hand, however, Standing Order 81(10)(a) provides the following:

In any calendar year, seven sitting days shall be allotted to the Business of Supply for the period ending not later than December 10....

Although we think of them as opposition days, they are actually intended for supplies that are, of course, listed in government orders. The use of the word "shall" in the Standing Orders implies that it is imperative that we have opposition days, and here is what we read at page 857 of Bosc and Gagnon:

If the government fails to designate the prescribed number of allotted days, the remaining days in that period will be designated by default.

That statement is important. It echoes Speaker Fraser's rulings on March 22 and 26, 1990, at pages 9628 and 9758 of the Debates. In the second ruling, he said the following: "The Standing Orders list the number of allotted days there will be in each supply period and where the Government has failed to designate sufficient days to meet the requirements of the Standing Orders, by attrition those days left in the period must become allotted days, when no other alternative is possible in order to comply with the Standing Orders." That is what happened in this instance.

The events of 1990 are not identical to today's circumstances. In fact, there are a few distinct features to consider. First, Speaker Fraser's ruling was about the order of precedence for Government Orders. It was essentially intended to limit the government's usual flexibility in scheduling Government Orders. Today, we are dealing with motions of privilege that are different from and procedurally superior to Government Orders. Second, the old principle underlying our supply procedures is described as "grievances before supply". It would be unwise for the government not to respect the power and authority of Parliament.

Consequently, we will only take up the matter of supply if, and only if, the House succeeds in adopting Government Orders on the scheduled dates. Page 151 of Bosc and Gagnon explains the following: "However, the debate does not interfere with Routine Proceedings, Statements by Members, Question Period, Royal Assent, deferred recorded divisions or the adjournment of the House". We experience this on a daily basis, too.

### *Privilege*

Simply put, under our Standing Orders, all these things need to happen, and they are happening. Standing Order 81(10)(a) states that four more opposition days need to be held this fall. By way of analogy, does that mean that even if the privilege motions remain outstanding, we will debate opposition motions on December 5, 6, 9 and 10?

Mr. Speaker, I understand that these matters are important, and that is why I wanted to raise them immediately, both to give you time to reflect on them and to give the parties time to make arrangements in response to your decision.

• (1600)

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for La Prairie for his intervention. We seem to be on the same wavelength. I encourage all my colleagues, especially those responsible for conducting negotiations between all the political parties here in the House of Commons, to make arrangements to reconcile these two fundamental aspects of the House's duties.

I thank all members for their attention.

---

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

• (1605)

[*English*]

### PRIVILEGE

#### REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

The House resumed consideration of the motion, of the amendment as amended and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I rise today for this debate, there are a lot of things I could say, but what I would like to focus on, at least in the initial part of my remarks, is what is at heart here. Sometimes what happens in this place when we debate issues is that some members lose sight of what exactly is at the heart of the matter. It is not just, as in this case, a privilege motion. It is not even just about a scandal. What we are talking about, at least in my view, is \$400 million of taxpayers' money. It is important that we remember that. It is something we should always have at the very top of our minds when we are looking at issues in the House, whether it is a matter like this of privilege, the litany of scandals of the Liberal government, government legislation or any legislation for that matter. We should always be mindful of who pays for all of this, and it is the taxpayer.

In this case, at the heart of the matter is \$400 million of taxpayers' money that has been forcibly removed from their wallets. That is the reality of the situation. Anytime a taxpayer sends their hard-earned money to Ottawa to the CRA, or what I refer to as the place where people's tax dollars go to die, the money is being forcibly removed from their wallets. They do not have a choice in the matter. They have to pay tax dollars, whether they like it or not and whether they think they are being used wisely or not.

I hear from a lot of my constituents, and a lot of people from all across this country when I am out in different parts of it, about their feeling that their money is not being used even remotely close to

wisely by the current government. There is a lot of frustration in this country about the fact that people see their money being treated like it is some kind of personal slush fund for the Prime Minister, his friends and Liberal members of Parliament and their friends.

I can understand why people would be frustrated about that. They work incredibly hard for this money. There are many people across this country who strap on their work boots, throw on a hard hat and get their hands dirty. They do it for long hours, and in some cases it is back-breaking. Then they watch their money get forcibly removed from their wallet and sent to Ottawa, to be used as some kind of private, personal slush fund for Liberals.

It has to be tough some days when the alarm clock goes off at 5:30 in the morning. Maybe someone was out with their buddies a little late the night before, maybe had a beer league hockey game or something and only managed to get a few hours of sleep. They have to get out of bed, and then they realize they are going to work until probably two o'clock in the afternoon, just for the government to take all of that money. Then after two o'clock comes, maybe they work until six or seven o'clock, working hard on a construction crew or something, and that is the part of the money they get to take home to their family. All of the other stuff they got out of bed at 5:30 in the morning for until sometime early in the afternoon is sent to Ottawa so that these guys over here, these Liberals, can give it out to their friends.

This is exactly what we are talking about when we talk about this green slush fund. It is \$400 million of the money those people have worked hard for, doing back-breaking work, to try to provide for their families. Instead, it has gone to Liberal insiders. It is important to have that in mind, and it is important to have some context around that.

• (1610)

I would like to get to that, but first, as I mentioned, people are paying taxes and sending dollars against their will to a government that wastes them. Ten days ago, every single Canadian, I hope, spent some time remembering and commemorating the sacrifice and service of the men and women who serve this country in our Canadian Armed Forces. When we talk about having to do hard work, there is no one in this country who not only works harder but also makes more sacrifices and puts more on the line than they do.

On November 11, I hope we all paused in remembrance. I love that we do that as a country and I love that in the lead-up to that day, there is now Veterans Week and Indigenous Veterans Day. These are all opportunities for us to commemorate and remember veterans' service and sacrifice, but it is something we should do 365 days of the year. Veterans have sacrificed so we all in the chamber can have the opportunity to stand and debate issues like we are doing right now and so we can represent our fellow community members here in Parliament. There is huge gravity that goes with that, and it would be good for some members to remember that.

*Privilege*

When we talk about issues like the one we are talking about today, a slush fund for Liberal insiders, that is not what men and women in service sacrificed for. They sacrificed so we could all come here and try our best to better our communities, our provinces and our country, and to do things we believe are in the best interests of Canadians to try to make their lives a little better and a little easier, and to provide hope and opportunity.

That is the kind of thing we should be debating; however, there has not been much of that in the last nine years. In fact, I do not think there has been any of it. There have been people who have come here to enrich their friends and have forgotten about the taxpayer I talked about, who gets up and packs their lunch in a plastic bag and goes to work for 12-hour to 14-hour days doing backbreaking work. The very epitome of that, of course, is the men and women who serve in our Canadian Forces.

Service members are asked to go to places in the world that, in some cases, they may never even have heard of before to defend the freedoms of people they do not know. When they do that, all they ask in return is that we do our best to ensure that those freedoms are protected and to ensure that we use our democracy to make sure there are the opportunities and the security we talked about. Instead what they have received over the last nine years is a government that, following the Prime Minister's lead, just looks for what is in it for them. What can they do to enrich their friends?

The SDTC fund is an example of that. In some cases, the \$400 million went to companies that SDTC board members were involved in personally. If we look up "conflict of interest" in the dictionary, the board would be pictured there. That is not right. That is not what this is supposed to be about. The men and women who served our country just wanted us to show them good government.

● (1615)

On top of all that, imagine what we could have done for our veterans and their families with the \$400 million. I have a number of other examples that I want to share with the House in a moment, of what could have been done with the \$400 million had it not been spent to enrich the personal interests of people who were involved. Imagine, just for a second, what we could have done for our veterans and their families.

As the Conservative shadow minister for veterans affairs, I hear heartbreaking stories every single day from veterans, from their families and from the families they have left behind in some cases, of just a complete and utter lack of support. I have often heard this referred to, by veterans and their families many times, as a triple-D policy. The policy entails delays and denials, and the third D stands for "die".

There are long delays in trying to get the benefits or services that veterans and their families are entitled to by virtue of the service they gave this country. They deserve the benefits and services. It is the least we can do. However, they face not weeks or months of delays, but we are literally talking years of delays. I hear every single day from veterans who have waited years.

I would like everyone to stop and let that sink in. Veterans served this country. Then they come back home and want to be able to get on with their life after a transition out of the Canadian Armed

Forces. There are things they need in order to be able to do that. There are benefits and services they are entitled to, that they have earned, in some cases with their blood, but they wait years and cannot get those benefits. That is absolutely ridiculous.

In some cases, veterans are denied over and over again, and they have to fight tooth and nail. They fought for this country. They should not have to come back and fight with the government to get what they deserve. That is what they have to do, and it becomes so difficult. In some cases, this is where the third D comes in. Many veterans tell me they believe it is actually intentional and there is an effort to try to delay and deny for so long that a veteran will give up. They will lose all hope.

It does not matter whether that is actually what happens or not. If it is the perception a veteran has, and many of them do have it, then it is the reality. It is not right and it absolutely must be fixed. We have lost far too many veterans. Too many veterans end up homeless in this country. Veterans are using food banks to such a level that some veterans association food banks are telling me that they actually are having trouble keeping the shelves stocked to be able to help our veterans.

We should never even be uttering those things in the same sentence. The idea of a homeless veteran should not exist. The idea of a veteran using a food bank should not exist. The idea that a veteran has to give up hope because they have fought with their government for years for something that they fought for and deserve should not exist. It should be simple. The effort should be to try to make sure we are there and to make it easy for them.

Instead, I hear stories every day of veterans being asked to prove something. For example, I heard the story of someone having lost two legs because of a roadside bomb, and then they have had to prove every single year that they are still missing limbs. That is just one example of many I have heard. Veterans fought for this country. They literally gave life and limb for this country. The injured ones then have to fight to prove they were injured serving this country.

● (1620)

I might have the figures slightly wrong, but they would not be off by much. The Veterans Review and Appeal Board is an agency to which veterans who have gone through all of the possible different channels can take an appeal. I have heard many times that on certain types of claims, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board often ends up, if the veteran persists long enough and fights long enough to get there, approving well over 90% of the claims at that level. Why did it have to take years of fighting with the government to get there? Why could we not approve the claims and let veterans have what they need to move on with life?

*Privilege*

On top of it all, I could get into the fact that situations come up in this country where, in the last few years under the Liberal government, veterans have come looking for help to live their life. The words that have been used by officials at Veterans Affairs to veterans are that if living their life is so hard they could offer them assisted death. That has actually happened; I have heard it from a number of veterans. I have heard of cases like this numerous times. It causes what is called sanctuary trauma, where the institution that is supposed to help someone actually causes more trauma.

I was talking to a veteran last week who told me that his wife knows before he even tells her when he has been on the phone with Veterans Affairs, because he is agitated. He said that the worst days he has are the days he has to talk to Veterans Affairs on the phone. Before she even asks him whether he has been talking to Veterans Affairs, she knows the answer, because it affects him that badly. I can only imagine what a veteran like that, after all of that, must think when they hear about stuff like the SDTC fund on top of it.

The government is fighting tooth and nail to ensure that it does not pay out benefits to a veteran who has earned them. Then \$400 million is given to its friends through a green slush fund. Can members imagine what that must feel like to a veteran who has fought for years, and in some cases has had to take the government to court, to get what they are entitled to? I think it is important we remember that.

I have heard Liberal members talk about the fact that they feel like the debate is a big waste of time and that we should be doing all these other things here, and so on. I do not disagree; it would be nice to be doing those things. However, at the end of the day, the heart of the matter is about the \$400 million that was forcibly removed from the pockets of taxpayers and given out to their friends, Liberal insiders.

Veterans have had to scratch and claw to try to get what they have coming to them, what they deserve and what they are owed by virtue of the service they gave to this country. Then they watch the Liberals steal it for their friends. I can only imagine how horrible that must make a veteran feel. It is disgraceful and shameful.

• (1625)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I was listening very intently to the member opposite. He mentioned 11 days ago, and I have a number for him. In seven days, my daughter-in-law is deploying to the Middle East for the next six months. I have two sons in the military and a daughter-in-law in the military.

I agree with the Speaker's ruling that what happened needs to be looked at. I sit on the procedure and House affairs committee, and I want to find out what happened. I think the member opposite knows that I am a pretty straight shooter on files with respect to Veterans Affairs and the military, and I want to know. However, there is also a very important piece of legislation that is stalled right now and that all members in this House support, Bill C-66, on our military justice system, which would protect members of the Canadian Armed Forces. We all agree with this, but it cannot move forward because we are continuing to debate a privilege motion, which is important, and I do not disagree, but the Speaker just ruled

that he is urging the parties to come together and move forward. I am asking the member, who cares so much about military and veterans: Can we agree to get this piece of legislation back in front of the House? Can we come together for veterans, for the military and for families like mine?

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Madam Speaker, first of all, let me say how much I appreciate the service of the member's family members and of herself. I have had conversations with her about the military and our veterans, and I appreciate the sincerity of those conversations, I always have. I will work with anyone who is willing to be there for our veterans.

The unfortunate part, of course, is that what we have seen over the last nine years has not been a government that supports our men and women in uniform, and has not been a government that supports our veterans. We see the effects of that every single day. We have a recruitment crisis. We have veterans who are struggling with homelessness and with food banks. It is disgraceful.

In terms of working together, yes, there is no question. The simple answer to what is being requested here is that the government should simply comply. It is the right thing to do. If it is the right thing to do, then why can the government not just do it? We could then all work together on a number of important things. I would be thrilled to be able to do that. This government just simply needs to comply with what is being required here. Also, while I have the floor, I may as well say that it needs to start showing some respect and appreciation for those who serve this country and have served this country, because right now, it is not happening.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulo, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I can well understand my colleague's indignation about the fact that veterans are not being prioritized. I was particularly moved by his story about the veteran who is missing two legs and has to prove over and over that they are still missing two legs. We are not talking about a liver, we are talking about legs. Legs do not grow back.

This story reminded me of an email I received from a doctor, who told me that doctors have to fill out 16 pages of paperwork in order for a person living with a disability to receive the benefits owed to them by the Canadian government. If we multiply the time that takes by the doctor's salary and by the number of people living with a disability, it costs Quebecers and Canadian taxpayers approximately \$1 billion a year to prove that a person is living with a disability.

We see what is happening with the red tape. In my colleague's opinion, would it be possible to cut back on the paperwork and ensure that the government, when asked, can provide paperwork that is actually useful?

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Madam Speaker, I agree with the member that there is a big problem in this country when it comes to all this red tape. It is absolutely necessary to find solutions to this situation.

Common-sense Conservatives will offer many solutions to Canadians.

● (1630)

[English]

While I have the floor, she did mention the story of the soldier who tried to prove over and over about missing legs. For her benefit and for the benefit of everyone in the House, I want to tell another story, briefly, about a veteran in Quebec. She has a back injury as a result of her service and she requires a wheelchair lift to be able to get out of her wheelchair and into her home. Right now, she has to literally drag herself across a gravel driveway to get into her home. The Liberal government has been fighting with her for years trying to deny her that wheelchair lift. She was actually one of the individuals I mentioned who, when she was begging for help, was told that, if it was so difficult, they could offer her medical assistance in dying instead. She said she was not looking for help to die, she was looking for help to live.

I will happily report that this veteran is getting her wheelchair lift, but sadly it is not because the government finally stepped forward. It is because her fellow veterans went out and found private contractors who were willing to do this pro bono for the veteran because the government refused.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague brought up some very important items about what we could have done with the money instead. In Edmonton West, there is an organization called the Veterans Association Food Bank. There is one in Calgary as well, a sister organization. We have a food bank just for veterans and we struggle to keep it stocked. It is disgraceful in this day and age in Canada that we have veterans going to a food bank. The sister scandal of the green slush fund, instead of the other Randy, we have the other green slush fund, the net-zero accelerator, which the Auditor General reported on, showed \$15 million of taxpayers' money went to a large corporation worth \$30 billion that was funding ISIS.

I wonder if the member would care to comment about the government's priority of funding massive billion-dollar multinationals that are siphoning money off to ISIS.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Madam Speaker, let me first comment on the comment my colleague made about the Veterans Association Food Bank in Edmonton. I have visited that food bank on a couple of occasions to just check in with them to see how things are going for veterans. There are actually two veterans food banks in Edmonton. They both have trouble keeping the shelves stocked. I see that in communities all across this country. It should never be the case that we even need a veterans food bank, let alone that we cannot seem to find ways to keep the shelves stocked because the demand is so great.

To the point he raised, those who serve and have served see things like he mentioned, and they see that they are so underfunded. In some cases they are buying their own helmets. Can we imagine the ridiculousness of that? They are having to buy some of their own equipment because they cannot get it provided to them. We hear stories like the ones I have told about veterans who cannot get the benefits they are entitled to for years. Then we hear that the very thing those people went to fight against is receiving funding.

### Privilege

There is so much more we could do to ensure our military members have the equipment and resources they need, so much more we could do to ensure our veterans have what they deserve. Instead, we send this money away to places.

It is just disgraceful. It is time we start to rechannel that into making sure our forces have what they need, into ensuring our veterans have what they need. That is going to have a big impact not just on the morale, which is an incredibly important thing, not just on our ability to be operationally ready in this country to do the job we need to do to defend this country, but also on our ability to work with other governments and to have Canada have a place of influence in the world. Right now, with the Prime Minister we have, Canada is not at the table at all. It is time for us to change that.

● (1635)

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Madam Speaker, here we are, five weeks in, and we are still debating the Liberal government's refusal to produce documents relating to the latest scandal, the green slush fund scandal, as ordered by Parliament on June 10. This is the third time that I am rising to speak on this issue, so I want to take a slightly different approach. I want to talk about the legal principle of subsequent remedial measures, in the law, of evidence.

That rule says that evidence of a defendant or a possible defendant in a civil case effecting repairs to some obstacle that injured a person in order to avoid future similar injuries is not admissible in the court of law. The principle behind that is that we do not want to disincentivize people from actually making repairs to prevent future injuries. The example that is often given is when a homeowner repairs the steps up to the front door on which the postal delivery person was seriously injured the day before. Is doing the repair effectively an admission of liability? The answer is yes, probably, but here is the point. That evidence is not admissible in a court of law for the basic public policy principle that I stated before.

How does that apply to the current case relating to the green slush fund? A little bit of background is in order. The Auditor General revealed some shocking findings in her June 2024 report, which was tabled in Parliament on June 6, I believe, about how the Liberal government had turned SDTC, a federally governed and owned business, into a green slush fund for Liberal insiders.

*Privilege*

Here are some of her findings. She found that SDTC gave out the following in taxpayer dollars: \$58 million to 10 ineligible projects without even ensuring that contribution agreements were in place and the terms met. On some of them, the applicants could not even demonstrate the development of green technology or any environmental benefit at all. The purpose of SDTC was just ignored. There were \$334 million and over 186 cases where there were clear conflicts of interest. This is board members at SDTC voting for each other's applicant grants, clearly a conflict of interest.

One of the whistle-blowers had this to say:

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

This is very serious, not just mismanagement, but allegations from a credible source that there is criminal activity under way. Where there is smoke, there is fire. We, the opposition, did what we are supposed to do, which was to hold the government to account. Back in June, the Conservative Party put forward a motion in the House of Commons shortly after we received the Auditor General's report. That order reads, in part:

That the House order the government, Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) and the Auditor General of Canada each to deposit with the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, within 30 days of the adoption of this order, the following documents....

There was then a long list of documents that had to be produced.

The Conservative motion passed on June 10 with the help of the NDP and the Bloc Québécois. I thank them very much. It was only the Liberal members of Parliament who voted against it, because they were worried. They did not like it. They did not like the order. Over the summer months, they just ignored it. They delivered some of the documents but clearly not all.

When we got back here in September, things got ugly pretty quickly. Our House leader, the opposition House leader, on the first day back, rose on a question of privilege “concerning the failure of the government to comply with the order that the House adopted on Monday, June 10.”

● (1640)

That was presented to the Speaker, and the Speaker agreed with us, confirming that the Prime Minister's Office and all relevant government departments had not fully complied, but that they must comply with this order made in June for unredacted documents. At the time, the Speaker said, “The Chair cannot come to any other conclusion but to find that a prima facie question of privilege has been established.” In parliamentary terms, that is a serious allegation. There was a breach of privilege and that should have embarrassed the government.

It is pretty clear and easy to understand what the Speaker meant, so why are we still here, five weeks later, debating this question of privilege? The answer is simple. The Liberal government is still not complying with it. Why not? We do not know. The government has raised some smokescreens and innuendo, but it has not come clean to say why it is not complying. As long as that goes on, the longer this fiasco drags on, the more suspicious we become that perhaps the aforementioned whistle-blower is right that there was criminal activity going on here.

I want to get back to my original comments about the principle of subsequent remedial measures. Such evidence, as I said, is generally not admissible in a court of law. Did the Liberals actually take remedial action to try to fix SDTC after they claimed they were as surprised as the rest of us were that this corruption and mismanagement was going on? The answer is no, they did not do anything. As a matter of fact, they just wound up SDTC. There was so much corruption, so much smoke, so much contamination that even the Liberals were embarrassed by it. Rather than trying to fix it, they just wound it up altogether.

Now we are really suspicious, along with Canadians. What are the Liberals hiding? What was going on at STDC? Why are we not getting the documents? Canadians want to know. What does the Prime Minister's Office know? What is in those documents that the Liberals are refusing to produce? What are they hiding? Was there criminal activity? Can we recover some of the taxpayer money, \$400 million altogether? Canadians deserve to know.

The total amount of money, as I said, was \$400 million. What could we do with that money? We could do a lot of good, positive things, as the previous speaker, my colleague from Banff—Airdrie, just said. It could certainly help veterans and parents. It could help people who have been going to food banks who cannot afford groceries in these high inflationary times. Four hundred million dollars goes a long way to solve many problems. It could have been much better used than having it distributed by Liberal insiders among themselves.

I would like to compare this to the scandal of some years ago, the sponsorship scandal that brought down the previous Liberal government. That was only \$40 million. This is 10 times as large. This is very significant and taxpayers, I think, need to understand what is going on here.

Things were not always corrupt at Sustainable Development Technology Canada. It had a great reputation at one time. It was created by an act of Parliament back in the Liberal days of former prime minister Jean Chrétien to promote investing in green technology, a laudable goal. It continued its work under former Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper and likely it would still be thriving today if the current Prime Minister had just resisted getting his fingerprints all over it. However, he just could not resist the temptation of putting his own friends in there. He and his industry minister at the time, Navdeep Bains, could not resist putting their own close friends in charge.

They fired the old board and put in their own friends. Many of them owned businesses that were applicants or potential applicants for grants under this program. Maybe somebody could have raised a red flag to say there was a lot of potential for conflict of interest, but that did not seem to concern anybody on the government side of the House. The result was that the Liberal-appointed board created an environment where conflicts of interest became the norm. Conflicts of interest were tolerated; they were managed.

● (1645)

In that orchestrated manner, these Liberal-appointed board members were able to, nicely, award grants to each other. This is the way it went: “Hey, you vote for my project, and I’ll vote for your project.” That is what the whistle-blower told us. That is what the Auditor General uncovered. The Liberals broke SDTC, as they have broken so much else in Canada. I just want to raise a couple of examples.

Recent statistics from Statistics Canada about crime in Canada are really quite shocking. During nine years of the Liberal government, violent crime has increased by 50%. Homicides are up 28%. Sexual assaults are up by 75%. Gang violence has nearly doubled, and auto theft is up by 46%. Extortion is up by an astonishing 357%. Recently, the Liberal government has been forced to admit that 256 people were killed in 2022 by criminals who were out on bail or other forms of release.

This all happened under the Prime Minister’s watch, with his Bill C-5, which eliminated many of the mandatory minimum sentences for serious crimes, and Bill C-75, the catch-and-release bill that puts accused people out on bail on the least restrictive conditions possible. Canadians are concerned.

This is what our police are saying about the Liberals and how they have been mismanaging criminal law responsibilities and, specifically, their record on gun crime. The Toronto Police Association had this to say, speaking to the Prime Minister: “Criminals did not get your message. Our communities are experiencing a 45% increase in shootings and a 62% increase in gun-related homicides compared to...last year. What difference does your handgun ban make when 85% of guns seized by our members can be sourced to the United States?”

The Vancouver Police Union had this to say about the Prime Minister’s record on managing gun crime: “Guessing he’s not aware of the ongoing gang war here in B.C. which is putting both our members and public at risk on a daily basis.”

The Surrey Police Union, right next door to my community of Langley, says, “The federal handgun freeze fails to address the real issue: the surge of illegal firearms coming across our borders and ending up in the hands of violent criminals.”

It is not just the police who are concerned about the drastic rise of crime in our streets and our cities. I heard from a group of CEOs and other directors of a group of downtown business improvement associations from across British Columbia. I am familiar with the work that business improvement associations do because I sat on the board of the Downtown Surrey BIA for a few years before I was elected to Parliament. That is where my law office was, so I am very familiar with the area and very familiar with the work the

### *Privilege*

BIA does. I was happy to meet with this group to hear their concerns and their solutions to some of Canada’s toughest problems.

I found it remarkable that this is what these community organizations are asking for. Number one is to invest in mental health, addictions and homelessness support across Canada. Indeed, homelessness is a problem right across Canada, but particularly so in our downtown cores. I am thinking of the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, which at one time was a beautiful place but is not anymore because of homelessness, crime and chaos.

The second ask is this, from the community organizers of our downtown cores: to ensure Canada’s downtowns and main streets are safe and inclusive spaces by initiating a systematic review across the country concerning the bail system and implementing further changes to the system by reforming Bill C-48, which is a bill that went through the House not too long ago that took a small step in the direction of bail reform. They are saying it needs to be extended, not just for serious repeat violent offenders but also for theft offenders.

● (1650)

They are saying we need to stop the easy bail practices that have become the norm in Canada with the introduction of Bill C-75. The Vancouver Police Department talks about the same 40 individuals having negative interactions with the police 6,000 times in one year; that is every second day for 40 people. Imagine what the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver would look like if those 40 people were not on our streets. This is the message we are getting from community organizers.

The third thing they are asking for is to incentivize local entrepreneurs and commercial entities to form businesses in downtowns and on main streets. This is what they are asking for: give people shelter, keep repeat thieves off the streets, and create an environment where businesses and entrepreneurs come flocking back to the downtown core. This is what ordinary Canadian citizens want.

People are reporting that they feel less safe on our streets. Those fears are now being supported by evidence from Statistics Canada and from credible and, I would say, non-partisan organizations like police unions and business improvement associations.

The Attorney General should meet with people like that instead of just left-leaning law professors from Liberal-friendly law schools who teach their criminal law courses from a pro-accused perspective instead of from a pro-victim perspective. Our Attorney General would benefit, indeed, all of Canada would benefit, if he and the Prime Minister would listen to the concerns of ordinary Canadian citizens.

*Privilege*

These are the things we should be talking about, or would be talking about if the Liberal government would just comply with the order so we could get down to business again. We should be talking about stopping the crime, building homes, implementing a fair and competitive tax regime by axing the tax, and fixing the Liberals' out-of-control, never-ending, inflation-producing deficit budgets.

Until the Liberals come to their senses and comply with the order, I guess we are just going to remain in this holding pattern. Here is a better idea: The Prime Minister could walk to the Governor General's house and acknowledge what everybody knows, that he has lost the confidence of this House and that the 44th Parliament should be dissolved and we should call an election. I spoke to many people when in my home community last week for Remembrance Day, as well as in the neighbouring community of Cloverdale—Langley City, where there is a by-election going on because the Liberal member of Parliament resigned.

I am hearing from people on the street that they are very anxious and eager to have a general election. They are happy with a by-election, but they want a general election. They want to stop the corruption, they want to fix what the Liberals have broken and they want a government that is going to have common-sense solutions.

Canadians deserve a government that will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. Canadians deserve a government that does not play favourites for Liberal insiders but creates an environment where non-insiders can work and get ahead. They deserve a Canada that delivers on its promise to all who call it home: that hard work earns a powerful paycheque and pension, and buys affordable groceries and affordable homes on safe streets, in beautiful neighbourhoods, where anyone from anywhere can accomplish anything.

This is all achievable, but first, we need to have a general election and a common-sense Conservative government that will start working seriously on these issues that concern ordinary Canadians.

• (1655)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** 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 Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, The Environment; the hon. member for Calgary Centre, Innovation, Science and Industry; and the hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South, The Environment.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member across the way gets a lot of gold stars. According to the CBC article, this is what Conservative MPs are saying: “If the leader invents a new slogan, ‘we know we’ll have to use it’”. The good news is, “‘If you repeat the slogans, you get rewarded,’ said a Conservative source.

“‘You are celebrated in front of the entire caucus for being a good cheerleader.’” The member said a lot of slogans there.

The article continues:

Conservative MPs' words and actions are closely scrutinized by the leader's office. Partisanship is encouraged. Fraternalizing with elected officials from other parties is a no-no.

Those who follow these rules are rewarded. Those who don't often have to suffer consequences.

I want to compliment the member opposite because he repeated a lot of the bumper stickers and the slogans. Does he also believe that he has to report to the leader? Is it okay for the Conservative members to be followed and stalked by staff and others who report to the leader of the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, it is amusing that that question is coming from the only person on the Liberal side of the House who is allowed to comment and be involved in these debates.

I am very proud to be a member of this caucus and to have the member for Carleton be our leader. I am happy to get gold stars from him, but what I am really looking forward to is getting gold stars from the Canadian citizens in the next general election. Bring it on. It is time.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I always enjoy listening to my esteemed colleague. I have a great deal of respect for his judgment and his ability to have respectful and productive debates.

However, I have some serious questions about the debate we are currently having. I tend to agree with the Conservatives that the government should hand over the documents that are required, for all sorts of reasons that have been explained at least 100 times in recent months and that I will not revisit, but I wonder whether we are going to turn the page at some point.

I am sure that my colleague would like us to address the important issues that we were elected to address, as would I. There is the passing of the budget. There are measures to help struggling families. There are all kinds of bills and all kinds of measures that need to be passed. However, we are stuck with an ongoing process that is obviously completely pointless.

Does he think it is possible for the official opposition to agree to turn the page, despite the criticisms that need to be levelled at the government? I am stating that we will be with them on this, that we too have criticisms of the government. However, we could move on and get back to our regular business so we can do our work.

I will close by saying that ever since I was first elected, every time there is an election, people ask me whether I am going to run again. I always reply that I will run on two conditions. The first is that I still have to be enjoying what I am doing. The second is that I need to feel useful. Right now I have to say that I am beginning to have doubts about the second condition.

[*English*]

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, I am very honoured to have a question from my friend and colleague, the member for Rivière-du-Nord. We have a great time working on the justice committee together, and I think we are accomplishing some really important things.



He said that this is an important issue, and I agree. I am very grateful that the NDP and the Bloc Québécois voted with us on it. I think we all want to get back to business, but the solution is for the Liberal Party to comply with the order. This order is completely within the authority of the House of Commons to make. This is a minority House. The Liberal minority government has to learn how to work with it. It failed in trying to stop this order. The order has been made, and the Liberals need to comply with it.

• (1700)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have been contemplating a lot about conflict and how it is being acted out in our communities, our country and across the world. I am reading a book by Amanda Ripley called *High Conflict*. It talks about breaking free from the destructive cycle of conflict we are seeing in so many places around the world and really focusing on constructive approaches to disagreement, which focus more on improving relationships and decreasing destructive, divisive conflicts.

The member is talking about a utopia that he thinks is somehow going to magically happen. I am wondering if the process of his analysis of this really speaks to any of this, such as looking at how to bring people together, how to have meaningful conflict and how to learn from one another as opposed to just using slogans, which create a high conflict that does not get resolved.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, the member asked a thoughtful question. I agree that we should all try to work together.

Just a little while ago today we heard the Thursday question. I would encourage the Liberal government to comply with the order and to not look at us to say that we are not being co-operative. There is an order that it has to follow, and it has not. It is a breach of privilege. This is a very serious allegation and a very serious finding from our Speaker. It needs to be complied with. It is a two-way street. If it wants co-operation from us, it needs to co-operate with how the House operates.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would say to my friend and neighbour that I understand the principle of parliamentary supremacy here. I also understand that the RCMP has told us that getting hold of these documents that the Conservatives want us to deliver to a third party, the RCMP, could seriously compromise its investigation and that the documents would be rendered practically unusable to it because of those concerns.

Which would he rather have? Would he rather have the principle of parliamentary supremacy applied or justice for those who may have broken the law and deserve the punishment of the law?

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, my friend and colleague from Fleetwood—Port Kells is my next-door neighbour, and I enjoy working with him.

I do not think it is an either-or. He is saying that we either have the government complying with a just order from Parliament or we have justice in the way law enforcement is done by the RCMP. I do not think that there is a contradiction here.

The RCMP has very smart people on staff. It has lawyers on staff who can figure out what to do with the documents, whether to look

### *Privilege*

at them or not look at them. We are not telling the RCMP how to do its work. We are just telling the Liberal government that we have passed a motion in the House of Commons, which is completely within our authority to do. It should comply with it.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's talk today. One of the things we found out with the green slush scandal is that excerpt 20.03 of the contribution agreement between the government, industry and STDC states very clearly that any conflicts of interest, real or perceived, have to be reported to the minister, who at that time was Navdeep Bains, and is now the current minister of industry.

We heard from many of the board members, who spoke openly of the conflicts, yet they claim that somehow none of this, despite the contribution agreement requiring so, was reported to the minister. Does my colleague think that perhaps the reason the government is hiding these documents is that Navdeep Bains, a former Liberal cabinet minister, and the current minister of industry were told of the conflicts of interest, that Canadian money was going to Liberal insiders, and that is why it is covering it up?

• (1705)

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, the answer is that I do not know. What we really need is for the documents to be produced so that we can discover what has been going on.

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, as always, it is a pleasure to rise here in the chamber to speak on behalf of my constituents in Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

This is the second time I have had to speak to this question of privilege. To be frank, I am shocked to get this opportunity because I thought, after hearing my first speech, the Liberal government would have seen the error of its ways and complied with the Speaker's order and the will of Parliament, via a majority vote back in June, to turn the documents over. Maybe I am a little too naive about expecting the government to follow the rules.

Madam Speaker, that being said, I do not want to have to speak to this a third time, so would you verify that we have quorum?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We will check.

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We have quorum.

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Madam Speaker, hopefully, this time, with enough members of the government listening, the Liberals will actually be willing to comply with the order of the Chair.

### *Privilege*

Last time I got up here, I utilized the opportunity to voice a number of the answers that I got from my constituents of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, and I read those answers directly into the record. I was asking for their feedback on two questions: One, should the Liberal government turn over the SDTC documents to the RCMP for the criminal investigation and comply with the will of Parliament and the ruling of the Speaker? Two, should the Liberal insiders who were awarded contracts through SDTC in an illegitimate manner or means repay that money that they received back to taxpayers?

I was shocked that, within just a few hours, I received over 200 email replies, and within just a few days, I had over 500. Approximately 85% answered in the affirmative to both those questions. Approximately 10% were unsure. They were maybe not really tracking the issue. A select few felt, for whatever reason, that maybe the government should not comply with the will of Parliament. I read about 30 of those answers into the record last month, and I am going to use the opportunity again in this speech to read their words into the record again. I have gone through and vetted them because there are a number of them that would not meet the parliamentary language test, so I will try to make sure that I do not slip up.

Before I get into their responses, I want to remind everybody who is watching exactly what we are debating today because we are on a subamendment. To back up, the question of privilege that we are considering is the motion from the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, which was seconded by the member for Mégantic—L'Érable. He moved:

That the government's failure of fully providing documents, as ordered by the House on June 10, 2024, be hereby referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The amendment as amended was moved by the member for Mégantic—L'Érable, and seconded by the member for South Shore—St. Margarets. He moved:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

“provided that it be an instruction to the committee:

(a) that the following witnesses be ordered to appear before the committee, separately, for two hours each:

- (i) the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry,
- (ii) the Clerk of the Privy Council,
- (iii) the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, who respected the order of the House and deposited unredacted documents,
- (iv) Paul MacKinnon, the former Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet (Governance),
- (v) the Auditor General of Canada,
- (vi) the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police,
- (vii) the Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada,
- (viii) the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel of the House of Commons,
- (ix) the Acting President of Sustainable Development Technology Canada,
- (x) a panel consisting of the Board of Sustainable Development Technology Canada; and

(b) that it report back to the House no later than the 30th sitting day following the adoption of this order.”

The subamendment read:

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”.

What does this subamendment get to? Basically, it is highlighting the conditions for ending this blockage of Parliament, this Liberal filibuster, by simply turning over the unredacted documents related to SDTC, more commonly known to most Canadians as the Liberal green slush fund. While the Liberals claimed that they have turned over thousands of documents, it has been reported, and the counsel to the House of Commons has reported in committee, that many of them have been redacted and the Liberals have not complied with the order.

I noticed that the member for Winnipeg North has given three speeches on this question of privilege already, and he has had, I am pretty sure, over 300 interventions on this topic alone.

● (1710)

He somehow continues to claim that this is a Conservative filibuster. In reality, the Liberals have the ability to end this blockage in the House of Commons today if they simply turn over the documents. Members from all officially recognized parties in the House have been speaking to this question of privilege for quite some time now. An important aspect I did not get to in my first speech is what this fund is about. It is a fund that has been around for over 20 years. It was given a clean bill of health back in the 2018 time frame, with no issues. It was established to promote research and development, to support green technology funds right across Canada. That is a good cause; I think this is something that members in the House totally agree on.

Unfortunately, this scandal, this mismanagement of 400 million dollars' worth of funds by Liberal insiders, with over 186 conflicts of interest, has created a huge problem for a lot of these green technology companies across Canada that are not part of the scandal. They were not tied to this insider corruption. Back in June, the minister announced a new governance framework for clean tech funding and said, “Effective immediately, SDTC will also resume funding, under a reinforced contribution agreement with ISED, for eligible projects in a sector vital to our country's economy and clean growth transition.”

“In line with the Auditor General's findings,” the minister said, “[his] Department will enhance oversight and monitoring of funding during the transition period.” Here we are, five months after that announcement, and there are still unknowns. There is a green technology company in my own riding, employing approximately 70 employees. Those 70 people are working hard to make Canada a global leader in green hydrogen. Where is the money they were pre-approved for? They are not one of the organizations tied to the corruption and these conflicts of interest.

I guess I will pre-propose a question I might get from the member for Winnipeg North. He is normally the one who likes to ask me questions. He will have time; my speech still has approximately 11 minutes left. He can go talk to the government and try to get an answer, as the spokesperson in this place for the government, about when that money is going to start to flow. In my riding alone, there are 70 people depending upon this flow of money that is supposed to be still going through for the companies that were not in conflict. If there are dozens just in my own riding, I guarantee that there are hundreds of Canadians across this great country who are sitting in a status of unknown. They do not know whether they are still going to have a job. The funding is supposed to be flowing in the new year or whenever it is supposed to be coming; it has been already pre-approved, but they do not know when they are going to get that funding.

I ask the parliamentary secretary to do some digging into that over the next few minutes or encourage the minister to come and inform all members this decision has an impact on, to give them a status update in a timely fashion. These businesses are doing phenomenal work to help address green technology across this country.

I am going to go back to reading some quotes. There is no bigger privilege that we have in the House of Commons than to be the voice for our constituents here in Ottawa and to put their words on the record.

In response to my questions, Jennifer from Lion's Head said, "The Liberal government should definitely hand over the SDTC documents for investigation.

"Also Liberal insiders should have to pay back the grant money they received!!

"I just don't understand how this deceitful government (especially [the Prime Minister]) gets so many passes on shady, shady deals for the past 8+ years now."

Marion said, "The Liberals should hand over all the documents immediately and everyone should pay back the money they received illegally (in my opinion). Just another example of the Liberals' incompetency or worse, dishonesty."

• (1715)

Rhoda said, "Yes, the Liberals should be called to account and to submit all documents to the RCMP and to comply with Parliament. Otherwise, their actions indicate they are hiding something. They are not above the law.

"Yes, those Liberals must be held accountable and should repay the grant money to the taxpayers."

Robert wrote, "Thanks for permitting a taxpayer of Canada to reply. Discouraging and just disappointed in most if not all of the Liberal-NDP performance.... Our Canadian federal governments that are joint are very shady and questionable partners that I do not believe have Canadian best interests first...which they surely should."

Linda from Sauble Beach wrote, "Yes to both your questions. Sounds like watchdogs fell asleep. It will be hard to get the money back from Sustainable Development [Technology Canada]. Social

### *Privilege*

services, hospitals, etc. will take the hit, with lower or nil grants. Theft from the public purse should certainly be investigated. Maybe bribery was involved and the acceptors could be made to pay back their 'gifts'."

Bill from Kemble said, "The Liberal government must obey the wishes of Parliament and deliver the un-redacted documents over to the RCMP. Failure to do so should invoke charges of obstructing justice against the prime minister and his minions.

"All persons or companies that illegitimately obtained funding must be made to pay back with interest all monies received. Additionally, criminal charges relating to fraud should be brought against the CEOs and other top executives."

Deborah from Georgian Bluffs wrote, "The Liberal horse is long out of the barn. As far as I can tell, the Liberals have executed a number of activities that are highly suspect at best, possibly criminal, some by commission and others by omission, and yet they remain in power and have been in no way held accountable. Of course I think any documents proving wrongdoing should be submitted and monies returned to the public coffers, but do I have faith anything will come of it? No."

Elaine wrote, "Yes and yes to both your questions. That is cheating, stealing and secretive. I'm glad there are whistleblowers. There is no confidence, common sense, honesty left with [the] government in any capacity or on any level."

Mark said, "All SDTC documents should be made available to the RCMP, and any ill-gotten funds should be returned, as well as criminal charges being filed where applicable [against] whomever is involved. This bleeding has to stop."

Samantha said, "Yes, because if it was anyone else, the same would apply. We as taxpayers should be treated with the respect that this will get looked into and brought to justice."

Denise wrote, "My answer is yes and yes. But, unfortunately, I am sure nothing will be resolved and those who received the money will never pay it back and nothing will be done to the politicians who gave this money to their friends. It is sad to see so much money go to the rich when there are so many struggling just to make ends meet."

Gary said, "The Liberals should absolutely adhere to the will of Parliament. Isn't that what democracy is all about? There are too many cover-ups and back room deals, and this is obviously one that they don't want to be made public, although I don't believe they can hurt themselves any more than they already have."

Bill said, "Yes, the Liberal government should definitely turn over the requested documents immediately to the RCMP, and any Liberal insider who was awarded a contract illegitimately through the SDTC should be required to repay the amount."

Todd said, "The Liberal government that ran on being open and honest should be held accountable for their actions. The money that was given out should be returned and an investigation done by the RCMP.

"This is probably just the tip of the iceberg."

*Privilege*

That gets to a key point, which is important for everybody to remember. This approximately \$400 million of money that was handed out was only a sample set of the billion-dollar slush fund. In all likelihood, we are talking about a lot more conflicts of interest and a lot more money.

I do not know how many comments I just read into the record. Ultimately, the key message from them to us here in this chamber and to the government is to provide transparency and accountability. It is the role of parliamentarians and Parliament to hold the government to account and to oversee the government spending of Canadians' hard-earned tax dollars.

By refusing to comply with the Speaker's decision to produce the documents, the government is undermining the principle and integrity of the House. It is also setting a very dangerous precedent for what I think Canadians expect from all of us in the House of Commons.

● (1720)

Parliament is the House of the people, the people of my constituency of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound and, for that matter, all the constituencies across this country who trusted us and elected us to represent them. We are here to be the people's voice in Ottawa and ensure that we are good stewards of every single one of their tax dollars. Perhaps more than ever, as people struggle with the cost of living crisis and try hard every day just to put food on the table and pay to have a roof over their heads, Canadians deserve to know their tax dollars are being spent prudently, responsibly and on programs that will impact their lives in a positive way, not to line Liberal insiders' pockets.

In preparing for my speech today, I reviewed some of the excellent speeches by my Conservative colleagues. I appreciated learning something new from my hon. colleague from Foothills when he highlighted some claims the member for Papineau made back in 2013, which was before my time and privilege to be in this esteemed chamber. The then leader of the Liberal Party proclaimed that a future Liberal government would “be coming out shortly with a way to open up and be more transparent about all our expenses in a way that will restore Canadians' confidence and trust in holders of public office”. He stated, “We will certainly offer a level of transparency that hasn't been seen before.”

A lot of Canadians believed those words and rewarded the member for Papineau in 2015 with a majority government. Unfortunately, when the Prime Minister said we would have a level of transparency and accountability like we had never seen before, Canadians, I am pretty sure, assumed then that there was going to be more transparency and more accountability. Unfortunately, over these last nine years, we have seen exactly the opposite. As we have seen, the government and the Prime Minister have slammed the door shut on accountability and transparency when it comes to Canadian taxpayer dollars.

In summary, the Liberal government is accountable to Parliament, and Parliament's will is supreme. It is not my Conservative colleagues who are obstructing the business of the House of Commons. It is the Liberal government that is going against the will of the democratically elected House of Commons. The Liberals have the ability to end the blockage in the House of Commons today if

they simply hand over the documents. We are here to hold the government to account, to be honest, be transparent and make sure the hard-earned taxpayer dollars of Canadians across this country, in my riding, in the Speaker's riding, in all ridings, are being spent for the right reasons and in an accountable, transparent manner.

I am hoping the member for Winnipeg North has an answer to my question. Hopefully, he can explain how the money is going to flow to the green tech companies that are doing so much to address important issues like climate change across this country, trying to make a difference and make Canada a global leader, but are being held up because of the Liberal scandal and this mess that has been created.

● (1725)

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we see with this issue that we are setting a precedent in some way. Yes, we know Parliament is supreme. Of course, Parliament makes errors and it is called to order by the Supreme Court, for example. Parliament is supreme, but in this particular case, we are setting the precedent that Parliament is using its power to obtain documents to give to a third party.

Let us forget that it is the RCMP for a moment. This is a first, and it is a very complicated issue because it is a first. That is why it is a good idea for a committee, which represents the House in terms of the proportion of members from different parties that are on the committee, to deliberate on this. A committee could go much deeper than the kind of debate we have seen here in the last four weeks.

I do not understand why the member, on the one hand, has faith in Parliament but, on the other hand, does not have faith in a body that reflects Parliament and is within Parliament itself, that is, the procedure and House affairs committee.

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Mr. Speaker, I have complete faith in our committees and our process here. I never once said anything in my speech to the contrary.

I am here at the will and privilege of being elected by the great people of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound. I asked for their opinions about whether the government should comply with the will of Parliament. Yes, maybe it is a precedent. Maybe the government should have made that case a little clearer if it felt it was a precedent this House should not take on. That decision was made back in June when we voted on this.

We are now here. I asked my constituents, and they made it crystal clear to me that the government needs to comply with the will of Parliament. I am here for the people who elected me. We are all here for the people who elected us and gave us the privilege to sit in this esteemed chamber.

*Privilege*

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, maybe if the Liberals had not wasted so much money in public funds in the SDTC scandal, we would have some heat in the chamber.

All joking aside, if the government did not delegate the management of public funds so much, would the problem we are talking about today even exist? What could be done to make the management of public assets and public funds more efficient and non-partisan?

**The Speaker:** Before I recognize the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound for his response, I would like to reassure the member that we are aware of the situation and we are trying to fix it.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question, and it is something I talked about in my first speech. How did we get into this mess? I highlighted that this fund worked really well for 20 years, but where did it go off the rails? It was when the former Liberal minister, Navdeep Bains, decided to appoint a chair of SDTC who had conflicts of interest, despite being forewarned about the appointment of that member.

Ultimately, the issue, after we dug into it, was that the Liberal government-appointed board members of SDTC did not seem to have any ethics. There were 186 conflicts of interest. That is the key.

Whatever the process was for the 20 years prior, we need to go back to it. We need to appoint people based on merit who deserve to be there and who are offering programs, judgment or service to this country for the right reasons, not because they are connected to the government.

● (1730)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the public accounts committee, where we have been studying this issue, we had the deputy secretary to the cabinet of the Privy Council, which, as we know, is pretty much the Prime Minister's department. She told us that she was refusing to turn over the documents unredacted despite an order of Parliament because she insisted that the access to information law superseded the will of Parliament. In the same meeting, she told committee that she violated the Access to Information Act by destroying documents. This is right from the Prime Minister's own department.

Does my colleague believe what the Prime Minister's department believes, that the access to information law it violated supersedes the will of Parliament?

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the incredibly hard work he has been doing. I know he has been at the forefront of uncovering this scandal for a while now.

I just learned something new. I was not aware that the Prime Minister's Office basically suggested that the access to information law is somehow more important than the will of Parliament. I flat out disagree with that assertion.

I represent a rural riding. I come from a family with a modest background. I have to defend, even with my own family members, that there are legitimate reasons to protect certain things. Especially with my background in national security, I know that sometimes they need to be protected. However, when it comes to corruption, insider information or the bad spending of taxpayers' dollars, that should be transparent, especially when it is brought forward like this.

Ultimately, these documents do, in my opinion, need to be turned over. The will of Parliament must be upheld.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that the member—

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the NDP never got a question.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach will forgive me. Because of the transition, he is right; I did not go in the right order. I am realizing that now. I assure the hon. member that he will have an opportunity to ask a question.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we look at the motion we are debating. The motion says that we should send the issue to the procedure and House affairs committee. That is what we are voting on. In the over 100 speeches delivered by the Conservatives, they are telling the government that we should not listen to what the RCMP and the Auditor General of Canada are recommending to the government.

We should stick to the motion, which says to put the issue before the procedure and House affairs committee. Does the member not support the Speaker's recommendation? That is what the Speaker has asked us to do.

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Mr. Speaker, I will keep my answer fairly short because I know the member for Edmonton Griesbach wants to get in a quick question too.

The short answer is that I respect the will of Parliament. We will get to a vote on that. I am going to be voting yes on this motion.

At the same time, as I have told the member I do not know how many times, I think everybody has a right to speak. Do members know what would be fair? Everybody in this chamber should get to speak as much as the member for Winnipeg North. This Parliament would go so much faster if we all spoke the exact same number of words as him.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, looking at some of this hypocrisy, it is difficult for the New Democrats to digest scandal after scandal of the Liberals. However, there has also been scandal after scandal with the Conservatives. I find this to be a difficult issue to circle, because all of us should be opposed to corruption.

*Privilege*

When Mike Duffy did that, did he pay back the money and say sorry? If not, would the member be willing to do that on his behalf?

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Mr. Speaker, I think the member was newly elected in 2021. I was only elected in 2019. I cannot speak to past governments, but what I will commit to doing in this chamber is holding any government of any political stripe to account on corruption every darn time, and I will be 100 times harder on a future Conservative government that does anything even half as bad as the current Liberal government.

● (1735)

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this place to speak on behalf of the good people of Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, who sent me here. They are quite concerned about the business of this place being hung up and the fact that we are not addressing what we could be addressing. We are stopped from doing so because the other side of the House will not follow the order the Speaker laid out for them to produce documents relating to the Sustainable Development Technology Canada fund, unredacted, as the Speaker commanded them to do.

If they listened, it could be business as usual, and we could be dealing with other important issues in this country. Right now, what is important to Canadians and the constituents of all of us in the House, even constituents represented by Liberal members, is knowing what is in the documents that were sort of produced and somewhat redacted. What is with the big cover-up? If the Liberals bring the documents forward, the privilege debate will be over and we can get back to business. First we have to find out where that \$400 million went.

**An hon. member:** Where did it go?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, is wondering where those funds went.

Canadians have lost faith in the NDP-Liberal coalition, which seems to be alive and well. Nearly 20% of the Prime Minister's caucus, 24 members, signed a letter asking for a leadership review. What happened yesterday? One of his ministers resigned. Some people think he may be the other Randy. I do not know, but I am trying to be very careful because I know this issue is very close to the Speaker's heart and he is making sure that we do not step over any boundaries. Things are crumbling on that side of the House. Canadians can see it. The business of the country is falling apart.

On June 10, a motion was adopted calling for documents related to the SDTC fund to be produced to the law clerk. What happened over the summer? Nothing. Then the documents were either withheld or redacted at the order of the big boss, the Prime Minister.

The common-sense Conservative House leader raised this question of privilege because of a failure to comply with that House order. On September 26, the Speaker ruled that the House's privilege had been breached, give or a take a day or two. What is a day or two? Look at the time we are chewing up asking that this question of privilege be honoured and that the documents be delivered to the law clerk.

It is time to get on with business. The Liberals should just produce the documents. Let us get on with things. What are we going to find out about that \$400 million?

I have communities in Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame that are fraught with crime. People are fearful. As members heard me say today in a question, I asked the Prime Minister why he will not call an election and let the people vote on his crime record. I attended a town hall this past Friday in a town of 800 people, Friday afternoon. Nearly 300 people showed up at that town hall on crime. RCMP members were there too, talking about how their hands are tied.

● (1740)

The criminal justice system is not being supported for rural Canadians. They do not even see the point in laying charges in a lot of cases, because minimum sentences will be thrown out of court, and cases take so long to make their way through the criminal justice system in Newfoundland and Labrador. In fact, not long ago, a murder case that was pretty much cut-and-dried got thrown right out of court because it had waited so long without having one day in court. This is happening all over the country.

When the police have to have everything perfect, and if the RCMP has to wait three or four years to get the ducks in a row to do a major cocaine bust or crack bust, to shut down a crack house, how many more addicts are being created week after week, month after month and year after year? The NDP-Liberals' soft-on-crime criminal justice system favours the criminal. However, it disadvantages those who are impacted by crime and those families whose loved ones are addicts or are becoming addicts where the crime is addiction related.

People who worked hard all their lives, senior citizens, attended a town hall, and not just one, not just two, not just three but a multitude of them stood up and told the RCMP that they were sleeping with a gun next to their bed. That is an infraction of the Criminal Code, but what can the RCMP do? It does not have any resources, and the people feel like they are left to fend for themselves. It is becoming like the Wild West; it is crazy. It is deplorable and it should not be happening in Canada, specifically in rural Canada.

During the pandemic, people moved from metro regions of Canada back to their rural communities, to where they grew up and where they felt safe, but where now, just a short two or three years later, they are so afraid that they are telling us they are sleeping with a gun next to their bed. I heard it with my very own ears. The RCMP heard it. It is not hearsay. It is not something about which the media is going to say, "Oh, [the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame] is a big bluff. He is hyping it all up. He is making this stuff up and being dramatic." This is very real.

I spoke to a member of the clergy a few days before I went to the town hall meeting. I said to him, "You're a man of faith and you're in the community", and I asked him, "What are you hearing?" I told him what I am hearing. He said, "MP, what's going to happen is that vigilantism is going to take over and somebody is going to get shot." This is absolutely deplorable.

*Privilege*

The police do not have the resources. The depot was shut down for two years while every university, every community college and every high school in Canada was full on. The education system found a way to operate. Why did the RCMP depot have to be shut down for two years while the members that the RCMP has are moving into retirement age?

The RCMP knew what the shortfall would be with no recruits graduating from the college for two full years. Whose directive was it? I do not think it was a directive from the RCMP to shut down the depot. I think the directive came from the soft NDP-Liberal leadership. It is absolutely terrible, and I am sure my colleague from Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan understands that the RCMP college could have kept graduating members.

• (1745)

Right now rural crime is on the rise and addiction-related crime is going through the roof. The latter is a tricky kind of crime for the police to address because it is addiction-driven. There is absolutely, in most cases, no motive, no logic and no nothing. It is just driven by the need for the next fix, and the poor addicts cannot even think through the process of right and wrong.

Where else could some of the \$400 million have been spent? I think about the oyster industry in Prince Edward Island. I visited there this past summer. An industry that means over \$100 million to the economy of Prince Edward Island is completely in peril. The people of Prince Edward Island were promised a million dollars to conduct research to try to solve the MSX parasite problem that is going to completely wipe out the oyster industry in Prince Edward Island.

It would probably be safe to say that members would like to enjoy a nice Malpeque oyster once in a while. They are not going to be enjoying any in two years' or three years' time, because the parasite kills any oyster that is infested with it within two years, and it is going to completely wipe out the entire oyster industry in Prince Edward Island. We are not hearing anything from the members who represent Prince Edward Island.

I am glad as an Islander to stand here and speak on behalf of the oyster industry in Prince Edward Island, and just a little ways away on another island, Îles de la Madeleine, the minister announced not long ago lots of money from the blue slush fund for small-craft harbours. The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, one member of the House out of 338, delivered 20% of all small-craft harbour projects to her own riding, and P.E.I. gets \$500,000 a year. In August, a summit was promised to bring in industry experts to discuss the oyster MSX problem. There has been no talk of it whatsoever.

There are so many things happening in this country that affect rural economies and rural security, and they are being neglected. It is a burden we carry, representing the people who sent us here to speak up on issues that matter to them.

Another very, very big matter in my province of Newfoundland and Labrador is the failure of DFO science in carrying out adequate and accurate stock assessments on our northern cod. Right now, rumours are flying around that the vessel that was conducting the ground trawl survey has been having all kinds of mechanical issues,

and that once again, for the fourth year in a row, we are in jeopardy of not having a complete, accurate northern cod survey.

For the people who are involved in the fishing industry back home, it is complete neglect. When there are questions about the cod biomass, the finger always gets pointed at the survey. If the survey is incomplete, that is the best that we have. Follow the precautionary principle, and the maximum harvest potential can never be realized. Those are dollars that do not flow into our coastal communities and our coastal economies. They are new dollars that never get a chance to enter our economy, and that is not good enough.

• (1750)

In the spring of 2022 I brought forward a bill to address the ecological disaster and the imbalance that exist in our ocean ecosystems due to the overpopulation of pinnipeds. Pinnipeds include seals, sea lions and walruses. Just the available quota this year, if it were taken, would reduce the consumption of fish by over a million tonnes. All of the nutrition, the value of clothing and everything that goes with it, is sitting there. It is a waste, and it is destroying our marine ecosystem and reducing the GDP in our blue economy. Maybe some of the \$400 million could have gone into redeveloping our markets for seal products, but it is just not happening. All we hear is promises.

There are lots of groups. They do a little study, and it is \$500,000 for one, \$100,000 for another, and \$750,000 for another, but there are no results. We need results. The taxpayers' dollars could be invested in something that is going to give results. We do not know what the money is being invested in. We cannot get the documents.

We need the documents, and we need to get on with the business of the House. We need to start tackling crime. We need to fix the budget, and I guess we will soon find out what that looks like. We will have something to chew into.

Then we look at the issue we are continually bringing up here in the House. The number one thing I hear about, next to crime, is "When are we having a carbon tax election?" It is time to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. Everything I have spoken about here so far included three of those four pillars, so I cannot lose the opportunity to talk about the one that is taking the most money out of the wallets of Canadians: the carbon tax. The farmers who grow the food are taxed, the truckers who truck the food are taxed, and the factories that produce the food are taxed.

*Privilege*

I am sure the member from Winnipeg has eaten the odd can of Campbell's soup in his day. I wonder what he thinks it was cooked with. Was it a grass fire? I do not think so. A good old bit of diesel fuel is now getting the big factory burners going, cooking up the soup for the member. The trucker trucks it into a Loblaws somewhere. One good thing about a can of Campbell's soup is that it can be stored on the shelf. It does not need to be put in the big freezers and refrigerator units that the government supplied. It is very efficient sitting on the shelf.

When the Liberal government wants to dish out money to its friends, like Loblaws, that is no problem, but when the oyster fishermen and the oyster aquaculture industry are in peril in P.E.I., they are thrown to the wolves like the rest of Canadians who are depending on better from the government.

• (1755)

**The Speaker:** I would like to present my apologies to the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame. Indeed, he was correct; it was Thursday, September 26, that the ruling came in from the Speaker.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to identify a couple of things that are very important with regard to security and safety. The Harper administration, in 2012, put in a three-year plan, not a one-year plan, to take \$143 million out of the CBSA budget, to get rid of frontline workers and others who protected our borders.

This member was also part of the current group that, over a year ago, went line by line through the budget against funding CBSA and its workers. Back in 2012, the union and many other experts identified that guns coming illegally into Canada would come in a more diverse area and at a significant threshold. They said there would be more pornography coming into Canada and that there would be more people entering illegally.

Will the member apologize and own up to the responsibility that Stephen Harper started attacking workers who defend our border every single day? Also, why was the \$143 million not restored after they found out it was true that all those things went up because of Harper's cuts?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, I am sure my NDP-Liberal colleague is very pleased to be part of the Loblaws team that dished out all that money to Loblaws a few years ago to fit its stores out with new freezers and coolers. The government that is in place is nine years old. The member just went back 12 years. Who is responsible for the last nine years? We are not talking about 2012 here. We are talking about the present and the conditions people are living in from coast to coast to coast. They keep bringing back Mr. Harper. There have been nine years of NDP-Liberal rule. It is time for it to come to an end and to call a carbon tax election right now.

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, it is not nine years and going back 12 years, because he sits with—

**The Speaker:** To the hon. member for Windsor West, who is a very experienced member, that sounds a lot like debate.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know for a fact that the Conservatives do not have an envi-

ronmental policy. They do not like the price on carbon. They do not like ZEV mandates. They do not like the clean-fuel standard. They do not like an emissions cap on oil and gas. They do not like the clean electricity standard. The only thing they believe in is giving subsidies to businesses to invest in green technology. That is all they have.

Does the member opposite not see a hint of irony in that?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite a gentleman. He spoke of EV mandates. Last night I was watching the news, and a gentleman's life will be forever changed because he had to beat the windows out of a vehicle that was burning, and poor victims were burned inside. These EVs are just not safe. When they catch fire, it is impossible to put the fire out. It is a safety issue to even have lithium batteries in a vehicle. People are getting stuck in these vehicles. The rules surrounding them are so weak. In Canada, EVs just do not work. They are not selling. The government is dishing out \$35 billion to battery plants in Montreal and in southern Ontario for products that are not going to be sold. That is another waste of taxpayers' money. We can tack that \$35 billion onto this \$400 billion.

• (1800)

**Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave a passionate speech. In his speech, he spoke about \$400 million being taken from the people of Canada. We hear heartbreaking stories of old people being scammed, of money being taken out of their bank accounts. I would like to ask my colleague's opinion on this \$400 million. People did not have a say on where the money went. What is his opinion of that?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. It is a very good question. When seniors are robbed, they are usually robbed by friends or by other people they trust. There was an amount of trust put into the government in 2015. For goodness' sake, the Liberals took every seat in Atlantic Canada. It is always the people we trust who steal from us. It is not always neighbours or family in the case of seniors. Now it is the people they entrusted with 100% of the seats in Atlantic Canada. They want change and we are going to bring it to them.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member started off so well. I think he got about five gold stars according to the CBC and the Conservative insiders. Then he started taking a bit of a nosedive because, according to the article on Conservative MPs, if they stray too far from the message, they get told pretty quickly. I do not believe opposing electric vehicles outright or calling them something that they are not is going to do him well.



*Privilege*

Does the member recognize that what he is supposed to be talking about is a motion being referred to the PROC committee?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about control. This is the guy who stands and asks at least 50% of the questions in any debate in this House, the Campbell soup man from Winnipeg. He admitted it is one of his favourite foods.

**The Speaker:** I think we are all having good fun, and I do not think this is causing any disturbances, but it is really important that members try to not attach labels to other members. It is important to conduct ourselves with respect.

The hon. member.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, I, for one, certainly am not censored. I do not know anyone who is censored. We do not have to be censored. We all know what is important to Canadians. That is what we stand in this House to talk about: the crime, the homelessness, the hunger and the cost to heat their homes.

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

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, if that was me, you would be, if you remembered the name my riding, telling me to shut up. The member should have better sense and stop heckling over there. I would never do that to him. He is part of the government that has destroyed Canada. We have had enough. It is time to call a corruption, carbon tax, crime election.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague speaks with great passion in this place and I really do appreciate that. He mentioned that he does not want to be censored. I want to give him an opportunity to reflect upon something in this House.

What is a lesson he would give to this place in relation to what he thinks the worst Conservative scandal is and how we can learn from it?

• (1805)

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, do you have a way of deciphering what he just asked me? I do not think I am a brilliant man or a stupid man, maybe somewhere in the middle, but he is not making sense to me.

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

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, he should be ashamed of the marriage that the NDP have with the Liberals. They keep propping up the government—

**The Speaker:** Order. I am just making sure that members do not take the floor when they are not recognized by the Speaker so that the hon. member can answer.

The hon. member.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, the member should be ashamed of the arrangement that his party has in propping up the corrupt government that is breaking Canadians. We talk to people when we go back home, when we see the people who elected us. The number one thing they ask is how long is the NDP crowd going to keep backing up the corrupt Liberals who are breaking us. That is what we hear. What should the member do? He should put that in his pipe, smoke it and think about it.

**The Speaker:** I am going to ask members to be very careful in their choice of words and in the way they treat each other. It is very important for us to do so.

I see the hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, I do understand the member's emotion about many things of this place, and he is a very emotional fellow. However, there is a requirement to treat all members honourably. I asked him a very clear question as to what is the worst Conservative scandal that we can learn from, and he failed to answer that. That was the intent of my question.

**The Speaker:** That is now entering into debate, but the first point the hon. member made was a point the Speaker had also just made, which is the importance of having respect and decorum in this place.

The hon. member from Calgary Confederation, or rather, Calgary Centre.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is good to be the member for Calgary Centre. My friend is actually the member for Calgary Confederation. He and I collaborate on a lot of things because we are both the downtown members from Calgary. We have great constituents.

We are here tonight, again, because the government refuses to turn over documents the Speaker demanded. The Speaker demanded that the government provide these documents to Parliament, which is the Speaker's right. It is Parliament's right to get these documents, in their unredacted form, as we call the government to account on a report the Auditor General gave on a fund called SDTC, the Sustainable Development Technology Canada fund. The Auditor General reported \$400 million of unaccountable spending, which we have referred to many times as the green slush fund because of the way the government has spent its money. The Auditor General's findings were telling in so many ways. When we look at the conflicts of interest upon conflicts of interest, none of these funds should have been disbursed the way they were.

Many of the projects funded through SDTC did not even meet the eligibility requirements. At the end of the day, this happened because a bunch of Liberal-connected insiders were writing cheques to each other and approving money going into each of their companies. This included companies that are partially owned by people who sit on the Liberal bench, which is a shame. It is the definition of a conflict of interest.

The government does not want to disclose this to Parliament. However, we can go back to the constitutional set-up, how we function in this place. The government is the executive; we are the legislature. In Canada, the legislature is supreme. We are all elected across Canada, 338 of us. The Speaker has talked about showing respect to each other; this is legislative respect.

*Privilege*

The government must obey the rules of Parliament. If we do not have these rules and we do not know how to function together anymore, we will not be able to continue as a country in the way we govern ourselves, and have for so long, as a democracy. What is at stake here is the governance we have as an actual democracy. This is reminiscent of what happened during COVID; then, the same government took the Speaker's predecessor to court because it was ordered to provide documents on the Winnipeg lab scandal. In that scandal, a whole bunch of information was provided to a foreign government through a bunch of agents. The head of the Public Health Agency of Canada was brought to the bar to testify in front of Parliament about why he would not provide those documents. It was demanded that he provide them, and the government subsequently took the Speaker's predecessor to court to say it did not have to provide Parliament with those documents. That is a clear aberration of democracy, the way we practise it in Canada, and so is this.

This is an aberration. We have to get back to the way we govern ourselves effectively together. Canadians need to understand how their democracy works, and it is not in the way the government is treating their democracy. This is not an autocracy; this is a democracy. There are 338 people elected. I think we are up to about 120 now on this side of the House in the Conservative Party of Canada, and it looks as though we are going to do quite a bit better going forward. However, the government is going to abnormal lengths, at this point in time, to subvert the will of Parliament. We can think about that: subverting the will of Parliament. I am not sure this will continue, but so far, we have managed to hold the three opposition parties together to make sure we continue on this path. We are not going to commence with any of the government business until these documents are provided to the House of Commons for our inspection to find out where \$400 million of taxpayer money actually went and whose pockets this money went into.

This is our right to claim, and we are doing that. We are standing here. I hope the other two parties stay with us in this and do not crumble because they are getting some kind of bribe. I do think that is part of the card game that the Liberals want to play. They have to bribe one of these other parties to no longer commit to this effort to make sure Parliament is held in the respect due to it. There is a lot at stake.

In Question Period, every day, we talk about the opposition parties holding government to account. Most Canadians think that happens in Question Period, but it is no longer even a functional part of holding the government to account.

• (1810)

Questions are asked and answers are not given. The government sometimes thinks it is its job to ask questions of the opposition about what is happening over here. Question period is about the functioning of government, and every one of those questions we ask should be about the accountability of government and what the government is doing at any one point in time, but it is not functioning that way. Canadians are watching the practice of democracy being whittled down on a daily basis. I beseech you, Mr. Speaker, to get hold of question period, hold the government to account and make the Liberals provide answers during that 45-minute session

every day when Canadians get to watch the government's answers to the questions asked by responsible members of the opposition.

We are talking about a \$400-million slush fund here, and I want to get to the root of it. Exposing this slush fund will expose a lot because there are a bunch of actors here that the government goes hand in hand with. They are shaking each other's hands and effectively moving money into people's pockets. It is a great redistribution of wealth from Canadian taxpayers to friends of the government. I say that with some reservation because it is almost an accusation and it is not my style to make direct accusations, but why are the Liberals not providing the documents? It has been almost two months. They are withholding something for very good reason.

I will go back to what we are looking at. It is a redistribution method the government has at this point where it is taking money from taxpayers and giving it to people it believes are on its side. This cannot go on forever because despite the fact that the Minister of Finance said we would only have a \$40-billion deficit, it is going to be more than \$46 billion this year. That adds to the \$1.3-trillion federal government debt we have in this country, which is about \$30,000 per Canadian, not per family but per Canadian. That is \$120,000 of debt for a family of four. On top of that, there is a provincial debt, which is almost the same, but call it \$55,000 of debt per Canadian between our two levels of government, which is obscene.

We are \$2.2 trillion in debt across this country. We are spending more on interest now than we are spending on anything else. We could spend all this money, coming up to \$90 billion a year, on something besides debt if we got a hold of this. It is an awful amount of money to be coming off our income statement every year. It is unsustainable.

What happens once we go through all that? Inflation is going to make sure there is less money in everybody's pockets for their take-home pay, their rent, what they provide for their kids and their families, for their futures and their pensions. The government is inflating peoples' savings down so it is worth less and less as far as what they buy.

I am going to divert at this point to talk about what happened last week. It is relevant because the Minister of Environment was over in Baku, Azerbaijan, for COP29, the Conference of the Parties, about new environmental measures. When he went over there, he pledged more money from Canadian taxpayers, an extra billion dollars per year or thereabouts, going through a fund the government set up called FinDev.

This is a manufactured corporation; it is the people of Canada's money at the end of the day. It is going to provide what they call "blended finance". I know what that is in the real world, but it is nothing when it is a government organization; it is just taxpayer money the government is throwing at a wall. It is more money, more spending. The problem is that a week earlier, the same minister, the Minister of Environment, put a cap on the Canadian oil and gas production industry. The cap was not even where we are right now.

Every actor in the Canadian economy says we are going to have to cut our oil production by about a million barrels a day. Right now, the country produces about 5.3 million barrels of oil per day, most of which goes for export. It is our number one export in this country at about 30% of our export value. Cutting oil production by a million barrels a day is going to cost the Canadian economy about \$100 million per day.

● (1815)

The Minister of the Environment is over in Baku pledging billions of dollars of Canadian money for foreigners, because they have more needs than we have. He is going to say that. We have a country that is already going broke because of our high debt and we are pledging more money and we are going to have less in the economy here to pay for anything going forward. I worked in finance for a number of years. Everybody here knows that. I can guarantee us that this is not a lesson we give people in high finance. This is a lesson we give people in grade school. We cannot continue to spend more and earn less without this going upside down very quickly. It is going upside down very quickly.

There are a number of quotes here that I want to give with regard to that cap that the government is putting on Canadian oil and gas production. They say, “The proposed regulations put a limit on pollution, not production...the oil and gas sector is well positioned to reinvest record profits into projects that drive cleaner production...The draft regulation will encourage the sector to redirect these record profits into decarbonization.”

I think the people over at Environment and Climate Change Canada do not understand what records are, do not understand what climate change is, do not understand anything about economics here, and do not understand how businesses in Canada actually make money and how they lose money significantly in commodity downturns. These are cyclical, as we will know. Every commodity industry is cyclical. We make our money when the product is up. We lose money, often, when the product goes down in price, in the world price.

They then make these false statements. This is Environment and Climate Change Canada, which is a fabrication of an organization. It is really a passenger organization that is there to take care of the non-governmental organizations that feed it misinformation. I can say that very clearly because I have watched it through my five years here. It is an inane department that needs to be cleansed of all the influence that is coming into it that is purely self-serving at the end of the day. It no longer serves Canadians. It serves itself and serves the cannibalistic organizations that are more or less taking advantage of Canadians in this respect.

Let us go through there: “Countries around the world are moving actively, including Canada’s democratic allies and other major countries, including China.”

I have the emissions profile from China, all Asian countries and other countries around the world. Canada’s oil and gas industry is an environmental producer, and it is very effective at reducing its emissions. It has been. It has gone down by 30% in the oil sands over the last two decades, more so, from an emissions reduction perspective, per barrel of oil produced, than any other producer in the world.

### *Privilege*

Does that make any sense to anybody on the other side of the bench? The industry, the sector that is performing the best as far as our pollution profile, our emissions reduction, is the one we are going to punish here by actually saying we cannot produce anymore. We are not only punishing the Canadian economy, we are punishing technology around the world. We are punishing the environmental solutions as they come forward here. All this is based upon what is going on here in the green slush fund. A lot of green stuff is going through this.

Here is something that they actually got partially right: “Oil and gas companies in Canada have proven repeatedly that they can innovate and develop new technologies to produce more competitive oil and gas with less pollution.”

There is some nonsense in that sentence but I agree with the sentiment. They got something mostly right there.

Let us get through to a few other things here, because the same week that the environment minister came up with that production cap on Canada’s most profitable industry, for the country, not for themselves, because the banking industry is way more profitable than the oil and gas industry, the environment commissioner came out on Thursday, three days following, and gave this report card on where the environment minister and his whole department has been for their delivery across this.

I am going to quote a few things from the environment commissioner. He says:

...missing and inconsistent information, delays in launching important measures, and a lack of reliability in projections hindered the credibility of [the government’s] plan.

I am going to go through a few other neat quotes here from the environment commissioner, not from an opposition politician but from the environment commissioner, who is there to make sure that Canadian dollars are spent well, and that we get results in our environmental outcomes here. There is a:

...lack of transparency on emissions reductions and projections....

That is, ECCC, Environment and Climate Change Canada, is making it up as they go along.

Here is another one:

The recent decreases to projected 2030 emissions were not due to climate actions taken by governments but were instead because of revisions to the data or methods used in modelling.

If we do not like the results, we should just monkey around with the model a little bit to show that it is doing better than it actually is, but it is failing.

● (1820)

Everything the government is spending billions of dollars of Canadian taxpayer money on is failing as far as emissions go. There are provinces and industries around this country that are doing very well in making sure we reduce emissions per barrel, per unit of GDP and on an energy efficiency basis. However, that is not the result of anything the government or Environment and Climate Change Canada is responsible for. It is a complete sham. If they do not like the results, they just change the numbers, get some different inputs and change the modelling.

### *Privilege*

Here is another one: “This issue of the lack of transparency in the modelling continues to be an ongoing concern, which can undermine the trust and credibility in the reported progress.” The environment commissioner is telling the government that it cannot be trusted, that its modelling is wrong and that, effectively, the numbers it is putting on paper are a bunch of hogwash. This lack of transparency means that accountability for reducing emissions remains unclear.

The gist, of course, is that the government's approach to greenhouse gas emissions is a complete failure. It does not know what it is doing. It does not know how to accomplish its goals. It does not even know how to measure the outcomes it seeks.

This goes back to the parasitic organizations that are well-funded by the government. That is where the \$400 million that I am talking about comes in, the relevant part of this equation. This was a green slush fund that accomplished nothing green, which is the problem. It was just a wealth transfer. It was money going into a whole bunch of pockets that was not reducing anything, nor accomplishing anything environmental for Canada or the world. We were just spending taxpayers' money, and that spending of taxpayers' money was going toward nothing effective. It was just going into the pockets of a whole bunch of insiders. It was a sham.

How did this nonsense arise? This nonsense arose four years ago when the pandemic happened. I would like to quote some of the insiders who were getting rich off the government, and when I say rich off the government, I mean off taxpayer money. The government does not have any money; it is a government going broke, but it continues to take money from taxpayers across the country and give it to rich organizations that are profiteering from the largesse that the government foists upon them.

This is a real doozy from the task force for a resilient recovery:

By using a \$13-billion public investment to leverage \$35 billion in private capital through de-risking and co-investment strategies, and enabling regional efficiency finance networks through standardized project origination and underwriting approaches, and aggregation and warehousing of projects to attract large institutional investors.

What a bunch of hogwash. Those are the words that these organizations put on paper. They do not even make sense. They are from the government's friends putting together a paper excusing that they will be paid billions of dollars for accomplishing absolutely nothing.

Here is another one, from a news article: The “primary focus” of the task force was “a review of The Resilient Recovery Framework, a document submitted to the Task Force by the Smart Prosperity Institute on the very day of its launch.” Smart Prosperity was also the principal researcher for the task force. The task force was put together to look at Smart Prosperity's work, and Smart Prosperity was doing the research for the task force. Have members ever seen such a bunch of circular nonsense?

Let us look at that. The Smart Prosperity Institute is a joke. It is an organization cobbled together from the government's friends to funnel money into their pockets and the pockets of a whole bunch of other friends of the government. It is an absolute atrocity.

Fifteen people were on the task force for a resilient recovery and four of them had business experience. About 13 of them were just government grifters, people riding the tails of government and making sure they got paid all the way along. However, when they got paid, who did the paying? It was the Canadian taxpayer who did the paying. These are the people we need to hold to account, and they will be held to account. There is a reckoning to be had here, and that reckoning is part of the \$400-million slush fund that we need to address very clearly.

I have said a lot and have a lot more to say, but I will entertain some questions at this time.

● (1825)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I take it from the member's comments that, like many other Conservatives, he does not recognize that climate change is a reality in life. That is fine. That is not what my question is about.

What we have before us is a motion to see the issue brought to the procedure and House affairs committee. That is what the Conservatives have moved, and well over 100 continue to play a million-dollar plus political game as they try to twist reality and put a great deal of misinformation not only inside the chamber but also outside the chamber through social media.

My question for the member is this. When will the Conservative Party stop with the self-serving interests of the leader of the Conservative Party and start dealing with the interests of Canadians and the issues that they are facing on a daily basis?

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am going to address one thing. The member should never put words in my mouth. If he wants them to stick, he can say them from his own mouth.

Everybody knows the climate is changing. It is something people are experiencing on a day-to-day basis. I hope you discipline him, Mr. Speaker, because that is just absolute nonsense, and I would like him to withdraw that comment.

Nevertheless, I will address what he said here. We serve Canadians, each one of us who comes to this House of Commons, so for him to suggest I am providing misinformation is a great insult. I think he knows me better than that. He knows when I show up in this House of Commons I have done my homework. I look at the problem and what the solution set looks like. Therefore, for him to suggest I am providing misinformation, as you know better, Mr. Speaker, and the Liberals should know better, frankly, I think a withdrawal is required.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member. I can understand how temperatures can get high.

I would hope that all members extend their full respect and decorum to all members in this place. We should never presume what people are feeling.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Windsor West.

*Privilege*

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in that spirit, I have a couple of things. We have seen in this House documents and information not provided that should have been provided. One of the problems that we have in Canada is Crown copyright. Crown copyright prevents parliamentarians and other Canadians from seeing information that was supplied to the government of the day, as well as research that was done that affects many businesses, organizations and not-for-profits, and the chamber here with respect to what we get on a regular basis.

Given that the member was prepared to come here and look at this in a different way, I hope, than others, would the Conservatives support amending Canada's crown copyright to be more similar to that of other Commonwealth nations and the United States? We have not updated this properly since 1911, so that would also provide regular information that would be important for parliamentarians and the public.

• (1830)

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, it is something I confess I have not looked at. I think anything that provides us with better information in this House of Commons is going to be good for the outcome, which of course is good government for all Canadians at the end of the day and making sure we have that information available.

What I am seeking today in this speech is the information from the government on a \$400-million slush fund. That is the first step. However, I appreciate and would entertain, as I am sure my party would entertain, the ability to update information available to parliamentarians going forward.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we agree that the government should hand over the redacted documents, but the Conservatives need to stop this filibuster that has been going on for weeks. People in my riding are wondering what this paralysis is accomplishing. Moreover, the needs of the public are not being met, either. What about our legislative role? Is my colleague comfortable with having contributed to this paralysis?

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her interesting question.

Are the Conservatives the ones causing this obstruction right now? I think it is the government that is systematically obstructing the House by not turning over the documents that we as parliamentarians need to do our work.

If the Bloc Québécois does not want to have the information that the government has a responsibility to provide to parliamentarians, that is the opposite of what it has said so far. I think that it is very important for Parliament to continue operating like a Parliament, like a democracy. It is very important that we stay here to ensure that the government fulfills its responsibility to hand over the documents to Parliament.

[English]

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to sort of pick my hon. colleague's brain a little bit, because I know he has a finance background. He brought up and highlighted in his speech a number of important things that I

hear frequently from my constituents too, in particular about the state of our national finances, the sheer amount of interest we are paying on our national debt and how big that national debt is.

The member said that the scandal is a \$400-million one, but he highlighted another issue, about the government's latest decisions that are tied to emissions, and what the cost of those is going to mean to Canada's gross domestic product. I just wanted him to clarify whether he said \$100 million a day. Maybe I got that number wrong.

How could the Canadian government and Canadians have ultimately benefited from the money that is no longer going to be contributed to our economy?

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, \$100 million a day is based on the reduction of a million barrels a day of export capacity towards our main trading partner, the United States of America. It is based on the price of oil, obviously, that is going to be there at times and not there at times. We could say that between \$60 million and \$120 million will be the amount. Multiply that by 365 days and there is a whole bunch of money that is no longer going to be in the Canadian economy. That is just the trading volume.

There are also jobs. Up to 400,000 jobs will be implicated in the manoeuvre from the government. Four hundred thousand jobs provide a lot of tax revenue for the government at the end of the day. The main revenue source for the government is actually income tax revenue from individuals.

Of course our trade surplus with the United States is very important as well. The manoeuvre would hamper that trade surplus significantly. Inflation would go higher, people would earn less and our country would go upside down economically.

• (1835)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I did not mean to offend the member, but the motion says that we have to send the issue to the procedure and House affairs committee. The government, as well as all the political parties, is saying, yes, let us send it over, but the Conservatives are putting up speaker after speaker, thereby filibustering.

We listen to the lines being used by Conservatives, whether it is on this issue or on the other issues they continue to bring up, such as being Liberal-friendly, but we know that the chair who was appointed was actually a great donor to the Conservative Party. She was a political adviser to Stephen Harper and to Brian Mulroney.

Conservatives have actually misled Canadians by making those types of assertions in many different speeches they have given. Would the member not agree?

*Privilege*

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the tone brought to the question by my colleague on the other side of the House. I do not agree that the issue is something we should just push off to a committee at this point in time. The committees are actually not working well. We want the documents now in Parliament, not at committee for examination and for pushing down the road, as the case may be.

The documents were demanded by Parliament for Parliament, and they should be brought here. We can look at the documents at that point in time and determine whether they are referable forward to somebody for examination into whether there have been some crimes committed that need clear examination. That is something that needs to happen as quickly as possible, not by referring it on and on to committee and examination.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating you on having succeeded in restoring some peace in the House. The government members opposite are calmer than they were during question period.

It is a privilege for me to rise once again to discuss the Liberal green fund scandal. It is another opportunity to shed light on the devastation felt by thousands of Canadians from coast to coast for having been sold the Liberal idea of a responsible, democratic and free country.

I have been the member of Parliament for Lévis—Lotbinière since 2006, so for nearly 19 years. During the 19 years of trust placed in me by my constituents, I have been fortunate to witness the birth and growth of an entire generation. That is significant. I am moved and very honoured by that. Many are related to me, some were my children's playmates, still others have heard about me from their parents, at school or even on television. I have taken part in many activities that have given me the opportunity to get to know these fine young people, from skating and hockey to the choir and the theatre, from school graduations to our traditional Canada Day celebration at the Saint-Agapit agricultural fair.

We are proud of these young people and all the people in my riding, and we are proud to share the values we hold in common and a vision for our society where everyone knows they can trust their parents and their community without worrying about whether the people governing our country are trustworthy, honest and just. Unfortunately, that is not the way things are today. The Liberals' latest green fund scam is once again upsetting the balance we had before the Liberal government was elected in 2015.

They say we do not miss what we do not know, but losing something good can sometimes be devastating, and our whole society is now paying a heavy price. Debt is at an all-time high, and crime is rampant everywhere. Young people are born at a disadvantage to parents who do not have the resources to raise them, or to families grappling with addictions that set them on the path to poverty or even violence. Why has it come to this? I will explain in the rest of my speech.

It is because of the Liberal promises about legalizing marijuana and decriminalizing hard drugs. It was a fantasy to think that allowing this to happen would lead to better control. The outcome is that

we have reached the end of the road and nothing better lies ahead if we continue down this path. Throughout this Liberal reign, I have held on to my Conservative values, and I have not stayed silent in the House, even at the risk of appearing old-fashioned or over the top. I have stayed true to my values and beliefs.

I keep speaking out at every opportunity, with each new scandal, like the green fund scandal before us today. I have never lost hope that each small seed would eventually bear fruit and lead us back to a better understanding of what our government should be. Despite the many opportunities we have given to the Liberals, who are backed by the NDP and the Bloc Québécois, we have never given up on the goal of bringing back common sense to this government and to this Parliament.

On November 12, TVA Nouvelles reported on a recent Leger poll showing that more and more young people are turning to us Conservatives. It is clear to me that young people are coming back to us because they are tired of living in a world with no rules or guidelines, where they see their childhood friends and loved ones sinking into the hell of drugs and addiction. They are tired of seeing people who were once full of life and full of hope now struggling to hold down a job and keep a roof over their heads.

When we look at where we now rank in the G7, it would be an understatement to say that the Liberals' policies have left us in a very sad situation.

• (1840)

Returning to the poll, it clearly shows that family values, a strong work ethic, wealth building and pride in being able to put food on the table and create community solidarity are making a comeback. People want to go back to acting in accordance with their core morals, their true nature, without deceiving anyone, especially the most vulnerable.

I believe that young people clearly understand that their future is at risk and that making the right decisions as quickly as possible is essential. Separating from Canada is not what young people in Quebec dream about or need. That is why the Bloc Québécois is lagging so far behind in young people's voting intentions in Quebec. Young people are not looking for another empty dream. They want to feel united with other people and pull together in the same direction, to keep what gains they have and create a prosperous future, like we once had, before 2015.

We have strong young people in Canada with visions and values that show their hearts are in the right place. They see their parents worrying about the fact that they work day in and day out but never get ahead. Parents are stunned when they hear about all the crooked stuff that the Liberals have been involved in and have yet to be punished for. In fact, many constituents of all ages come up to me in my riding to say that they are completely baffled that the Bloc Québécois and the NDP are supporting measures that make no earthly sense. People can see that they are using blackmail to buy time just so they can keep warming their seats until October 2025. Because of the support of the Bloc Québécois and the NDP, it is costing us a lot of money to keep this three-legged government going. It has been limping along for far too long.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I am very happy that young people have learned from the Prime Minister and this shady Liberal government. They have learned what not to do. We are learning the hard way, even more drastically, that thugs are not nice, whether they wear ties and ride around in limousines or supply drugs and roam our alleys with illegal weapons. How did we get here?

Unfortunately, I think that many people fell for the Prime Minister's charm. The Liberals' political tactics are as old as the hills and well known to all. They offer free membership, but then make members pay dearly to attend cocktail parties and fancy dinners that provide access to certain well-placed individuals in order to obtain favours. Then the best members are appointed to key positions and bingo, that is how we end up with all those fine people defending each other, protecting each other, giving each other contracts, and getting their vacations paid for, all by reaching into Canadians' pockets without the slightest scruple or remorse.

I am already looking forward to answering my colleagues' questions at the end of my speech. Some will be blue with anger, others will be red with embarrassment, and maybe some will even be pale green over this whole green fund business.

I would love to keep going, but since I have only a few seconds left, I will gladly continue my speech tomorrow morning, in the first hour, as soon as the House opens.

---

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1845)

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I asked the independent, non-partisan environment commissioner if Canada's emissions reduction targets could be achieved without a carbon tax. He said yes. Does the government agree with him?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed once again that the vast majority of Canadians will receive more money back from the Canada carbon rebate. In Manitoba, that is \$1,200 annually, and it is even higher for residents in rural areas. In fact, there is a 20% top-up. It was 10%, but our government decided to double that to give rural constituents and residents across Canada even more money back. Experts agree that putting a price on pollution is the most cost-effective way of fighting climate change. The Premier of Saskatchewan has even confirmed this. Premier Moe has said that his government looked at alternatives to carbon pricing, but they were too expensive.

Our government is committed to fighting climate change while also making life more affordable, and that is exactly what putting a price on pollution does. The Bank of Canada has confirmed this. The Governor of the Bank of Canada said that carbon pricing con-

tributed less than 0.15% to inflation. That is 15¢ on \$100 spent. That is not a significant amount; moreover, with the carbon rebate, eight out of 10 families get more money back in their pockets, and those are predominantly lower- and medium-income families. That is a fraction of half a per cent. That puts it in perspective.

The Conservative Party keeps claiming and have continued to claim that they have a plan to fight climate change, but it has yet to produce any kind of comprehensive plan. It has a few slogans here and there, but there is no plan that I can see. In May 2023, the Leader of the Opposition held another fundraiser with more than a dozen lobbyists from the oil and gas industry, accepting over \$60,000 in donations. They wanted to ensure that he would not fight climate change and do the opposite of climate action. In essence, he would make pollution free again in this country.

When I knock on doors in my riding, I ask people at their doors who should pay for pollution, the average Canadian or industry. Even among those who are somewhat critical of the price on pollution, every single person says it should be industry. That is exactly what our government does. By putting a price on pollution, we are incentivizing innovation. We are setting a significant price signal in terms of changing behaviour in the market, and that is exactly what we are seeing. If members listen to the environment minister's responses in question period, they will hear that there is a significant amount of emissions reduction in Canada.

It does not end there. Since the Conservative Leader of the Opposition was elected 20 years ago, he has voted against climate action and protecting the environment over 400 times. We cannot find a member in the House who is more opposed to fighting climate change. It is embarrassing and shameful. When I look my two daughters in the eye, I want to make sure that I am doing everything I can to protect our clean water and the environment for a healthy future for all Canadians, including my daughters. I do not know how the Conservatives can look themselves in the mirror when they never take climate change seriously. Not once have I ever heard them say that they believe in climate change and have a plan to address it.

• (1850)

**Mr. Dan Mazier:** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have a long history of firing people who speak truth to power. I am sure the environment commissioner is worried about keeping his job after exposing the truth about the Liberals' carbon tax.

Does the Liberal government plan to fire the environment commissioner for admitting the carbon tax is not needed to meet Canada's emissions targets?

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, it is kind of rich to hear the Conservatives ask such a question. It is very interesting because they seem to want to fire every independent expert who happens to disagree with them. They want to fire the independent Governor of the Bank of Canada when he does not agree with the slogans and misinformation the Conservatives spew in the House every single day. I wonder if they want to fire the guy they quote regularly about food price inflation, Sylvain Charlebois, who was at the industry committee not so long ago. I posted the clips of him saying very clearly that climate change is the biggest challenge in our agri-food sector in Canada and that we must address it.

If the Conservatives are so interested in price inflation in Canada, why do they not have a plan to address the biggest challenge that our agri-food industry is facing, which is climate change?

## INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising to ask a follow-up question to a question I had about a month ago in the House of Commons. We are listening to all kinds of stuff, and this pertains to the debate we had today, which was about providing documents to the House of Commons on the green slush fund, the SDTC scandal.

What we are trying to get, of course, is real information that the government has to provide from one of its documents. We passed a motion in the House, supported by all the opposition parties, demanding those documents from the government, as is Parliament's right. However, when I asked for that, I asked if the government thought it was not providing the documents because of incompetence, an oversight or actual corruption.

There are different degrees of a problem in there, but the one we are most worried about is that the Liberals are complicit with some of their friends in giving this money to a whole bunch of people connected to the Liberal Party and not providing a type of oversight, which is what the Auditor General has provided. The response I got back was, effectively, "We have warnings from the Auditor General and we have warnings from the RCMP that this might be a charter issue." The issue with that fabrication, if I may say that, is that normal jurisprudence on this has us collecting the documents.

Let us remember who is supreme in Canada, in our Canadian Constitution. Parliament is supreme, not the executive, not the RCMP and not the courts. Nevertheless, each of these organizations has a purpose here. Those documents that have to come before Parliament for us to look at and provide to the police authorities are not something they have normally looked at before. In this respect, we are driving that bus forward.

The RCMP will look at the documents and find out if there are charges to be laid. We are not the ones laying the charges. We are the ones who are going to be putting the documents to people who have the ability to make that decision. That is our role, and every one of these organizations has a role. This is Parliament's role. Somehow the government does not think Parliament has a role in this process or any process going forward. It just looks at Parliament as a speed bump.

The government is disrespecting the Speaker because it is he who delivered the request on behalf of Parliament to provide those documents. The government members are asking if they should listen to the RCMP, the expert legal person they spoke to or the House of Commons, which is the Speaker. I am going to tell them right now that, hands down, there is one person they should listen to, and that is the Speaker, in providing that actual ruling.

I am not concerned about the House treading on charter rights, because those charter protections happen at the judicial level. We do our job here, and sometimes Parliament passes legislation that gets overturned by the Supreme Court. That is where that judicial interpretation of charter rights happens, not here. We do our job and do not let a whole bunch of bureaucratise and certain legal opinions move us in one direction or another. There are far better legal opinions at the end of the day that will determine what happens.

I can guarantee members, and I think the Speaker knows this from a previous legal background, that if we seek a legal opinion, particularly on a charter issue, we are going to get six opinions, each pointing in a different direction. Let us get our job done here in Parliament. I beseech this government again to get us those documents so we can see what is behind them, come to the bottom of this and move on with the work of Parliament.

● (1855)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. For months now, the House has been paralyzed by Conservative politicians who are putting partisan politics ahead of delivering real results for Canadians. Instead of focusing on delivering for constituents, which is what we were all elected to do, the Conservatives have chosen to filibuster their own motion in the House, to avoid sending it to the procedure and House affairs committee, which is exactly what was recommended by the Speaker.

The member opposite is voicing serious accusations, and I want to be clear: ensuring public funds are disbursed ethically and transparently is of utmost importance to this government. That is why, when allegations of financial mismanagement at SDTC first came to light, our government acted swiftly and decisively, and commissioned a range of independent audits and studies to get to the bottom of the troubling allegations.

There is absolutely nothing to hide. The evidence is there for all to see. This government took immediate action to undertake the proper due diligence to understand the facts, which is what we do when there are allegations of mismanagement in an arm's-length foundation the federal government set up over 20 years ago. We have submitted thousands upon thousands of pages to the House, and are willing to further study this issue at the procedure and House affairs committee, if the Conservatives ever allow the House to proceed in its normal functioning.



What we are not willing to do, however, is compromise the independence of the RCMP investigation. The RCMP commissioner has said very clearly that he does not need or want the information that the Conservatives are asking the Auditor General to provide, that they already have an investigation under way, that they have all of the documentation they need, and that providing the information in the way the Conservatives have proposed would actually compromise their independent investigation. This would compromise one of the pillars of our democracy, which is judicial and police independence.

Conservatives have this reputation. When they do not get their own way, they want to undermine the independence of our institutions. They want to run rampant right over top of them because they want to get their way. They want to paint this with the brush-stroke of their partisan politics for political gain. That is just wrong. We have also heard from former House law clerks and from the Auditor General herself, who have warned us that this partisan overreach is a dangerous precedent to set in the House. We know weaknesses were identified in the SDTC governance model, and that is exactly why we have taken definitive action. We have followed up on all of the recommendations that were made by the Auditor General.

In addition to having done a number of third party reviews, we have moved forward on improving the governance model at SDTC. The board's chair and CEO resigned. The board was dissolved and let go. There is a new board that is transitioning under the National Research Council. That is intentional to ensure the minister and our department have better and clear oversight for this organization. Previously it was independent, it was at arm's-length, and that is one of the reasons we felt the monitoring and supervision was not as tight as it needs to be in the future. We take these matters seriously. We have gotten to the bottom of this. This is the accountability all of us should expect.

● (1900)

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the responses he gave to my question. I do not think they are proper responses; there are a whole bunch of holes in what he has provided here. Number one, the RCMP is the agency looking into whether there will be charges here to press or not. All we are providing, at the end of the day, is the unredacted documents. Those unredacted documents right now are unavailable to the RCMP because they are unavailable to us. The government member says he has nothing to hide. Then why are there hundreds and thousands of pages of pure black ink in redacted documents here? Nothing to hide means that would be a lot more transparent.

Let me give an example where we have actually worked in this respect through one of my committees. George Young, the chief of staff to the minister of defence at the time during Afghanistan, provided documents that we thought should be looked at from a criminal perspective. The RCMP did not. In the end, they made the decision not to.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I have basically tried to answer the member's question in the best way I can, which is to say that we have tried to get to the bottom of the issue, expose all the facts and provide all the evidence. We have collaborated very effectively with the Auditor General, the Ethics Commissioner and the

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

RCMP. If they have any requests for documents, obviously our government is committed to working with all of those independent experts.

Why would we have ordered all the independent reviews, taken all the actions I have mentioned and studied the issue at a committee over and over again? We have been willing to do all those things. What we are not willing to do is compromise the independence of the Auditor General, the RCMP and our judicial system in Canada. That is clearly a red line that we do not want to cross. We do not want to set a precedent of trampling on Canadians' charter rights.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a great honour to rise, but particularly now because I believe I am the last speaker this evening. I am happy to bring it home tonight. It is an honour and privilege.

I do have a very serious topic to raise, and I am hoping I can have a serious discussion with my colleague on the other side. This serious issue is one that has been brought forward by several first nations. The way the story unfolds is sad if not tragic. It revolves around a dock called euphemistically the "big dock", in northern Alberta. It is in a northern community, surrounded by first nations including the Chipewyan people.

The dock is a community hub. It is where people go for a walk on a nice summer day in northern Alberta. It is where children, including of course indigenous children, swim and play. It is where a young couple might go for a walk to talk about the day and to enjoy each other's company.

In this picturesque surrounding there is trouble, though, and here is the challenge. Recently, just this year actually, the indigenous communities contracted an environmental firm to look at the water in and around the dock to see what the condition of it was. What it found was extremely troubling: The water was contaminated with above-legal limits of toxins, including arsenic, mercury, iron and hydrocarbons. Many of these are carcinogens that can and do cause cancer in people. Keep in mind that young couples, fishers and indigenous children swim in this contaminated water.

Of course, that in itself is extremely troubling, but let us add a couple more facts. The dock is owned by the federal government, by Transport Canada. The really difficult and challenging part is that, according to the consultant's report, Transport Canada knew about the contamination in 2017.

I do not think it is for me to speak for first nations, so I am just going to reiterate to the member what is being asked. Remember, the member is answering not just to me; he is answering also to first nations and indigenous people, so I am hoping the member will not take this as an opportunity to pontificate about various Liberal accomplishments or other things and that he will answer the requests of the chiefs.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

First, they want to meet with the Minister of Transport. Second, they want the dock repaired and brought up to code. They of course want the site remediated, meaning the removal of the toxins. They want to dredge a canal to the channel to Lake Athabasca for boat access. They want a temporary dock, further testing to be conducted along the waterfront and for any and all documents to be made available.

I will add that I did ask at the transport committee, and received unanimous consent, to get all documents and correspondence relating to the big dock from Transport Canada, but we still, nearly a month later, have not received a single document. As the Prime Minister said, and quite frankly I agree with him, there is no relationship more important for the federal government than that with the first nations, so I am hoping we get a substantive response.

• (1905)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad I am here tonight for this late show to answer this question. The reason I say that is because I spent three years of my life, before I got into politics, going up to Fort Chipewyan and working with the first nations there on environmental monitoring. It was a great privilege to be in that community, be invited into it, to meet with the elders there, and to understand the issues of those first nation communities and their community members. I take this matter very seriously.

I want to preface what I am saying with something that I think the member opposite should also take seriously. These contaminants that are being monitored are directly from the tailing ponds of the oil sands. I know the member to be an hon. member, and I think he does care about the environment. I hope he can convince his party leader one day to take the matter of climate change and the contamination from our oil and gas industry seriously enough so that we can work together across the aisle in the House to address these issues for these first nation communities.

Those contaminants did not come from anywhere else. The first nations there have started a collaborative initiative to monitor the water, the contaminants in the water and the impacts on their ecosystem. They also employ their community members to do that work. That is really important work, and I think it has led to the realization that the moving of the dock and the dredging that would need to take place to replace it is going to be a difficult issue. It is not as simple as just funding the issue.

However, I do take the matter seriously. The reason I say that is that, when we dredge that toxic waste up from the bottom, we are essentially going to spread it throughout the watershed. The Peace-Athabasca Delta, for generations and generations, has been the water source and the home to those first nations. They identify with that place. They identify that water and that watershed as being the most important thing for their lives, their livelihoods, their identity, their culture, their traditions and their traditional knowledge. All of these things connect back to that watershed.

I think this is really important. I know that Minister Anand has been in touch directly with the nations to discuss their concerns. Transport Canada has previously disclosed the presence of contamination in Transport Canada-owned lands at Fort Chipewyan. The

Fort Chipewyan public port facility has been listed on the federal contaminated sites inventory, an open public list, since 2014. For almost a century, the wharf at Fort Chipewyan has been active with multiple users and uses. Studies show that contaminants in the sediments in the Transport Canada-owned water lot and in the lands adjacent to the wharf may have come from a variety of sources.

I really think this is an important issue. I would say there are a number of different steps that the department has taken, and I would think that we could work together with the first nations. I know that Minister Anand is taking this matter seriously. Transport Canada has taken some immediate steps and retained a qualified third-party environmental consultant through Public Services and Procurement Canada, and is working with the first nations and the consultant to address this very issue.

• (1910)

**The Speaker:** I would just like to remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that we are not to mention the proper names of current members of the House of Commons.

Once again, I would remind staffers who are listening to please do a better job in making sure that, when they provide information, they respect the traditions and rules of Parliament.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, that does sort of beg the question of if a tree falls in the forest and there is no one there to hear it, was there really a violation of the rules? Although I do thank the Speaker for enforcing the rules.

I know the member to be an hon. member and I do, to answer his question, care about climate change and where the toxins came from. I am more than happy to work with the member and anyone else who wants to resolve that issue to make sure that we hold accountable wherever those toxins came from. However, there are several issues that I do want to drill down on because we did not get a response.

Will the government commit to remediating the site? Will it commit to bringing the dock up to code? Will it commit to doing further testing? Can the government do something to make residents aware of the potential contamination?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, as I said in my response, and I will say it again, the Minister of Transport is taking this matter seriously. She has heard the concerns of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, the Mikisew Cree and the Fort Chipewyan Métis Nation.

While recent studies have found that the wharf at Fort Chipewyan is not likely to pose risk to human health, Transport Canada is committed to collaborating and working with the first nations to address community concerns about potential contaminants at the dock.

Transport Canada will continue to work closely with the communities to address their concerns about the contamination.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**The Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

---

(The House adjourned at 7:14 p.m.)



# CONTENTS

Thursday, November 21, 2024

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27869

### Committees of the House

#### Public Safety and National Security

Ms. Dancho ..... 27869  
Motion for concurrence ..... 27869  
Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27871  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27871  
Mr. Angus ..... 27871

### Points of Order

#### Decorum

Mr. Angus ..... 27871  
Mr. Arnold ..... 27872  
Mr. Bachrach ..... 27872  
Mr. Kurek ..... 27872

### Committees of the House

#### Public Safety and National Security

Motion for concurrence ..... 27873  
Ms. Dancho ..... 27873  
Mr. Lloyd ..... 27873  
Amendment ..... 27874  
Mr. Gerretsen ..... 27874  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27875  
Mr. Bachrach ..... 27875

### Points of Order

#### Decorum—Speaker's Ruling

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes) ..... 27875

### Committees of the House

#### Public Safety and National Security

Motion for concurrence ..... 27876  
Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27876  
Mr. Patzer ..... 27877  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27878  
Mr. Angus ..... 27878  
Ms. Damoff ..... 27878  
Amendment to the amendment ..... 27879  
Ms. Michaud ..... 27880  
Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27880  
Ms. Dancho ..... 27880  
Ms. Michaud ..... 27880  
Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27883  
Mr. Patzer ..... 27884  
Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27884  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27884  
Mr. Ruff ..... 27885  
Mr. Angus ..... 27885  
Ms. O'Connell ..... 27888

Mr. McLean ..... 27888  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27888  
Mr. Green ..... 27888  
Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27889  
Ms. Bendayan ..... 27889  
Mr. Green ..... 27890  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27890  
Mr. Falk (Provencher) ..... 27891  
Mr. Gerretsen ..... 27891  
Mr. Barsalou-Duval ..... 27892  
Mr. McLean ..... 27893  
Mr. Green ..... 27893  
Mr. Paul-Hus ..... 27893  
Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27895  
Division on amendment to the amendment deferred ..... 27895

### Petitions

#### Fossil Fuels

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27895

#### Agriculture and Agri-Food

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27895

#### Human Rights

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27895

#### Parental Alienation

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 27896

#### Democratic Institutions

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 27896

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27896

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### Privilege

#### Reference to Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Motion ..... 27896  
Mr. Stewart (Toronto—St. Paul's) ..... 27896  
Mr. Long ..... 27899  
Mr. Angus ..... 27899  
Ms. Larouche ..... 27900  
Mr. Melillo ..... 27900  
Mr. Bachrach ..... 27900  
Mr. Lamoureux ..... 27900  
Mr. Fast ..... 27901

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Infrastructure

Ms. Diab ..... 27903

<b>Veterans</b>	
Mr. McCauley .....	27903
<b>Pakistan</b>	
Mr. van Koeverden .....	27903
<b>Philippe Barrette</b>	
Mr. Lemire .....	27903
<b>30th Anniversary of La Source d'Entraide</b>	
Mr. Schiefke .....	27904
<b>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship</b>	
Mr. McLean .....	27904
<b>Lucien Francoeur</b>	
Ms. Bendayan .....	27904
<b>Project Red Ribbon Campaign</b>	
Mr. Casey .....	27904
<b>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship</b>	
Mr. Berthold .....	27905
<b>Conservative Party of Canada</b>	
Mr. Badawey .....	27905
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Mrs. Roberts .....	27905
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Steinley .....	27905
<b>Housing</b>	
Ms. Taylor Roy .....	27906
<b>International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers</b>	
Ms. Collins (Victoria) .....	27906
<b>Francine Lalonde</b>	
Mr. Beaulieu .....	27906
<b>NDP-Liberal Coalition</b>	
Mr. Bragdon .....	27906
<b>Housing Accelerator Fund</b>	
Mr. May (Cambridge) .....	27906

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Public Safety</b>	
Mr. Caputo .....	27907
Mr. LeBlanc .....	27907
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Caputo .....	27907
Mr. Virani .....	27907
Mr. Caputo .....	27907
Mr. Virani .....	27907
Mr. Berthold .....	27907
Mr. Champagne .....	27908
Mr. Berthold .....	27908
Mr. Champagne .....	27908
<b>Official Languages</b>	
Mr. Therrien .....	27908

Ms. Petitpas Taylor .....	27908
Mr. Therrien .....	27908
Ms. Petitpas Taylor .....	27908
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Boulerice .....	27908
Mr. Champagne .....	27909
Mr. Davies .....	27909
Ms. Anand .....	27909
Mr. Hallan .....	27909
Ms. Bendayan .....	27909
Mr. Hallan .....	27909
Ms. Bendayan .....	27909
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Lawrence .....	27909
Ms. Gould .....	27910
Mr. Lawrence .....	27910
Ms. Gould .....	27910
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Gourde .....	27910
Ms. Bendayan .....	27910
Mr. Gourde .....	27910
Ms. Sudds .....	27910
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Ms. Michaud .....	27910
Mr. LeBlanc .....	27910
Ms. Michaud .....	27911
Mr. LeBlanc .....	27911
Mrs. DeBellefeuille .....	27911
Mr. LeBlanc .....	27911
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Barlow .....	27911
Ms. Gould .....	27911
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Barlow .....	27911
Ms. Gould .....	27911
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Ellis .....	27912
Ms. Gould .....	27912
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Ms. McPherson .....	27912
Ms. Damoff .....	27912
<b>Grocery Industry</b>	
Mr. Masse .....	27912
Mr. Champagne .....	27912
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Gerretsen .....	27912
Ms. Anand .....	27913
<b>Public Services and Procurement</b>	
Mr. Barrett .....	27913
Ms. Gould .....	27913
Mr. Barrett .....	27913
Ms. Gould .....	27913

<b>Ethics</b>	
Mrs. Kusie .....	27913
Ms. Hajdu .....	27913
Mrs. Kusie .....	27913
Ms. Hajdu .....	27914

<b>Canada Revenue Agency</b>	
Mr. Villemure .....	27914
Ms. Khalid .....	27914
Mr. Villemure .....	27914
Ms. Khalid .....	27914

<b>Ethics</b>	
Mr. Kurek .....	27914
Mr. Sousa .....	27914
Mr. Lloyd .....	27914
Ms. Bendayan .....	27914

<b>Emergency Preparedness</b>	
Mr. Lloyd .....	27915
Mr. Guilbeault .....	27915

<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Fonseca .....	27915
Mr. Virani .....	27915

<b>Public Safety</b>	
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	27915
Mr. LeBlanc .....	27915
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	27915
Mr. Virani .....	27915
Mr. Small .....	27916
Mr. Virani .....	27916

<b>Housing</b>	
Ms. Dhillon .....	27916
Ms. Martinez Ferrada .....	27916
Mr. Desjarlais .....	27916
Mr. Fragiskatos .....	27916

<b>National Defence</b>	
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	27916
Mr. Blair .....	27916

<b>Points of Order</b>	
<b>Oral Questions</b>	
Mr. Barrett .....	27917
Ms. Gould .....	27917

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

<b>Committees of the House</b>	
<b>Public Safety and National Security</b>	
Motion for concurrence .....	27917
Amendment to the amendment negatived .....	27919
Amendment negatived .....	27920
Motion agreed to .....	27922
<b>Business of the House</b>	
Mr. Scheer .....	27922
Ms. Gould .....	27922

<b>Business of Supply</b>	
The Speaker .....	27922
<b>Sitting Suspended</b>	
(The sitting of the House was suspended at 3:52 p.m.) ...	27922
<b>Sitting Resumed</b>	
(The House resumed at 3:55 p.m.) .....	27922
Mr. Therrien .....	27923

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

<b>Privilege</b>	
<b>Reference to Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs</b>	
Motion .....	27924
Mr. Richards .....	27924
Mrs. Romanado .....	27926
Mrs. Vignola .....	27926
Mr. McCauley .....	27927
Mr. Van Popta .....	27927
Mr. Lamoureux .....	27930
Mr. Fortin .....	27930
Ms. Blaney .....	27931
Mr. Hardie .....	27931
Mr. McCauley .....	27931
Mr. Ruff .....	27931
Mr. Scarpaleggia .....	27934
Mrs. Vignola .....	27935
Mr. McCauley .....	27935
Mr. Lamoureux .....	27935
Mr. Desjarlais .....	27935
Mr. Small .....	27936
Mr. Masse .....	27938
Mr. Scarpaleggia .....	27938
Mr. Tolmie .....	27938
Mr. Lamoureux .....	27938
Mr. Desjarlais .....	27939
Mr. McLean .....	27939
Mr. Lamoureux .....	27942
Mr. Masse .....	27943
Ms. Bérubé .....	27943
Mr. Ruff .....	27943
Mr. Gourde .....	27944

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

<b>The Environment</b>	
Mr. Mazier .....	27945
Mr. Turnbull .....	27945
<b>Innovation, Science and Industry</b>	
Mr. McLean .....	27946
Mr. Turnbull .....	27946
<b>The Environment</b>	
Mr. Lawrence .....	27947
Mr. Turnbull .....	27948

Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>