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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 6, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)
[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—COST OF LIVING RELIEF FOR CANADIANS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP) moved:

That, given that,

- (i) Canadians are facing an affordability crisis and need more than temporary relief,
- (ii) the government's \$250 Working Canadians Rebate would exclude many workers and other Canadians who need it the most,
- (iii) the 2021 Conservative Party platform included a one-time GST holiday,

the House call on the government to:

- (a) permanently remove the GST from essential goods, including home heating, grocery meals, Internet and mobile phone bills, diapers and kids' clothes;
- (b) expand the rebate to include all adults whose income is under the threshold and did not earn employment income in 2023, so that people like recent graduates trying to enter the workforce, retired seniors, people with disabilities, injured workers, workers on parental leave and long-term sick leave, and others in need are included; and
- (c) pay for that measure by putting in place an excess profit tax targeting the largest and most profitable corporations.

He said: Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have a point of order from the hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, I rise to challenge the admissibility of the motion before us and seek clarity from the Chair in relation to Standing Order 81(13), which reads, "Opposition motions on allotted days may be moved only by members in opposition to the government—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order, please.

I cannot hear the hon. member. He is quoting a standing order, and I will listen to his point of order. I would ask members to

please wait until I have had an opportunity to hear a bit more of what the hon. member is putting forward.

Could the hon. member remind me what standing order he was referring to?

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Standing Order 81(13), which states:

Opposition motions on allotted days may be moved only by members in opposition to the government and may relate to any matter within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada and also may be used for the purpose of considering reports from standing committees relating to the consideration of estimates therein.

I would argue that the member moving the motion, whom some call the Maserati Marxist, is not eligible to do so, because—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask the hon. member to be very careful about the wording he is using, and I would ask him to withdraw and rephrase.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, I would argue that the member moving the motion is not eligible to do so.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I ask the hon. member to first withdraw.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, I withdraw.

Strictly speaking, the member does not represent a party in the opposition to the government. He has voted 24 times in favour of the carbon tax scam, when 70% of Canadians and 70% of premiers said not to increase the carbon tax. He has propped up the government on every vote of confidence along the way so that he can protect his \$2.2-million pension.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It sounds to me as though this is more debate.

Is the hon. member saying he cannot move a motion? Why is that?

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, it is because he is part of the government.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): He is not part of the government, and the hon. member knows that full well. Therefore, the hon. member's point of order is out of order.

I have another point of order, from the hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South.

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I was trying to hear my colleague, and I heard considerable disruption.

I would ask that the Speaker have control of the—

Business of Supply

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Just as it is right now.

Madam Speaker, this is completely unacceptable.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I rose on a number of occasions to indicate that I was hearing the hon. member. I would again ask members to please be respectful when others have the floor. I would also ask members to make sure that, when they rise on points of order, the points of order are actually legitimate.

[*Translation*]

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

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Madam Speaker, with regard to what you just said, I would also like to remind the House that there is a delay before the francophones can hear the simultaneous interpretation. You asked members not to speak when you have the floor, because you cannot hear what is being said. On our side, when people talk over you, we cannot hear what you are saying, nor can we hear what the interpreter is saying. It is also difficult for the interpreters. I rose on the same point of order last Friday.

Madam Speaker, I would ask you to remind the House that we would like to fully participate in the debate.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate the member's comments. This is certainly a time of year when people would perhaps rather be at home. As I said yesterday evening, it would be nice if everyone was kinder and more respectful in the House, particularly today.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

[*English*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, one thing we have just realized—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): On another point of order, the hon. member for Thornhill.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order, please.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I am rising on a question of privilege I gave you notice of more than an hour ago—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Burnaby South has started his speech. I will take the matters of privilege after the speech is done. It has been the convention of the House to allow the speech to happen, and then the questions of privilege will be dealt with after the speech and before the questions.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have one more point of order, and I hope this is not a challenge to the Chair. I have made my decision.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

• (1010)

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, questions of privilege take precedence over everything. I would ask that—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): As I have indicated to the hon. member, the convention of the House is that we let the speech occur.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. There is debate on both sides. I am speaking right now. The convention of the House is that we allow the hon. member to finish his speech. I will hear the question of privilege before we get to questions and comments.

The hon. member for Thornhill has another point of order.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I have a continuing point of order. The Standing Orders state that you should hear a question of privilege if I have given you the appropriate notice. I gave you that appropriate notice this morning, more than an hour ago, and the House should hear a question of privilege, particularly to do with—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is a challenge to the Chair, and I have already indicated that the convention of the House is that we hear the speech, and then we come back to the question of privilege during questions and comments. I would hope that members respect that.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, it seems that the billionaire bootlickers have a concern about the fact that I am trying to bring forward a motion that calls for tax relief. We have learned that Conservatives do not want tax relief for the working class; they want it for their billionaire buddies instead. Any time we talk about tax relief for the working class, they get upset. That is what we just saw in the chamber. We will clip—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just noticed that there was a point of order, and I missed it.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, you have referenced convention of the House. Could you cite any precedent? I have been a member for a long time; I follow the procedure, and I am not aware of a single case in which a member who had a question of privilege, especially one with the urgent nature of that being raised, was told to wait. If there is a convention of the House I am not familiar with, I wonder if you could share even a single instance in which any member raising a matter of this nature has been told they have to wait for the convenience of another member, who is not speaking on the matter of privilege, until they are finished. Very respectfully, my understanding is no such precedent exists.

Business of Supply

I know there is a requirement to provide an hour's notice, but there is also a requirement to raise the issue at the earliest possible opportunity. In fact, there are cases in which Speakers have dismissed questions of privilege simply on the basis that they were not raised in sufficient time and with sufficient proximity. I am thinking of Speaker Regan. Members are under an obligation: If they do not follow that rule, then their very serious question of privilege could be dismissed, even if it was a question of privilege deemed to have merit, simply because—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is not going to be dismissed. The hon. member will have an opportunity to raise that. The question of privilege that has been put forward is not with what is going on in the House, and it has always been a practice of the House that we allow the speech to occur. I can come back to the member after on that. I am going to stick to that; as I said, I will not take any more challenges to the Chair.

There is another point of order, and I hope it is not on this matter. The hon. member for Grande Prairie—Mackenzie.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Madam Speaker, it is interesting that you have made this ruling. Over the last week, several Liberal members of Parliament have—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have already indicated that I will not take a challenge to the Chair on that.

The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Madam Speaker, I am asking, through you, that the leader of the NDP withdraw his comments. You very clearly made the member for Calgary Forest Lawn do that, and I would expect there would be consistency and that he would have to withdraw his comments.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I did not quite hear what the hon. member said because there were a lot of discussions here at this end of the chamber. I will listen to what was said and come back to the House if need be.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, I will just begin from the top. We will make sure we clip this and show folks that any time New Democrats want to talk about a tax break for the working class, the billionaire bootlicker Conservatives get upset.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would just ask the hon. member for Burnaby South to withdraw that. Again, the words being used in the House from time to time that are directed to individual members are not acceptable. This is causing disorder. I would ask the member not to use that term, and I would ask him to withdraw.

• (1015)

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, I withdraw the term billionaire bootlicker for the Conservatives.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, there is a tradition in this place that when the Speaker asks a member to withdraw, they simply withdraw and do not repeat the words again. Clearly, there is an intent by the NDP member to disrespect the Chair in this case.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I certainly did not take it that way. It is not unusual for members to repeat the word while withdrawing. I would ask members not to mention the word; that would be even better. I would ask all members to do the same with whatever words they use that cause disorder in the House; they know these words cause disorder.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets, on a separate point of order.

Mr. Rick Perkins: The Liberal lickspittle member down there needs to fully withdraw.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, in terms of these types of characterizations, no matter what they are, I would just ask members to stop using adjectives and maybe just speak to the issue that is before the House.

On a point of order, the hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South.

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I have used the past inappropriate term of sellout Singh, referring to the NDP leader. I would like to withdraw that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There are a lot of games being played right now. I would ask members to please refrain from doing that, so we can get to the business of the House.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, on a point of order.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, my conscience was prodded by the intervention from the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South. I may too have at some point used the term Maserati Marxist to refer—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will shut this down right now.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, I want to talk about the Canadian dream. This is what we want for everyone in our country.

We want people to be able to find a good job, and that job should earn us enough so that we can find a home that meets our needs and that meets the needs of our family. We want to make sure that people have enough so that they can have a fridge full of groceries, and they do not worry when they go to the grocery store about what they need, because they can get everything that they need for their family. They can save up enough money, maybe for a trip, maybe for a little vacation or for the treats that their family or their loved ones need.

However, that is not what it feels like right now. People are losing hope.

They are seeing the super rich make more money than ever before, while they keep on falling behind. Canadians are doing everything right, but they cannot get ahead. It is because governments, and the current government specifically, have failed to do the most important job of government: to fight for people, not the billionaires and not the CEOs.

Business of Supply

In this difficult time, it is clear that the Liberal government has let people down. Rents have doubled. Home prices have doubled. Grocery prices are out of control. Big corporations, though, on the other hand, have seen their profits massively increase. Their CEOs are getting huge bonuses. Shareholders are getting huge dividends.

The Prime Minister says to leave the economy up to the bankers. Instead of choosing people, he chooses the wealthiest CEOs, corporations and billionaires. He has shown again and again that he is too weak to stand up to corporate greed. While they are raking in cash, people are drowning in bills.

What have the Conservatives done throughout this? They want to pour fuel on the fire of corporate greed. Their plan is to make life even less affordable. The leader of the Conservatives wants to cut, cut deeply and hurt people. He wants to cut from the working class to give to his CEO friends.

He wants to cut health care so that it is even harder to find a family doctor, so that wait-lists and wait times are even longer. He wants to cut pharma care so that people do not get access to free birth control or free diabetes medication. He wants to cut pensions so that seniors who are already struggling to get by are in even more difficult times. He wants to cut EI so that workers who cannot find a job or cannot get back to work have even more difficulty getting back on their feet. He wants to cut dental care because he is saying that seniors and kids do not deserve to get their teeth looked after. That is what he wants to do.

There is a cost to the Conservatives and people need to know this cost. He wants to cut child care. If he does, that could cost families more than \$8,000 a year. He wants to cut the Canada child benefit. That would hurt families with another \$600 a month. There are costs to the Conservatives, and that hurts. He wants to cut from Canadians to give to big businesses. That is what he has shown.

He will let us fall further and further behind to help the very rich get even further ahead. Last week, he proved who he truly is. The Conservative Party proved who it is truly in it for. Conservatives had no problem, when they were in government, with bringing in a \$60-billion—

• (1020)

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not believe there is quorum in the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will double-check and see if we have quorum in the House. It will just take a few minutes.

And the count having been taken:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): We have quorum. There are individuals online as well, so they are considered to be in the House.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, last week, the Conservatives showed us what they are really about.

They often talk about tax cuts. We learned that, when they say tax cuts, they mean for billionaires only. They had no problem with a \$60-billion tax cut for the richest CEOs' corporations, but they

said no to a tax cut for the working class. They have shown us who they really are.

On top of that, the Conservative leader's own campaign in 2021, which he ran on, promised a GST holiday. He is now voting against it. The hypocrisy is so blatant. It shows us that any time they talk about cutting taxes, they only want to cut taxes for their CEO buddies. They do not want relief for families.

What they are saying, to a single mom who is trying to buy a snowsuit for her kid, is, no, she does not deserve a tax cut. They are saying to a senior who maybe wants to go out to dinner, no, they do not deserve a break. However, to a CEO that runs a massively wealthy corporation, it is, yeah, they need big tax breaks. That is what the Conservatives have—

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Both in the House and online, I think you should check for quorum.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will check for quorum.

And the count having been taken:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There was a quorum and there still is quorum.

The hon. member for Burnaby South.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, where is the Bloc Québécois in all of this? Where is the Bloc Québécois? The Bloc has made it clear that, even in a minority government situation, it is a symbolic, useless party. It is not—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Madam Speaker, the member for Burnaby South knows full well that we cannot make reference to the absence of members in the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am not sure what was said. I will watch the video and intervene if the member indicated that someone was not present in the House.

The member for Manicouagan is also rising on a point of order.

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Madam Speaker, I have been hearing insults since I entered the House. I would like—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): One moment, please. I cannot hear what the hon. member is saying.

[*English*]

I would ask members to please refrain from speaking while someone else has the floor.

Business of Supply

• (1025)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Madam Speaker, I would just like to ask you to remind members to simply respect each other. We are trying to have direction on how to handle the relationship we have with all of our colleagues and our employees here.

What I am hearing right now is insults and even threats against our political party. I find that deplorable, and I would like things to calm down. I am not responsible for the fact that some people are in the House or not, and neither is my political party. I would simply like the House to be called to order. This has carried on while I am speaking. Please intervene.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I apologize for not hearing what was said, but it has been clarified. Members certainly cannot mention who is or is not present in the House. Members cannot say whether a specific party is present in the House. There are also people who participate virtually, and that has to be taken into account.

Moreover, when someone has the floor, it is crucial that they are given the chance to say what they have to say without interruption. If there have been insults, I hope people will refrain from such behaviour, because we all have the right to be respected in the House.

I think some of what the hon. member raised was a matter of debate. Refraining from creating chaos in the House is always best. I hope everyone will show respect for each other. That way, we will be able to participate in debate, questions and comments. We will also be able to hear points of order and questions of privilege without being attacked in some way.

[*English*]

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, on that point of order, I heard behaviour, quite frankly, that was intimidating to my colleague. I do appreciate your admonishment. I hear more of that heckling and more of that intimidation, but I—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I already laid down the law on this, and I am hoping that members will—

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I do believe an apology is required.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, I did not quite hear what was being said. We can look at the record. I did indicate there should not be any insults or anything else being hurled at anyone. I will ask the clerks to come back to me with what exactly was said because I certainly did not hear it from this end.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Manicouagan.

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Madam Speaker, briefly, a threat to disrupt the Bloc Québécois's next opposition day was made against us. I heard, "Just you wait and see when your next opposition day comes around". Really, that is what I heard.

I consider that to be intimidation.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I did not hear that, but, as I said, I will check whether anyone heard anything on the floor.

The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I think today we are obviously witnessing behaviour in the House from the Conservatives that is meant to disrupt the leader of the NDP's speech. I think they are sore because we forced them to vote against women's reproductive health and rights yesterday.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That's more of a point of debate and not a point of order.

I would ask members, when they rise, to please state the point of order they are actually rising on.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I am rising on the same point of order as the member for Manicouagan.

While the Chair, because of the heckling from the NDP House leader, may not have heard it, I did hear the threat about the Bloc's future opposition days from that end of the House, so I can verify that when you are reviewing this issue.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): As I indicated, I will review it. Thank you very much.

Mr. Dave Epp: I rise on the same point of order, Madam Speaker.

"A promise, not a threat," is what I just heard in the background as well. It is a pattern of behaviour, a pattern of threats.

Again, at the foreign affairs committee yesterday, the leader of the NDP threatened every member for voting and then misrepresented the motion. It is the same pattern of behaviour.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Whatever is happening at committee, I cannot weigh in on that. The committee is responsible for the chairing of its own meetings. I would also indicate that I have already made a declaration on this. As I said, I would come back to the House.

I have another point of order from the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

I am sorry, but the hon. member is not coming through. I am not sure if his mic is plugged in properly.

No, it is not working. He might want to try to come back some other way.

The hon. member for Burnaby South can continue his debate.

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, where have Bloc Québécois members been throughout this whole debate on how we can help families? Honestly, they have proven that their party lacks real substance, that it is useless.

With a minority government in power, they have proven themselves incapable of achieving results for people.

Business of Supply

[English]

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The leader of the NDP just referred to the Bloc Québécois using unparliamentary language, not only with respect to the group but also the individuals.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): If I had to rule on that type of language all the time in the House, I think the official opposition and every other party in the House would be taken to task all the time.

Again, I would ask members to be respectful. When members are attacking an individual, that is when it becomes a problem. I would ask members to please be mindful.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, the member of Parliament for New Westminster—Burnaby is consistently telling members of Parliament in the House to sit down, trying to remove their right to speak on behalf of their constituents. I would ask you to please ask him to show respect for the right of members of Parliament to speak in the House.

An hon. member: Sit down. Sit down.

Mr. Rick Perkins: He just did it again, twice. He said, “Sit down.” He is not the Speaker. If he wants to run for Speaker, he should do it.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, I want to remind members that when someone has the floor to be respectful, and when others rise to take the floor, they should not be told to sit down or anything like that. This happens from all parties. It is not one particular party. It happens all the time. I would ask members to please be respectful of each other. No matter how many times we rise to guide individuals, it seems they still do it.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Chair, I apologize for the technical issues.

I want to follow up on the point of order from the member for Manicouagan. Members are presumed to be hon. members when they hear something and when they raise something. It is not the tradition of the House to say that we need to wait for the video evidence. If two members contradict each other, that is another matter.

The member for Manicouagan raised an issue of a threat. Other members heard it. No member has risen to contradict those comments or to say they were not made. Therefore, I think the tradition of the House would not be that we would wait for a tape, but rather we would presume the member for Manicouagan is an hon. member and has spoken truly about the threats that were made. Therefore, I think the Speaker—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member knows full well that it is actually the practice of the House to either review Hansard or look at videos from the House of Commons. I have been here for 16 years and it has been done for those 16 years.

As I indicated, I will come back to the House, unless somebody wants to rise and withdraw right away. At this point, as I indicated,

I am prepared to wait until I hear. If someone wants to rise, that is fine too.

That is the last point of order I will hear on this. I have already ruled.

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I rise a separate point of order, and as part of my privilege, I have the ability to raise points of order. Neither the Speaker nor anyone else can stop that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): What is the standing order, please?

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, we have the right to raise points of order in the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Which standing order is it?

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I will get that if that is what you desire. I will come back and talk a little about points of order, if that is what you want, or we can continue with the point of order, which was—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask members to please hold off. I am dealing with the issue.

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, my point of order, which was a separate one, is that I have the right, not for me but for the people of Northumberland—Peterborough South, the 100,000 people I represent, to speak on their behalf. That is why I was elected; that is why I was sent here.

Mine is a point of clarification—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1035)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask members to please hold back—

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, you have ruled—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, I would ask members to please be respectful. Somebody else has the floor. I will determine whether it is a point of debate or not.

The hon. member has the floor.

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, my point of clarification is this: You ruled earlier that, of course, when members referred to a party as being useless, that was okay because it was a party. If I refer to the NDP as a team of Maserati Marxists, that is acceptable.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Yes.

I think that people are just impinging on what the House will allow and what the House will not allow. Members know there are grey zones, but the points are ones that have been raised on a number of occasions. I would just ask members to please be respectful.

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, I rise on a separate point of order. With what has occurred here, could you please advise us how much time the current speaker has left in his speech?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The member has three minutes and 49 seconds. I am sure he is anxious to get through it, and I am sure members are anxious to get through this so we can get to other orders.

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, as I said, instead of changing things to improve people's lives, Bloc Québécois members have often supported the Conservatives. They voted with the Conservatives against the dental care plan, despite the fact that it disproportionately benefits Quebecers. They voted against free contraceptives. They voted against diabetes medication. They voted with the Conservatives to cut assistance to Quebecers.

What does the NDP want to do? New Democrats understand that people need help, and they need it now. That is why we proposed removing the GST on some essential items and on monthly bills. In other words, we want to remove the tax on Internet, cellphone and heating bills, as well as on children's necessities, like diapers and clothing. Removing the GST on essentials and monthly bills is a concrete measure that will help people. The Liberals eventually gave in to our proposal because we lobbied and pushed for it, but they got it wrong. They let people down. Their proposal is not permanent, and it does not include monthly bills. The motion we are moving today fixes the problem.

[English]

Today our motion offers to give people some real help right away and to expand it to include monthly bills, like we had initially proposed, including cellphone bills, Internet bills and home heating bills, to give people permanent relief. It is a plan that would give people meaningful relief right away, and it also acknowledges that we need to fix the cheques. The cheques being proposed right now would go out to someone earning \$149,000 but would not go to a senior. That does not make any sense.

Therefore today's motion would do two things. One is to make GST relief permanent. Let us give people permanent relief and let us make sure it includes monthly bills so people can get some real relief. On top of that, let us fix the cheques.

We are making it very clear, and a vote today in the House would make it very clear, that we are saying collectively that seniors, yes, deserve some help as they are some of the hardest-hit people in our country, that people living with disabilities absolutely need some help, and that someone who just started working this year should not be excluded because they just got their job. We are calling for the cheques to be expanded and for the GST relief to be permanent and include monthly bills.

We have an important choice to make. New Democrats have always been and will always be the party of the working class. We have recently shown that very clearly, and the other parties have shown where they stand. They have shown that they do not stand with the working class. The Liberals have let down workers by making the GST relief not permanent. The Conservatives have shown that they are really on the side of the billionaires and CEOs, and they are against the working class.

Privilege

We are going to keep on fighting to make sure people know we have their back. Much more work is needed and much more help is needed. We are going to continue to fight for people.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

● (1040)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton to please hold off. Even if he thinks I cannot hear what he is saying, I can certainly clearly hear what he is saying; therefore I would ask him to please refrain from speaking out.

The hon. member for Thornhill had a question of privilege. I am now ready to hear it.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ACCESS TO PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am rising on the question of privilege that I rose on earlier. It is about the occupation that took place in the Confederation Building this week. You may have heard by now, Madam Speaker, that a group of 100 protesters, in an orchestrated and coordinated fashion, entered the Confederation Building and undertook an occupation of it.

While the events occurred on Tuesday, it is in the subsequent days that additional details have come to light, which I would respectfully submit as a means to my question of privilege with respect to its satisfying the timeliness requirement.

According to the news report published, on CBC's website even, on Tuesday morning:

The demonstration started around 8:45 a.m. The protesters said they would allow MPs with offices in the building to pass through the crowd, but those MPs would have to listen to the demonstrators' demands on the way in.

Officers of the Parliamentary Protection Service (PPS) and Ottawa Police were on the scene, asking people if they had any business inside the building before letting them in.

By 10 a.m., protesters removed from the building were chanting outside. Police and PPS members intercepted and then released 14 protesters without charges.

However, in the subsequent days, additional news reports featuring additional comments and confessions by the protest's organizers came to light. On Wednesday, Politico published a piece with an interview with a protest organizer named Rachel Small, whose "goal was to interrupt the daily business of Parliament 'by not letting MPs walk through these marble hallways'". The Globe and Mail—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am having a hard time hearing the member. I am going to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to check what is going on in the hall and see whether they can quiet it down.

I also want to just remind members that when we go through questions of privilege, the role of the Chair is to decide whether the matter merits priority over all other business, which I have done, depending on what the House is used to.

Privilege

However, we also need to make sure that there is a brief summary of what has transpired so I can determine whether or not we need to move on and whether other members want to provide other information.

There is a raised hand from the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster. I am not sure whether it is on the question of privilege or a point of order.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Madam Speaker, it is just about having the floor once the member for Thornhill is done, on the question of privilege.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I want to go back to the point you just made, that a question of privilege is supposed to be something of substance. The issue here is whether it is being used to filibuster and interrupt the work of other members.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, we know the person heckling me, who wants women to go to backstreet abortionists, can take her turn.

The issue is the interruption of the work of the House of Commons by the false use of a question of privilege.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, I just want to remind members to please be respectful.

I want to ask the hon. member to indicate the question of privilege she has brought forward, in order to make sure I have a full understanding of it, but again, it should be a brief summary and not take hours to speak about.

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

• (1045)

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, with respect to the comment just made by the member for the NDP, I would like him to apologize and to withdraw it. It was a totally out of line, a totally unacceptable comment to be made in the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I ask the hon. member to withdraw the comment.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I withdraw, but they voted against—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would just ask members to please be respectful and to not add more to what they have to say. I had to say this yesterday as well.

In addition, the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton thinks I am not hearing what he is saying, but I certainly do hear what he says. It is very problematic.

The issue that I raised was because when I first started the question of privilege, I should have read a document to speak about questions of privilege and how people bring them forward. I forgot to do that, so I just wanted to indicate that there needs to be a brief summary of what has transpired.

Knowing that it is a short day, we will move to the hon. member for Thornhill.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I have spoken for just a couple of moments to give members context, and I will not be silenced by that member about the personal safety of members of the House and his toxic masculinity in here, the thing he accuses others of doing. I am going to continue on this context because it is important. It is not only my privilege that is breached, but it is everybody who has an office in the Confederation building and those who try to access the parliamentary precinct. I have lots of examples of where this has been heard in the House and in committee.

On Wednesday evening, I understand, the Western Standard published an insightful piece on the protest. This is where the member should be ashamed of himself. The organization that protested was supported, and the support was provided by New Democrats. The article opens as follows:

A group of approximately 130 Jewish Canadians “took over” Parliament Hill’s Confederation Building Tuesday morning in support of Palestine, demanding an arms embargo against Israel.

Three New Democrat MPs, [the member for Edmonton Strathcona, the member for Hamilton Centre and the member for Winnipeg Centre] joined the 100 protestors occupying the lobby of the building, where many members of parliament have offices, while about 30 others stayed outside.

The article quotes, later, a lady named Mrs. Small:

“Three MPs came down,” said Small, naming the three NDP MPs.

“[The member for Winnipeg Centre] said that she was so proud to be there.... I’m not trying to speak on her behalf, but I was very touched by that.”

These subsequent interviews, and these things we have read in the news, came to light later, since the events of Tuesday morning, which I submit also formed the basis of a breach of privilege and equally form the basis of the timeliness necessary in bringing this question of privilege forward.

My own parliamentary offices are in that building. In fact, they are the first door on the right when walking into that building. It was an effort to paralyze the workings of Parliament and it was essentially directed at anybody in that building. It is hard to think it was not directed at members right there on the first floor, with the protesters’ true motivations coming to light, not to mention that they were seemingly aided by New Democrat MPs, which is what has compelled me to rise on this question of privilege.

Our own members, members of the House of Commons, were impeding the work of parliamentarians: to get into their offices, to have meetings in their offices, to have meetings cancelled in their offices. Those who came to the front door would not be able to even walk through the front door of Parliament Hill. That is why I am raising this point.

House of Commons Procedure and Practice states on page 107, “In order to fulfill their parliamentary duties, Members should be able to go about their parliamentary business undisturbed.... Speakers have consistently upheld the right of the House to the services of its Members free from intimidation, obstruction and interference.”

Meanwhile, *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, second edition, comments on page 176, “No impediment should be placed on the Member in going about his parliamentary business, whether in the House, on his way to the House, or while on his way home.”

Indeed, Bosc and Gagnon, at page 86, remind us that “the denial of access of Members to the Parliamentary Precinct has been found to constitute contempt of the House on several occasions.”

It might be helpful to pause here and recall the definition of the parliamentary precinct, which this very much falls within: It is the offices of members of Parliament. On page 163 of Maingot, the parliamentary precinct is endorsed:

In the parliamentary sense, the precincts are the premises that the House of Commons and the Senate occupy from time to time for their corporate purposes. It includes those premises where each House, through its Speaker, exercises physical control to enable the Members to perform their parliamentary work without obstruction or interference.

That includes the Confederation building, where access was denied, or meant to be denied, on Tuesday morning and then with subsequent media reports coming out about who was involved in those protests.

● (1050)

It is the intention of the NDP-organized protesters, which was revealed in those media interviews, that is critical. At page 60, Bosc and Gagnon explain:

Any conduct which offends the authority or dignity of the House, even though no breach of any specific privilege may have been committed, is referred to as a contempt of the House. Contempt may be an act or an omission. It does not have to actually obstruct or impede the House or a Member; it merely has to have the tendency to produce such results.

I find that piece very important. New Democrats put 100 people in the building at an entryway. I can guarantee members they did that because they had the intention to obstruct the free passage of anyone looking to get in, members of Parliament or those they were conducting business with.

Turning back to the prohibition on obstructing and impeding members of Parliament on the Hill, Bosc and Gagnon expand on this principle at page 110:

In circumstances where Members claim to be physically obstructed, impeded, interfered with or intimidated in the performance of their parliamentary functions, the Speaker is apt to find that a prima facie breach of privilege has occurred.

Incidents involving physical obstruction—such as traffic barriers, security cordons and union picket lines either impeding Members’ access to the Parliamentary Precinct or blocking their free movement within the precinct—as well as occurrences of physical assault or molestation have been found to be prima facie cases of privilege.

From there, two further pages of the book are dedicated to summarizing the prima facie cases of privilege, which Speakers have found over the past four decades related to members’ access being fettered by protests, strikes and inflexible security arrangements.

Given that typically those clear-cut facts of each case are an equally clear principle, Speakers’ rulings on questions of privilege of this nature have typically been prompt and concise. Several reports from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs that followed are richer in content and help us understand the issue at hand. I believe it would be useful to review briefly some of those principles.

In reporting to the House on two questions of privilege arising from the federal public service strike, the procedure and House affairs committee explained at paragraph 15 in its 66th report presented in April 1999:

Privilege

One of the privileges of Members of the House of Commons is a right of unimpeded access to Parliament and the parliamentary precincts. Members are entitled to go about their parliamentary business undisturbed, and cannot be prevented from entering the chamber or a committee room for a parliamentary proceeding. This privilege can be traced back to at least the early eighteenth century, and is part of the heritage of all legislative bodies that trace their origins to the British parliamentary tradition. It is based on the pre-eminent right of the House to the attendance and service of its Members. Any obstruction of Members constitutes a breach of privilege and a contempt of the House of Commons.

From the same committee, following a different question of privilege, the 21st report presented in the House in December 2004 reads:

The denial of access to Members of the House – even if temporary – is unacceptable, and constitutes a contempt of the House. Members must not be impeded or interfered with while on their way to the Chamber, or when going about their parliamentary business. To permit this would interfere with the operation of the House of Commons, and undermine the pre-eminent right of the House to the service of its Members.

The report was concurred in, in the House, on May 17, 2005.

● (1055)

The procedure and House affairs committee later wrote, this time in its 26th report from May 2012:

As part of the parliamentary privilege, Members of the House of Commons have the right of unimpeded and unfettered access to the parliamentary precincts, and are entitled to go about their parliamentary duties and functions undisturbed and without any form of interference...

Parliament Hill, and most notably Centre Block and the Peace Tower, represent for Canadians the physical embodiment of our parliamentary democracy. As such, the grounds of Parliament Hill have become the preferred site for individuals and groups for peaceful gatherings and manifestations. The Canadian values and culture, as embodied notably by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms encourage, rather than deter, such an exercise of the fundamental rights of expression and association. The symbolic significance of Parliament Hill has, however, made it a potential target for those with malicious and illegal intentions, and the security posture on Parliament Hill must be adjusted to meet these threats.

We will recall The Globe and Mail’s comment about Madam Wasser that I quoted earlier, who “said in an interview that the Confederation Building was chosen for the protest because it’s a building where many parliamentarians conduct their business and protesters wanted to bring business as usual on Parliament Hill to a halt.”

Going back to the 2012 report of the committee, it restated the obligations and expectations of access to Parliament Hill, including the observation, “First, Members of the House of Commons should not, in any case, be denied or delayed access to the Hill and the precinct”. That is exactly what happened on Tuesday morning.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will remind the member that she is repeating a lot of what she has already said. We expect members to be brief when bringing new information to or discussing the matter at hand. When they start to get repetitive, I will have heard enough.

Statements by Members

I want to allow others who have risen on this to speak, but I will indicate that Speaker Scheer on April 30, 2012, Acting Speaker Devolin on June 13, 2012, and Assistant Deputy Speaker Anthony Rota all indicated that the Speaker has a right to terminate a discussion and it does not mean that any member rising on the question of privilege has unlimited time on the floor.

I will remind the member to please be brief with anything she wishes to add.

The hon. member for Thornhill.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I am talking about a serious issue where the security of members and the breach of privilege of members of the House would have occurred. I have given multiple examples of different rulings from multiple different reports within the procedure and House affairs committee. I am stating them in order to provide you with the maximum context for you to rule on this question of privilege, a question of privilege that impeded members of the House, your own colleagues, Madam Speaker, from doing their work, entering their offices and having meetings, and potentially breached their safety in this place. I would expect that members of the House would take that seriously because if this is not a question of privilege, I am not sure what is.

Similar points have also been made, sometimes word for word, by this committee. The 34th report was presented in March 2015. There was another 34th report, this one presented in 2017, in response to the 2015 question of privilege where concerns were raised about a 74-second delay for a shuttle bus and it rose to a case of a prima facie breach of privilege. Madam Speaker, if a delayed bus was found to be a breach of privilege, then I am not sure how 130 people sitting in a lobby and impeding access to members of Parliament, members of the House, to enter this place, do their work, enter their offices and feel safe, I am not sure why you would not be able to hear that as a question of privilege in its entirety.

• (1100)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member seems to be challenging the Chair on what I just said. As I indicated to the member, she brought some items forward that were repetitive. I wanted to let her know the procedure is that when hon. members present questions of privilege, they are all important and the summary must be as brief as possible because other members want to weigh in on it.

On a point of order, the hon. member for Grande Prairie—Mackenzie.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Madam Speaker, I think it was inadvertent, but the hon. Speaker used the proper name of a sitting member of Parliament when quoting the former Speaker. I am wondering if the Speaker wants to clarify the rules with regard to using the proper names of currently elected members of Parliament.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Yes, I stand corrected. I should not have used the former Speaker's name. I should have used the member's riding of Regina—Qu'Appelle.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Madam Speaker, the government has utterly failed to protect our families, our communities and our nation from extremism. Its inability to curb terrorism or secure our borders is not just a lapse. It is a betrayal of its fundamental duty. To be specific, IRCC bears a significant portion of the blame. Members can take the recent arrest of a father and son in Toronto before they could execute an advanced stage terrorist plot. The father was in an ISIS video hacking at a prisoner's arms with a sword, yet he was still given citizenship.

The government's inaction has created a dangerous vacuum. Its failures have forced civil society, religious leaders and peace-loving Canadians to stand up. I am proud to join in these efforts, and I was honoured to assist in the announcement that Toronto is the Global Imams Council's western headquarters and bear witness to the signing of the Ottawa declaration. I stand with the GIC and all who refuse to bow to hate.

The government's abrogation of its duties to protect Canadians must stop. If the government will not act, then we will. Our people deserve better.

* * *

SAINT JOHN—ROTHESAY

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I, like many in the House, was elected in 2015, and for nine years, and over 1,200 nights away from home, I have fought for the constituents of Saint John—Rothesay in this place. I have only been able to do so because I am lucky enough to have the unwavering support of my family. We all know that being away from our families can take its toll. It is what we signed up for, and we all knew that we would miss milestones and memories.

However, our families did not necessarily sign up for this life, so to our families, I would like to say thank you. I am lucky enough to have my wife, Denise, my son, Konnor, and his partner, Anna, here visiting Ottawa this weekend. They are up in the gallery. I would also like to thank my son, Khristian, and his wife, Emma, along with our beautiful new grandchild, Jude. Without their love and encouragement, I could not do what I do, and I know all of us in this place would not be here if it were not for our families.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sure it was a slip, but the hon. member knows he is not to mention those who might be in the galleries.

*Statements by Members***RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS**

Mr. Chris d'Entremont (West Nova, CPC): Madam Speaker, every word spoken at the House of Commons is recorded, transcribed, edited, translated and published to the highest standards of a long and proud Hansard tradition. For eight Parliaments, Bruce Young has been the chief caretaker of these words, and today we celebrate his accomplishments as he will soon retire after 26 years at the House of Commons.

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

As head of Parliamentary Publications for 21 years, Bruce has steadfastly guided his team through many challenges, recognizing that despite major Canadian and global events, Hansard still needs to be on our desks at 6 a.m. He has supervised the publication of 2,665 Hansards and over 22,000 committee meetings. He also oversaw the publication of the first speech in an indigenous language and the first hybrid meeting.

[*English*]

A visionary problem-solver, Bruce has inspired his team to achieve the impossible on a daily basis. He will be missed, but we wish him a happy retirement playing hockey, chopping wood and, above all, spending time with family.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would like to take this moment to wish Bruce a happy retirement as well.

* * *

GLOBAL NETWORK OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN DEFENCE, SECURITY AND PEACE PORTFOLIOS

Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, last week, I hosted the meeting of the Global Network of Women Legislators in Defence, Security and Peace Portfolios, or WLID, here in Parliament, where we heard from Ukrainian MPs about being legislators in a time of war, including having an app that tells them when to leave the chamber and go to the bomb shelters. Their courage was inspiring and also reinforces our own determination to support Ukraine.

Several years ago, I realized that there were very few women in defence or security portfolios globally, and I established WLID, which began as an informal WhatsApp group. It is now a global network with a secretariat, members on every continent, a website and new co-chairs from Ukraine and Zambia. The network provides a supportive space to share strategies on how to overcome gendered stereotypes and barriers in this sector and share strategies and ideas for legislators. I look forward to seeing the WLID network grow, including members in the House and the other place.

* * *

RED RIVER MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION AND IMPLEMENTATION TREATY

Ms. Leila Dance (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, on November 30, I had the chance to be a part of a historical event for Canada. This event, which was 154 years in the making, was the Red River Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Treaty with the Government of Canada.

I would like to congratulate the Manitoba Métis Federation president, David Chartrand, his staff and the community for their ongoing dedication to the Métis people, and for ensuring this historical event happened. During his speech, Mr. Chartrand acknowledged that “Canada is a place where we can face challenges and come to terms with mistakes of the past, and move forward in a positive way, forging a new history for future generations.” Those are words I hope all Canadians can appreciate as we stand together on the correct side of history.

On behalf of my NDP colleagues, I was honoured to bear witness to this historic signing. I hope I can count on my fellow parliamentarians to commit to ensuring the treaty receives royal assent swiftly in the House.

* * *

YUKON

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this week, we celebrate the Yukon days on the Hill, an incredible event that brings a vibrant spirit of the north right here to Ottawa. We gathered parliamentarians, first nations chiefs, the grand chief, the AFN regional chief, leaders from the Yukon government, and other distinguished guests from the territory.

Yukon days are a unique opportunity to dive into meaningful conversations about the priorities and issues facing our territory. The week is indeed a testament to our spirit of collaboration and innovation. The Yukon is a place that leads with vision and determination, essential qualities for tackling the complex challenges we face, and for building a stronger, more inclusive Canada. This very morning, we announced Canada's new Arctic foreign policy. There is no better way to round out an extraordinary week for our territory.

As the member of Parliament for the Yukon, I am thrilled to showcase the resilience, culture and leadership of our Yukon communities. Together we are ensuring that the Yukon's voice resonates around this great country.

* * *

PETER BARROW

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, Reverend Peter Barrow passed away at age 92. He was the beloved husband of Carol and the devoted father of Trish, Jane and Maggie, as well as the cherished brother of Margaret. Reverend Barrow served as minister of Knox Presbyterian Church in Georgetown and Limehouse Presbyterian Church in Limehouse for 32 years.

Statements by Members

A lifetime member of the Masonic Lodge, Reverend Barrow was Georgetown citizen of the year in 1974. He was a founding member of the Georgetown Highland Games. He was involved in the Royal Canadian Air Cadets and the Rotary Club, and served as padre of the Georgetown and Acton branches of the Royal Canadian Legion. He was ever-present at the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Halton Hills, at the cenotaphs in Glen Williams, Georgetown and Acton, helping all of us remember.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to his family. May he rest in peace.

* * *

● (1110)

OTTAWA CENTRE

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Ottawa Centre, the revitalization of downtown Ottawa is a big priority for me. The pandemic and the occupation of downtown Ottawa has taken a significant toll on the core of our city. That is why I worked with businesses and the community to establish a downtown Ottawa revitalization task force, which has produced a lot of recommendations for all three orders of government to revitalize the core of our city.

I am really proud that the recommendations outlined in that report are being implemented. For example, we recently invested over \$300 million to build 210 affordable Dream LeBreton units right in the downtown core. Just yesterday, we announced nearly \$9 million to rejuvenate the Bronson Centre, which is an arts and community hub in our downtown core. Also, through the support of FedDev Ontario, we will be opening a new tourism office around Elgin Street. Through advocacy, the Ontario government is also putting forward \$20 million to rejuvenate our downtown core.

I will continue to work with the City of Ottawa and other levels of government to make sure the downtown—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Mississauga—Erin Mills.

* * *

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today marks the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, a day to honour the memory of the 14 women who were tragically murdered in the 1989 Polytechnic Montreal massacre, and so many more since.

In Canada, a woman or girl is killed every 48 hours. In Peel region alone, police responded to over 16,000 incidents of family and intimate partner violence in 2023. That is 44 disputes every day and almost two every hour, and that is just what gets reported. That is not counting those who are silent. This violence against women goes beyond physical harm. With the rise of online platforms, harassment now includes trolling, hacking and doxing. This systemic violence heavily affects marginalized women, indigenous women, racialized women and those with disabilities.

We must break this cycle. We must listen to and amplify survivors' voices, and strengthen support systems for those affected by violence.

* * *

MERV CHURCHILL

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, the community of Falkland and the entire rodeo community have lost a champion. One of Canada's longest-running rodeos, the Falkland Stampede, will be missing the voice of Merv Churchill next year.

At the age of 14, Merv was already deep in his passion for rodeos when he organized a barn dance to raise money for new corals for the rodeo grounds. Merv was a champion bull rider at the 1961 Falkland Stampede, but gave up that short career to become the long-term manager of the stampede. His wife, Dot, was always nearby, as was his family, and he also loved his community.

The Canadian Pro Rodeo Association honoured Merv as Committee Person of the Year in 1982. He was inducted into the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame in 2013. In fitting fashion, a celebration of his life will be held outdoors at the Falkland Stampede Grounds on December 14. As Merv would say, dress warm. It could be colder than a well digger's, ahem, out there.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Bloc Québécois betrayed the interests of Quebecers by blindly supporting this Liberal government's \$500 billion in inflationary spending. Quebecers are reeling from this crushing inflation. The cost of groceries, housing and heating has skyrocketed.

Our families and businesses are in crisis. Meanwhile, rather than defending Quebecers' interests, the Bloc Québécois is supporting all of this Liberal government's irresponsible spending. It is time for this “Liberal Bloc” to stop penalizing Canadians.

Quebecers deserve more than a government that has no sense of responsibility with respect to taxpayers' money. Canada needs a strong prime minister at the head of a common-sense government that will bring back fiscal discipline and give purchasing power back to Canadians.

There is only one thing to do: Go to the polls. The Conservatives are there for people. They are working for Canadians, not against them. Canadians are ready for a Conservative government. We will restore the promise of the Canada we used to know.

• (1115)

[English]

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today marks the 35th anniversary of the École Polytechnique massacre. I would like to take a moment to reflect on the 14 young women who were tragically murdered by a man who hated them simply for being women, women who had the audacity to pursue their educations. They were aunties, mothers, sisters, daughters and friends, and, 35 years ago, misogyny stole the lives of these intelligent, talented, beautiful women.

Violence against women has continued in Canada every day since. We see it in the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, where the rate of homicide against indigenous women is six times higher than the rate among non-indigenous women. We see it in the steadily rising rates of intimate partner violence, where four out of five victims are women. We see it on our social media, where men fill the comment sections with taunts of “your body, my choice”.

Many MPs have spoken in this chamber on this topic, yet the epidemic of violence against women rages on. Anti-feminist movements are on the rise globally, and we must state unequivocally that this hatred has no place in Canada.

Now, more than ever, we must take urgent action against misogyny and stand together in support of women and girls.

[Translation]

I remember.

* * *

[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Madam Speaker, imagine that we are a CFO of a billion-dollar enterprise and, when the fiscal year ends, we refuse to disclose the assets, the liabilities and the revenues. Then we ask to borrow billions of dollars more for next year.

That is exactly what these Liberals are asking of Canadians, asking for billions of dollars without disclosing the numbers.

The government's own budgetary watchdog said that the Liberals will likely not meet their fiscal commitments. That means more deficits. That means more inflation for Canadians.

When will the government live up to its obligation of transparency and fiscal accountability, stop covering up its financial mess and just release the numbers?

* * *

[Translation]

TRAGEDY AT ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizens' Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today we commemorate the tragedy that took place at École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989. Thirty-five years ago, 14 women were brutally

Statements by Members

murdered simply because they were women. This femicide left a lasting mark on our society and impresses upon us the importance of fighting violence against women and hate speech. We honour the memory of the victims, and we support their families and the survivors.

This grim anniversary encourages us to reflect on the progress accomplished since then and the work that remains to be done toward building an egalitarian society that is safe for all women. As parliamentarians, we have a duty to strengthen our laws in order to prevent such tragedies, to support education and awareness initiatives, and to unequivocally condemn all acts of violence. Despite the pain it has caused, may this tragedy inspire us to take action for a better tomorrow.

We will never forget them.

* * *

[English]

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, more than three decades have passed since the tragic murder of 14 women at Montreal's École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989. This abhorrent act of violent misogyny prompted Parliament to declare this day as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

Today, we honour the lives of Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte and Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz.

As we grieve this tragic loss, we renew our dedication to combat the hate that fuelled this dreadful event. Women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals across Canada and globally still face unacceptable violence and discrimination. We must unite to end gender-based violence, today and every day.

* * *

[Translation]

JEAN-GUY CARRIER

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, the north shore is a land of extremes. It is a place of great beauty and riches, but where Mother Nature can also be merciless. That is why it produces souls worthy of those extremes. Before winter turned our forests white, 80-year-old Jean-Guy Carrier was paddling on one of our thousands of lakes with his son-in-law when their boat capsized. The two men tried to get back to shore, but Mr. Carrier did not know how to swim.

However, it was his son-in-law who became fatigued and whose body was being pulled to the bottom of the lake. Mr. Carrier somehow managed to pull his son-in-law to shore, with untold strength and courage, the kind that perhaps can only come from love. He was unconscious and not breathing, but Mr. Carrier managed to resuscitate him and bring him back to life.

Oral Questions

Like many others, I believe that Mr. Carrier's actions should inspire us all. Our world needs kindness. Mr. Carrier's heart was forged by the extremes of our beloved north shore.

* * *

● (1120)

[English]

LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam speaker, the NDP leader says he is fighting for Canadians, but his actions speak louder than his empty promises. After 24 votes in obedience to the Prime Minister to hike the inflationary carbon tax and hike grocery bills, and record-breaking food bank lineups, it is all to protect a \$2.2-million pension. The luxury Maserati Marxist does not come cheap.

Consumer Affairs says “Maserati upkeep is a significant expense”. It goes on to say, “You can expect per-year costs to rise every year for the first four years.”

Does that sound familiar? Maserati expenses are three times the cost of a worker's car. With exotic sweet rides, a luxury fake Rolex, U.S. private schools and luxury \$200 rocking chairs that could pay a month's rent, the NDP leader helped double housing costs and drive up crime 50%, and families will pay \$800 more next year for food.

His vote comes cheap and his leadership comes cheap, but his pension sure does not come cheap. Canadians need tax relief now instead of more NDP leader cheap. On Monday, he asked for a chance to stand up for Canadians. How will he vote?

* * *

[Translation]

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, candles, roses, beams of light, masculinism, harassment, violence, hate; it has been 35 years today. Thirty-five years ago, 14 women full of promise and ambition lost their lives at the hands of a man in a tragic act of anti-feminism. There is no hiding what was behind this act.

These leaders of tomorrow were ripped from their future, but their memory pushes us to action. That is why we have taken robust measures with respect to so-called assault-style firearms, including expanding the list of banned guns in Canada yesterday.

Women are strong and courageous. Their safety and their freedom must be protected. To be a feminist is to have the social will to improve the situation for all women. It is about equality for all individuals. This evening, in Montreal, 14 beams of light will light up the sky and we will remember. We will never give up the fight. Today, these 14 women are no longer with us, but the pain remains and so does the urgency to combat violence against women.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

FINANCE

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, there is snow on the ground. It is pretty cold in the capital and Canadians from coast to coast are putting up Christmas trees, but the finance minister is stuck in fantasyland. Somehow, she still thinks it is fall. She is weeks behind on delivering the fall economic statement to the House and to Canadians. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that the minister blew past her deficit reduction targets, adding more inflationary spending and crippling debt, which Canadians will have to pay. However, we do not know for sure because she is nowhere to be found.

When will the finance minister tell Canadians just how much money she spent?

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we look forward to answering our colleagues' questions, but I do feel it is important to recognize the gravity of this day. It is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Thirty-five years ago, 14 women's lives were cut short in a brutal act of violence at École Polytechnique. They were killed simply because they were women. Gender-based violence must not be tolerated in this country, and we all have a role to play in ending it.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, Conservatives on this side of the House stand in solidarity with all of the victims' families on this tragic day.

My question, however, was about the finance minister and the fact that she is hiding today. She has not hidden the fact that she has doubled Canada's debt. She gave us the highest inflation in 40 years, and she delivered the lowest projected growth of any advanced economy. She is trying to hide the truth from Canadians, so I will ask once again.

If she does not want to come clean, can anybody on that side of the House tell us exactly how much Canada's deficit is this year?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we will put our record up against the Conservatives' any day of the week and twice on Sundays. Let me quote from a former governor of the Bank of Canada, David Dodge. He said, “because it was obsessively focused on reducing the federal deficit over fiscal years 2011-12 through 2015-16, the Harper government unnecessarily contributed to a slower, rather more muted recovery”. While Conservatives slowed down our recovery, we have accelerated our post-pandemic recovery and are now on track to have the highest growth rate in the G7. That is in addition to Canadian workers—

• (1125)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Thornhill.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, if the member wants to put his money where his mouth is, he should call a carbon tax election and let Canadians decide. The finance minister is going to have to find another job after the next election. Maybe she will find out that we cannot turn in overdue work. It is something we learn in grade school, but she must have skipped that day. The government has lost control of our borders. It has lost control of immigration. It has clearly lost control of the deficit too, and it is trying to cover up its tracks.

I will ask again, for those in the back, and I will say it slower: What is Canada's deficit this year?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, let us review the Conservative track record on affordability. They will not support feeding hungry kids healthy meals at school. To 400,000 more kids, they said, "No, we do not want to feed you." They will not support a GST break over the holidays on food, toys and other essentials. They said, "No, we will not support a GST cut for Canadians." They also will not lift a finger to fight climate change, which is cited in the report as being the greatest driver of food price inflation. When will they get on side with Canadians and actually support—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, it does not get more secretive than this. The Liberals have not even tabled this fall's economic statement. The Parliamentary Budget Officer was scathing. The audits for the 2023-24 fiscal year have not yet been tabled. This lack of transparency is unprecedented in the history of our country.

Canadians have the right to know what the deficit is for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024.

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question. As he is well aware, our government is investing to increase the number of jobs across the country.

Today, there is good news. There are 51,000 new jobs for Canadians.

[*English*]

We are going to continue to make the investments that are going to help grow the economy, help us transition into a modern economy, help build the homes Canadians need and, importantly, provide support to families who are dealing with a higher cost of living. It is a shame that the Conservatives, every step of the way, oppose these measures.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, twice this fall, the Bloc Québécois voted to keep this bad government in power. This government cannot even cap its inflationary deficit at \$40 billion, which will result in an \$800 increase

Oral Questions

in the price of the average family's grocery bill in 2025. It has gotten to the point where children are putting basic necessities on their Christmas wish lists.

Canadians want to know how high the inflationary deficit is now.

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, honestly, it is hard to listen to this question, because this week the member had the opportunity to vote to reduce taxes on food, but he voted against it. The member will have another opportunity in the very near future to vote in favour of school food programs across our country. However, I think the members is still planning on voting against that measure.

Members of the House need to support families and communities yet, at every opportunity, the Conservative Party votes against measures that support families in my community and those of my colleagues.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Quebec National Assembly has unanimously called on the federal government to repeal the religious exemption in the Criminal Code that permits hate speech under the guise of religious belief. Religion is not an excuse for inciting hatred. One would think that everyone would agree on that, but on Wednesday, the Liberals blocked a motion defending this simple principle, even though the Minister of Justice claims to want to combat hate speech.

What does he have to say to his colleagues who want the federal government to protect religious extremists who incite violence?

• (1130)

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the Bloc Québécois member's question.

We are well aware of what was suggested in the Bloc Québécois's bill. On this side of the House, we are in favour of any effort to combat hatred, particularly the anti-Semitism that we are seeing in Quebec and across Canada.

We could work together to improve or amend our own bill on online harm, Bill C-63, which is already before the House. We are perfectly willing to work with the Bloc Québécois in that regard.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, the National Assembly of Quebec wants to abolish the religious exemption that allows for hate speech. In Ottawa, some want to protect the religious exemption and protect hate speech. In Quebec, we defend communal harmony and social peace. In Ottawa, some defend division and violence. In Quebec, we defend secularism. In Ottawa, some defend the right to commit crimes in the name of religion. This is backwards. Religion is no excuse for committing crime.

Oral Questions

What is so hard to understand about that?

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, on this side of the House, we have a plan to combat hate in our country. That includes a national strategy to combat hate, as well as Bill C-63, which is on the radicalization that happens online. We know that radicalization starts with feelings and ends with acts of violence in the real world. That is what we are targeting with Bill C-63.

Bill C-63 targets the very same sections of the Criminal Code that the Bloc Québécois bill seeks to address. We are perfectly happy to co-operate with the Bloc Québécois to combat hate.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, Liberals and Conservatives have a choice: Will they support Canadians in real cost of living relief, or will they just keep letting Canadians get ripped off?

The NDP is forcing a vote in the House to permanently scrap the GST on all family essentials and have the rebate extended to seniors, students and people with disabilities. It is time for Canadians to come first, not the profits of ultrarich corporations.

Will the government support our NDP plan to help Canadians put food on the table and keep a roof over their head?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is great to see the NDP getting behind a tax break for Canadians over the holidays on essential goods at the grocery store, kids' toys, Christmas trees and everything that will make this holiday season a bit more merry and bright for Canadians.

It is too bad the Conservatives will not stand up to do the same, especially given the fact that they campaigned on this in the last election. It is truly the height of hypocrisy. I am not sure when Conservatives will get on board with actually supporting Canadians.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, everyone should be able to afford a good home and to save for a rainy day. However, people in Nanaimo—Ladysmith are struggling. They need permanent, not temporary, relief.

The Conservatives are a threat to this relief for those who need it most. They only want to give tax breaks to billionaires while everyday Canadians pay the price. Meanwhile, the Liberals have clearly let Canadians down.

Will the Liberals give people in Nanaimo—Ladysmith the break they need by permanently removing the GST from essentials, yes or no?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is clear that the Liberal Party of Canada and our government believe in giving Canadians a break over the holidays. This relief will certainly save families money over the holidays; this is much-needed

relief after the struggles many workers and Canadians have gone through with the inflationary pressures they have felt over many months. It is too bad the Conservative Party of Canada will not step up and support Canadians. In the House, they have obsessively harped on giving Canadians tax breaks. However, when the opportunity arises, they will not step up to actually support Canadians.

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CARBON PRICING

Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC): Madam Speaker, after nine years of the failed NDP-Liberal government, more and more Canadians are going hungry. They see the Liberal two-month tax trick for what it is: nothing more than a lump of coal in their Christmas stockings. One million people are visiting a food bank each month in Ontario. In Niagara Falls, 120 families per day on average are visiting Project Share, our local food bank, because they cannot afford groceries.

When will the NDP-Liberal government axe the carbon tax to provide the permanent, broad-based tax relief Canadians need and deserve?

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have some good news to share with the member. Just a few weeks ago, we signed an agreement with the Province of Ontario for our national school food program. This means that an additional 160,000 kids will have access to healthy food at school this school year. This is help for parents in a stressful and expensive time. It ensures that kids can focus on being kids and can focus on learning. When will the Conservatives get onside and support these measures for families?

● (1135)

Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC): Madam Speaker, a two-month Liberal tax trick does not provide the broad-based, permanent tax relief Canadians need. Sadly, the Liberals plan to raise the carbon tax again next year. One in seven residents in my community of Niagara Falls has visited Project Share. Almost 5,000 residents visited for the first time last year alone. Canadians need our help. They need permanent, broad-based tax relief.

When will the government finally call a carbon tax election so that we can scrap the tax?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the member that, the last time they were in government, the poverty rate for children was 16%. We have lifted hundreds of thousands of kids out of poverty, and the single most effective measure in doing that is the Canada child benefit, which ensures that parents have support each and every month to be able to afford the essentials for their family. Can we guess who voted against it? Can we guess who vows to dissolve it? It is the Conservative Party.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, the first thing the government has to get right is the basics. For Canadians, that is food and shelter. After nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, these costs are way up. Housing costs have doubled; even more, basic food costs continue to escalate, and food bank usage is up 90%. “Let them eat cake” is not an effective strategy. Escalating deficits are the root cause of inflation, but the government still does not get that. Reality is landing on the plates of Canadians.

When will the government take a lesson and stop its economic mayhem?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague points to food and shelter as pressure points for Canadian households. I actually agree, but let us look at what the different parties are proposing to do about it. First, on food, he is complaining about the high price when he is literally voting against a tax break on food. He is literally opposing a national school food program, which is helping hungry kids eat. When it comes to shelter, his own city is directly benefiting from hundreds of millions of dollars in investments to build homes more quickly, and he is supporting a leader who vows to cut that program. I will not take lessons from the Conservative Party, which cuts the very programs that put food on the table for families.

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member keeps trying to talk about putting band-aids on the wounds his economic policies are causing, but step one is to reverse inflationary policies and cancel the carbon tax, which hikes the price of food, fuel and rent. Food inflation has skyrocketed by over 36% in the past eight years. Higher deficits lead to higher inflation and a weaker Canadian dollar, leading to more inflation. This spending is not free; he can just ask the two million Canadians lining up at food banks. Time is up.

When will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is hard to understand how a member who said he is receiving \$228 million for housing considers that to be a band-aid solution. Does he think it is a band-aid solution that we are helping his city lead the country when it comes to converting office spaces to homes for Canadians? Does he think it is a band-aid solution that we are advancing a permanent program that is going to feed hungry kids in schools?

I have great respect for the hon. member. I love the city he calls home; it once provided a home to me. However, it is difficult, once again, to accept questions on the cost of food and shelter from a member and a party that oppose the policies making it easier to put food on the table for families and keep a roof over their head.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Madam Speaker, after nine years of this Liberal government, the cost of living has become unsustainable. Canadians are experiencing an unprecedented crisis. What is the Bloc Québécois doing? It is betraying Quebecers by voting in favour of \$500 billion in spending.

This year, more than 33,000 Quebec children are asking Santa for heartbreaking gifts: a winter coat, a lunch box or, even worse, housing for their family. It is shameful that this is happening in a country like Canada.

Can the “Liberal Bloc” give Quebecers a break and stop supporting this Liberal Prime Minister who is making Quebecers poorer?

● (1140)

[*English*]

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when I was out and about in my community talking to parents, I recently had a conversation with Olivier, who just had his fourth child. He shared with me the impact of the Canada child benefit on his family. He shared with me the impact of affordable child care, which has enabled both of them to go back to work.

These are meaningful measures we have taken to address affordability for Canadians that we continue to see the Conservatives oppose.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Madam Speaker, the inflationary Liberal policies of this Prime Minister, supported by the Bloc Québécois, have crushed Canadians.

Today, children in Quebec are turning to Santa Claus in the hope of having their basic needs met. There are 114 children asking for mittens and another 500 asking for winter coats. It is unbelievable. This kind of heartbreaking request should not exist in a country like Canada.

When will the “Liberal Bloc” stop devastating Quebec families and robbing them of their hope, especially the hope of children?

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizens' Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, affordability for our families and for our kids is top of mind for everyone. We have put measures in place, such as breakfast programs for kids and a GST break.

Oral Questions

The Conservatives had a great opportunity to vote with us. They had a great opportunity to tell families in need this holiday season that, yes, the Conservatives have their backs.

They did exactly the opposite. They voted against every measure for Canadian kids.

* * *

VETERANS

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, the federal government does not even know whether our veterans are dead or alive. This is unbelievable. Two veterans discovered that they were included on two sculptures honouring fallen heroes. Of the 67 people listed, 12 are still alive and four have never even worn the uniform.

These two women filed a complaint. A year later, yes, the plaque has been removed, but their images are still being used, without their permission, on the two sculptures, among the dead.

Will the minister ever remove these sculptures and apologize?

[English]

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for raising this issue in the House.

I can confirm that the department has not provided funding to this specific project and that VAC was not asked to validate the list of names featured on the memorial. That said, Veterans Affairs is in touch with the organization to rectify the matter, and we will.

The executive director of Canadian Trees for Life has said, with respect to the issue, that getting it rectified is a major priority. They expect this to be done swiftly and without delay.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Liberals do not even know what it was they paid for. No one checked what the \$2.9 million paid in 2019 was used for. Even after the ribbon cutting, with Liberal MPs in attendance, no one knew they had paid for sculptures that named living soldiers among the dead.

It took women veterans to file complaints in 2023. As recently as Monday, the Minister of Veterans Affairs was unaware of the situation when I asked her about it. Five years on, these two sculptures are a monument to federal government incompetence.

Will the minister remove them?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I can confirm that the department did not provide funding for this specific project and that Veterans Affairs Canada was not contacted to confirm the list of names appearing on the memorial.

That said, the department is in touch with the organization involved to correct the situation. I expect that this will be done quickly and without delay.

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Jake Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister and his new BFF, the Maserati Marxist, have never been more out of touch. Their punishing carbon tax makes gas, groceries and heating more expensive. The carbon tax coalition has doubled housing costs, doubled rent, doubled mortgage payments and doubled the down payment for a home. Workers cannot afford to pay their rent or mortgage, and Canadians are out of money.

When will the Prime Minister call a carbon tax election so we can axe the tax for good?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members to be judicious with the words they use and to not use them to describe other members.

The hon. minister has the floor.

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just want to clarify the record for everyone who is watching question period on a Friday morning: The coalition on carbon pricing actually fissured this year when the NDP abandoned its policy on carbon pricing. It is known as the most effective economic measure to bring down the price of pollution and also to boost economic activity.

Witness the Canada carbon rebate to individuals and now witness the Canada carbon rebate being applied to small businesses, as much as tens of thousands of dollars depending on the size of a business. It is an economic model that is proven in terms of the evidence, and it is a model that helps bring down emissions.

I would just hope that the NDP would get back on board.

* * *

● (1145)

LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Jake Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, the government has killed small business, and it is all about the pension when it comes to the NDP.

Next week, the NDP leader will be forced to vote on his own words. It will be the ultimate test of who he is. Does he mean what he says or are his words meaningless? He said he was ripping up the supply and confidence deal. We know it was a stunt before a by-election. The NDP leader gets his pension, the Prime Minister gets his power and Canadians get the bill.

Stop the charade, end the games and call a carbon tax election now.

Oral Questions

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): This is not a question on the administration of the House.

The hon. member for Kelowna—Lake Country has the floor.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadian families are paying the price for the Prime Minister's inflationary carbon tax. "Canada's Food Price Report 2025" just revealed that a family of four will spend \$800 more on food in 2025. Food prices rose 36% faster in Canada than in the United States. Taxing farmers, truckers and ultimately families has driven millions of Canadians to food banks, yet the Liberals are hiking the carbon tax again.

Will the Prime Minister finally give families some relief and cancel his punitive carbon tax?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, 15¢ on a \$100 bill is how small the impact of carbon pricing truly is. However, when we offered Canadians a GST tax cut over the holidays that is 100 times greater than that, the Conservatives opposed it. Conservatives demonstrate in the House every single day how they are not supporting Canadians, but this is truly a new height to the Conservatives' hypocrisy.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, while the member does all the work for the Prime Minister and the NDP-Liberal government, food bank usage is actually up 90%. Rising food costs driven by the carbon tax mean that the average family will spend \$16,800 on food next year. People who used to donate to food banks are now clients. Canadians are struggling, yet the Prime Minister will quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre.

Will the Prime Minister admit his failed policies, which are making food unaffordable, and cancel the carbon tax so families can put food on their table?

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I challenge the member to point to a single thing that her party has done to help Canadians address affordability issues. Frankly, it is appalling. On this side of the House, we will continue to put forward measures like a GST holiday and like the Canada child benefit to ensure that families have the support they need through these expensive times, while the Conservatives continue to deny Canadians the support they need.

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TAXATION

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is disappointing that at a time when so many families are struggling to afford the basic essentials, the Conservatives are voting against a GST tax cut, at Christmas no less.

The Liberals' classic half measure not only does not put enough money back in people's pockets but also requires small businesses

to change their prices twice in two months at the busiest time of year.

Why will the Liberals not vote for our plan, expand the GST tax cut, make it permanent, put more money back in people's pockets and give small businesses a break?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a GST break on essentials for Canadians over the holidays is going to make life more affordable for them for the next two months. That is good news for Canadians. It is great to see the NDP behind that proposal from the government.

It is a shame that the Conservatives, who have harped on in the House about cutting taxes, for months and months, for as long as I can remember, would actually stand up in the House to oppose a tax break for Canadians over the holidays. They are not serious; that is clear. All Canadians should wake up and realize that the Conservatives just will not be there to support them.

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● (1150)

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, more than half of women living on the streets are survivors of domestic violence, and women with disabilities are even more vulnerable, because when they marry, the government claws back their disability benefits, making them choose between abuse and homelessness. The Liberals have let women with disabilities down, and we know what happened to support for women when Conservatives were in power: cuts, cuts and cuts.

Will the Liberals stop their cruel and callous clawbacks that put women with disabilities in danger?

Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, for the first time in Canada, there is a benefit designed specifically to help persons with disabilities, and of course it is going to help women with disabilities as well. This is a historic step that we have put forward to address the long-standing poverty among working-age persons with disabilities. Like with other progressive programs, we are going to make sure we continue to expand it to make sure all working-age Canadians with disabilities are supported, particularly some of the most vulnerable women.

Oral Questions

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I go to the next question, I am going to allow the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake to re-ask his question, because I had not heard the end of it. I do want to remind members that they should link their question to the administration of the House a little earlier in their question so we know where it is heading.

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LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Jake Stewart (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is all about the pension. Next week, the NDP leader will be forced to vote on his own words, the ultimate test of who he is as a leader. Does he mean it or not? When he said he ripped up the supply agreement, it was just a stunt before a by-election. The NDP leader gets his pension. The Prime Minister gets his power. Canadians get the bill.

It is time to call a carbon tax election, stop the charade, end the games and call the election now.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There was actually no question in the comment. I am not sure whether anybody wants to respond at this point.

There is no response.

The honourable member for St. John's East has the floor.

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WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today we remember the 14 young women who were killed during the École Polytechnique massacre. As the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence come to an end, we are reminded that our work must continue until we achieve a Canada free of gender-based violence.

Could the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth update Canadians on the work our government is doing to prevent gender-based violence?

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it has been 35 years since the École Polytechnique massacre, where 14 women were gunned down simply because they were women. This tragedy reminds us why we must stand against gender-based violence, so we can prevent femicides.

The greatest risk for intimate partner violence becoming lethal is a gun in the home. That is why we have banned more than 1,500 assault-style weapons, including the type of gun that was used at École Polytechnique. Yesterday we banned an additional 324 types.

On this side of the House, we will always prioritize the safety of women.

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CARBON PRICING

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Madam Speaker, the New Democrats will once again sell

out Canadians, on Monday, by refusing to stand by their own words.

Here is the deal: The NDP leader gets his pension, the Prime Minister gets the power, and Canadians get the bill. Those bills are ever-increasing, when we look at the carbon tax that is going to be going up again on April 1, 2025, on the Liberals' way to quadrupling it. "Canada's Food Price Report 2025" revealed just yesterday that an average family of four in Canada will pay \$800 a year more in groceries next year. Two million people visit a food bank in a month.

Why can the Liberals and the NDP not just allow a carbon tax election to either quadruple it or to allow Conservatives to axe it entirely?

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a lot of questions have been about what the NDP is doing in terms of supporting parliamentary process. Let me talk about one thing that is very salient for today.

Today is December 6, the anniversary of 35 women being shot down in cold blood at École Polytechnique. What the NDP is doing is supporting a bill on the floor of the chamber that would help tackle the root causes of violence against women. What am I talking about? I am talking about radical misogyny that starts online.

Bill C-63, the online harms act, would help us target misogyny at its core. That is something that every member of Parliament needs to get behind, and we need to do it now because time is wasting on keeping women safe.

● (1155)

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Madam Speaker, we stand in solidarity with the victims and their families as always, each and every year.

The New Democrats, though, have to answer for what is going on with the NDP motion, because they will not back up their own words, what they have said in recent months. It was the NDP leader who said, "The Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people." He said he ripped up the coalition agreement that has kept the Liberals in power, yet as soon as the stunt was over, he taped it back together and gave it back to the Prime Minister.

Will the Liberals finally work with the NDP and not quadruple the carbon tax but allow Canadians to have their say in a carbon tax election, or are they too scared of what Canadians have to say to them?

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the people of Canada had their say on carbon taxes in the last election. In fact the Conservative Party, when it was in power, passed the fixed-date election bill. They keep calling. They want us to break the law. We will not break the law. You can break the law. We are not that kind of people.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that he is to address questions and comments through the Chair and not directly to the members.

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Madam Speaker, the government cannot be administered without the confidence of the House. The NDP leader once said, “The Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for Canadians.”

Now the NDP leader says that he is going to vote against his own words and in favour of propping up the Liberal government, a government that has doubled housing costs, has caused two million Canadians to visit a food bank in a single month and plans to quadruple the carbon tax.

Instead, why do the Liberals not call a carbon tax election so Canadians can choose between the costly coalition or our common-sense plan to axe the tax?

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will just point out, for Canadians watching today, that there have actually been three elections in a row on pricing pollution, on ensuring that no one in this country gets away with polluting for free: the 2015 election, the 2019 election and the 2021 election. The Conservative Party actually campaigned on pricing pollution itself.

What I would say is that the price on pollution is proving dividends in terms of the Canadian economy. How is it doing so? We are returning more money to eight out of 10 families through the Canada carbon rebate and through the Canada carbon rebate delivered to small businesses.

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Madam Speaker, that is simply not true, and the Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed it.

We know that the NDP-Liberal coalition is planning to hike taxes again next year. Despite the theatrical display of ripping up its supply and confidence agreement, the coalition is still alive and well. Even when Liberal MPs are calling for a new prime minister, the NDP leader is the only person who is keeping the Prime Minister in power.

Once again, instead, why do the Liberals not give Canadians a chance to vote in a carbon tax election?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives want to talk about confidence. Canadians can have confidence in our government to deliver programs and services that make their life more affordable and that contribute to their quality of life, like our early learning and child care program. Jim Stanford, a very famous economist in this country, just did a report on the success of the program, which has created 110,000 additional work

Oral Questions

opportunities for women and has contributed \$32 billion in GDP to the Canadian economy while saving Canadians 28%, on average, on their child care costs.

We are proving—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun.

* * *

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, BQ): Madam Speaker, in Montreal, people ride their bikes in both summer and winter, at least when the federal government does not get in the way.

The city is offering to clear the snow from the bike path on the south side of the Lachine Canal at its own expense, but Ottawa is refusing. Parks Canada does not have to do anything, but even that is too much to ask. On November 11, the Sud-Ouest borough passed a unanimous resolution calling on Parks Canada to authorize snow removal. I have also been in touch with the Minister of Environment about that. Will the minister ask Parks Canada to get out of the way?

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first of all, this falls under municipal jurisdiction. It is a municipal issue.

If there is an opportunity after question period, I would be pleased to speak to my colleague about this. For me, this is obviously a municipal issue.

● (1200)

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, BQ): Madam Speaker, Parks Canada is federal. The residents of the Sud-Ouest borough are not asking for the moon. They just want their paths to the downtown core to be cleared of snow. The city will do all the work and is even willing to foot the bill. Parks Canada has yet to provide a single well-documented fact or reason to justify its shocking refusal.

The Minister of Environment is himself an active transportation enthusiast. He too must think this is ridiculous. With Montreal already under a blanket of snow, will the Minister of Environment and member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie finally resolve this issue?

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to highlight all the efforts we are making on this side of the House to promote active transportation, such as jogging, walking and cycling, in Montreal, Toronto and across Canada.

If the member would like to discuss the matter in detail after question period, we would be happy to speak with him to see how we can help the City of Montreal with its responsibilities and see how we can clear the bike paths of snow.

Oral Questions

[English]

LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, “the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people”. Who said that? It was the Twitter-tough, Maserati Marxist, sellout NDP leader. He puffed up his chest and stomped his feet, yet he chooses the Prime Minister over Canadians each and every time. He is the only one propping up the government. He is complicit in every Liberal scandal and every failed policy.

On Monday, will he vote for a carbon tax election, or will he once again put his pension before Canadians?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That question definitely has no relevance to the administration of the House.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to ask members to please not be yelling out when others are speaking.

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George has the floor, and it needs to be about the administration of the House, or else I will cut him off and we will go to another question.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, Liberals are weak, they are desperate and the only reason they are in power is because the NDP leader is too selfish and too beholden to the Prime Minister to support his own motion made up of entirely his own words. NDP members voted 24 times to quadruple the carbon tax. The costly coalition has doubled housing costs, doubled rent and doubled mortgage payments, but on Monday they all have an opportunity.

Will the NDP leader put the people above his pension—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, the hon. member is not being relevant to the administration of the House. We are going to move on, and next time, the next question for the members will be cut.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): He was asking the question.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member, is it relevant to the administration of the House?

Mr. Todd Doherty: Asking for a carbon tax election, Madam Speaker, is that not relevant to the administration of the House?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will finish his question, and if it is not relevant, then the next question will be passed on.

The hon. member has the floor.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, they are weak, they are desperate and the only reason they are in power today is because of the Maserati Marxist NDP leader, who is too selfish, too beholden

to the Prime Minister to support a motion made up entirely of his own words—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): We do not need the member to read his whole question. If he can just finish the question at the bottom, please.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, on Monday, we have an opportunity. Will the NDP vote for a motion to call a carbon tax election—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, that has nothing to do with the administration of the government, and if this continues, hon. members will lose a question.

The hon. member for Bow River.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, the leader of the NDP says he ripped up his coalition agreement with the Prime Minister, calling him “weak”, “selfish” and “beholden to corporate interests”, and Conservatives agree. The NDP leader can prove it by putting his pension where his mouth is and voting non-confidence in the Prime Minister.

After nine years of the NDP-Liberal coalition, housing and rent have doubled. It will quadruple the carbon tax, driving up the cost of gas, groceries and home heating. Will the government give Canadians the relief they need by calling a carbon tax election now?

• (1205)

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a lot of us are struggling to understand the nature of today's question period, but I think I have discerned what it is. Those in the official opposition seem to be off their game because they are not using a lot of three-word slogans, and it has destabilized the House.

I can simply say, first, we support housing and the housing accelerator fund that, I think, 17 members of the official opposition advocated for before they were told not to by their leader. Second, we support the fight for the environment. We will continue to advocate for making sure pollution is not free and we will participate and work with any party that wants to support us in that endeavour because it supports the environment—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek.

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TAXATION

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the holiday season is fast approaching, which means many Canadians will soon be celebrating with family and friends. We know what Canadians are getting in their Christmas stockings this year from the Leader of the Opposition: broken campaign promises, hypocritical speeches and more and more of that.

Oral Questions

Could the minister please tell the House what we are going to do to support Canadians this winter?

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her incredible work and her leadership.

Last week, the House voted to give Canadians a real break by eliminating GST on essential goods. This means that ready-to-eat meals, children's clothing, toys, books and Christmas trees will not be taxed this holiday season. Canadians across this country will benefit from real relief at the checkout. Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition decided to do what he normally does. He put partisan interests ahead of helping Canadians and voted against removing a tax.

Can the Leader of the Opposition explain to Canadians why he decided to act like a Grinch this Christmas?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, questions and comments must have to do with the administration of the government. The member asked a question of the Leader of the Opposition.

The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

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LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, the facts do not lie. The leader of the NDP, with the Prime Minister, voted for the carbon tax 24 times, and New Democrats will do it again next week. The leader of the NDP, along with the Prime Minister, will quadruple the carbon tax in the spring. He is the one who created the coalition agreement with the government that has doubled mortgages, doubled housing prices and sent two million Canadians to food banks.

This coming Monday, the leader of the NDP has a decision to make. Will he continue to prop up the Prime Minister for his pension, or will he allow Canadians to vote and call a carbon tax election?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is very clear that members are playing with words and that these questions are not to do with the administration of the government. Members cannot ask a leader of another party or other members to respond to questions. The questions should be on the administration of the government and to the government for it to respond.

I hope the hon. member's other question is related to the administration of the government and asked of the government. Otherwise, I will have cut her off.

The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, just over three months ago, the leader of the NDP ripped up the agreement he had with the government. He said the Prime Minister was "too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for [Canadians]".

This coming week, on Monday, the leader of the NDP has an opportunity to decide if he will prop up the government again or not. Is he going to prop up the Prime Minister or allow Canadians—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just warned the hon. member, and she knows full well that she is not to ask questions of another opposition party during question period. She is supposed to ask questions of the government. This has been going on for quite some time. I would ask members to please make sure that their preamble has more to do with the work of the government, so we know it is going in the right direction, or at least that the end of their question has to do with the government and the administration of the government.

I see that the minister still wants to respond.

The hon. minister.

● (1210)

Hon. Arif Virani (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, what is really important is to focus on some of the issues. One of the issues Canadians are rightly concerned about with the House is foreign interference. They are asking things such as, how do we target foreign interference?

What I find fascinating is that we have had a lot of discussions about the leader of the NDP. That leader has actually had the courage to get a security clearance and get a briefing to help to protect this country. In fact, there is only one leader of a party who has not done exactly that, and that is the leader of the official opposition. I find it quite appalling that, for a man who would purport to assume and to want the highest job in this country, he does not have the courage to work on getting a clearance, getting a briefing and protecting this country.

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GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Madam Speaker, the fact is "the Liberals are too weak, too selfish and too beholden to corporate interests to fight for people". Those are the words of the NDP leader, who continues to betray Canadians by propping up the failed Liberal government. The leader of the party that used to represent workers now props up a government that raises the carbon tax, makes homes unaffordable—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry. I ask members to please settle down and please extend respect to the House and to the person who has the floor. I will find out soon enough what the question is and we will go from there. If this continues, as I said, we will have to go to a practice of pulling questions from those who are trying to pose questions.

The hon. member for Regina—Wascana has the floor.

Mr. Michael Kram: Madam Speaker, the leader of the party that used to represent workers now props up a government that raises the carbon tax, makes homes unaffordable, has lost control of the deficit and lets crime run loose on our streets. On Monday's vote, will the Prime Minister continue to hide behind the NDP or will he finally call a carbon tax election?

Oral Questions

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a shame the opposition still has not figured out how to ask a question on the administration of government business.

While I am on my feet, I might as well speak about what happened yesterday at the public safety committee, where there was pretty shocking testimony about foreign interference in the Conservative leadership race, confirming that the member for Calgary Nose Hill received an angry phone call from the Indian consulate and brought that forward to Mr. Brown's leadership campaign, where in fact his language was changed to make the Indian consulate officials happy. Why are Conservatives—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay.

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TAXATION

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a good thing this question period is almost over. Let us try this.

Last week, on the first day of Christmas, the Leader of the Opposition showed an amazing level of hypocrisy. When the House voted to give Canadians a break, the Leader of the Opposition decided to vote against it, despite running on it in the last election. Can the minister explain why providing tax relief to Canadians during the holidays will move our economy forward?

I hope everybody has a great weekend, and let us relax.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hypocrisy of the Conservative leader is absolutely shocking. During the last election campaign, all Conservative candidates campaigned on a promise to lift the GST during the holiday season. What did the Conservatives do last week, when presented with the opportunity to follow through on that promise? They broke their promise to Canadians by voting against a GST break over the holidays. I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition is planning on serving at Christmas dinner, but I sure hope it is better than the stale slogans and horrendous hypocrisy he has been serving up in the House—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Nunavut.

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NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, here is how a government question is asked.

Hunters and trappers in Nunavut rely on their boats to feed their families. Three years ago, the current government promised a small-craft harbour for Arctic Bay. Three years later, the government has not delivered. This harbour would allow safer hunting and help keep our communities safe from threats in the Arctic. I have

fought for this project and the Liberal government is still ignoring my community.

With the government's new Arctic foreign policy released today, will the Liberals finally fund this important project?

• (1215)

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is so refreshing today to hear an actual question presented to the government. I want to thank the member for doing so.

When it comes to small craft harbours, they are the lifeblood of every community in terms of economic development and in terms of social development. I want to learn more about the particular question at hand, and I am committed to meeting the member, as we all should, in a collegial way, in a clear way and in an inoffensive way, unlike we are hearing today.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order.

I ask the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets and the hon. parliamentary secretary to please behave.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

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TRANSPORT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, as we see the days dwindling to when we can actually pass legislation, my constituents are particularly concerned with Bill C-33. It is on rail safety and management of marine issues around our ports. It was first introduced two ministers of transportation ago, more than two years ago, when the minister was the member for Mississauga—Erin Mills.

Can the government update us? We have finished clause-by-clause. We are waiting for report stage. When will this bill come back so that we can at least get it to the Senate, where we have a hope of not losing years' worth of work?

Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, actually, I agree with the member. We have been in the House here for over a month now, bogged down by the Conservatives with respect to their privilege motion. Once we can get by that, we can get back to the order of business here in the House, something that most, if not all, members are looking forward to.

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ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE DE MONTRÉAL

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence.

[Translation]

I invite hon. members to rise and observe a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the tragic event that happened 35 years ago at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal.

[A moment of silence observed]

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I get to the points of order, I want to apologize to the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake. I asked him to re-pose his question. The first time, I could not hear his question completely because of the fact that there was a lot of noise and I was also having a conversation with the Clerk, checking on something. I did offer him the opportunity to re-ask the question. The second time, he neglected to put the question and made a comment instead. I think it is all in the hype of what happens here in the House, and I do apologize for that.

I just want to say, when it comes to the questions and comments, it is really important to ensure that it does have to do with the administration of the government. It is incumbent upon all members to not make so much noise, so that we can hear everything that is being said.

I do apologize to the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake.

* * *

• (1220)

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am rising on a point of order coming out of question period.

We are continuing to see this trend of questions, or preambles, where 99% of the question is on a subject that is not related to government business, and then, finally, the end of the question somehow asks the government a question. However, the Speaker has made it clear, in the past, that the proper way in which a question needs to be asked is to, at the very least, start the question by talking about some form of government business and conclude the question in the same way.

I believe that the Speaker has set a precedent. Today, Madam Speaker, as you represent the Speaker's decisions moving forward, you indicated that you will remove questions from individuals and cut them off. I know that it can be challenging to hear what is going on with some of the noise in here, but I think it is incumbent upon the Speaker to listen to what is going on and stop a question if it is clear that the content of the question has nothing to do with government business.

Government business is what the government is doing. Asking the government to call an election is not government business. I would ask, Madam Speaker, even if you were somehow to accept the fact that asking the government to call an election is government business, when 99% of the question leading up to it has nothing to do with the government but instead is asking questions of the opposition parties, you have to do something in order to get the

Points of Order

House back in order, which might be stopping the question and it might be removing future questions.

In conclusion, the question that the Conservatives keep asking is about something that is going to happen on Monday. It is very important to recognize, and I think it is fair to say, that throughout question period on Monday, the same questions are going to be answered because it is after question period. Please give this consideration over the weekend, so that you can handle it appropriately on Monday.

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Grande Prairie—Mackenzie, CPC): Madam Speaker, that is the height of hypocrisy. The hon. member is complaining about those types of questions when, as a matter of fact, the member for Saint John—Rothesay actually asked the majority of his question about the leader of the official opposition, but then had a very small tie-back to the administration of government in the very last comments.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chris Warkentin: I am being heckled by the member now recanting his initial comments.

Madam Speaker, secondly, in terms of a question about calling an election, there is only one group of people in the House who arbitrarily can decide on the timing of an election. It is the government. It is the administration. It is an action of the administration of government to determine if it will ask the Governor General for an election.

The House collectively can make a determination by forcing the government to go to an election, but the Prime Minister has the capacity and the prerogative to go to the Governor General and call an election, and that is what we are calling for.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I am raising a point of order with regard to the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Health back in October. As the House records will show, on October 3, 10 and 24, there were three meetings at that standing committee that were dealing with the subject matter of Bill C-277, an act to establish a national strategy on brain injuries. That bill was referred to the committee at second reading on June 12, and it was reported back to the House on October 28, again with unanimous support.

Because of those proceedings, I would ask for unanimous consent for the following motion that, notwithstanding any standing order—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry, but I am already hearing “no”. There is no consent.

On a point of order, the hon. member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley.

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Madam Speaker, on this matter of ruling questions out of order because they are not to do with government business, which you did during question period, there was one particular instance where you ruled one of our questions out of order, but then recognized the government minister to respond to a question that you had ruled out of order.

Points of Order

I question this practice, and I would like you to explain why it is appropriate to allow a government minister to respond to a question that you had actually ruled is not in order.

• (1225)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to see if I have any other points of order. Again, we will have one more on this specific issue, and then we can get to other points of order after.

Is the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford's point on this specific issue as well? His previous one was not.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, on the previous one, I just need some clarification from the Chair because, as I was sitting down, I missed something. Was it the Conservatives who said no to that unanimous consent for the brain injury community? I think they would really want to know.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There are no points of clarification on that point of order.

The hon. member for Kelowna—Lake Country.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, to add to the point of order about questions during question period, I think it would be a really challenging precedent to not allow members to use whatever preamble they would get to their question. The question is at the very end and to cut off members midway really impedes on the member's even being able to get to their question. Therefore, I do not think that is the way to go.

I know we have had NDP members who have asked many questions related to provincial premiers. We have seen a lot of that in the House. I think going this way in this manner would create a lot of difficulty. I just want you to consider that members should be allowed to freely state what is important to them and what they are hearing from their constituents and then get to the question. If a member of the government stands up to answer a question, that is their prerogative if they choose to answer it, whether it is business of the House or not. I would like you to consider that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby rising on the same point of order?

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, yes, I am.

As you know, the ruling was very clear from the former Speaker, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle. During the Harper regime, every single one of those Conservative questions would have been ruled out of order. In fact, after two sentences, those Conservative members would have been asked to sit down. These are previous rulings. You have been much more flexible in giving them a second chance. The reality is that previous Speaker's rulings, including the Conservative—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I cannot hear the point of order, because some members who had the opportunity to rise on the point of order are being a little bit unruly right now. I would just ask members to please wait if they wish to add anything.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, the jurisprudence is very clear: You have the right and the tools to cut this mockery of question period off immediately. Not a single one of the Conservative questions would have stood.

Now I want to reference the Standing Orders because they are extremely important. Numerous standing orders were violated during question period by Conservative members of Parliament. I would ask you, Madam Speaker, to ask the Conservative whip to, number one, ask his members to actually read the Standing Orders, because it is an important part of their work, and to ensure that when members from the Conservative Party come to question period, they actually understand the rules of order and will respect the rules of Parliament and stop making a mockery of the House of Commons.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay also has a point of order.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I think the question at issue here is that, in Parliament, question period is a very partisan moment. It is the moment when the daily shots at government take place, so there is leeway. However, it is about the fair application of rules by the Chair on the abuse of question period.

When the Speaker has ruled that we have not asked something on government business, the question is shut down. We are not given three and four opportunities to repeat the same question to get it on the record; it is shut down. Therefore, if the Speaker rules that a question is not on government business, it is unfair to the rest of us who have just been told, "No, your question is not on government business, so sit down; that is the end of it", to allow Conservatives to repeat and repeat.

I am very concerned, Madam Speaker, and you have heard my frustration, that there is a very unfair application in the House because of the intimidation tactics of the Conservatives. When we get up on points of order, we are regularly shut down quickly. Conservatives can speak on as long as they want, and it allows for a gaslighting in the House. What we are asking for is a fair application. If you rule as Chair that something is not government business, that is your decision, fair play, but to allow the Conservatives to keep going and going because of the intimidation they do with shouting and trying to undermine Parliament, it makes it very difficult for the rest of us to be willing to go along with the politeness of the House.

• (1230)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): To the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margaret's, this is the last point of order I will hear on this.

First of all, the issue is that a lot of what is said is just being repeated. Second of all, the Speaker of the House himself indicated that he would be coming back to the House about this, so there is something coming forthwith.

Points of Order

I think it makes it very difficult for the Speakers to be consistent, given how the questions are being brought forward. We take members for what they are planning to bring forward. As I have indicated, it is very difficult to really hear what is being said when so many people are weighing in; this affected the hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake today.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon everyone to be respectful of what is said and of the decisions of the Chairs. We are doing our best to try to manage the House, and it is very difficult to do that when the last piece in the question is related to the government administration, but nothing else is. That is what is raising issues in the House when we cannot hear what is being said.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would add, as my colleague stated, that the lead-up to the question is an important part of the set-up for the question in question period. The NDP members suggest that the Speaker should start censoring and stopping a question before the member gets to ask it, based on the fact that they do not like or are offended by the opening sentence. Frankly, that is a breach of a member's privilege with respect to their ability to speak on behalf of their constituents in the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have another point of order from the hon. member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry. I was just checking to see if the member has a title, because I usually try to make sure I recognize members by their other or ministerial titles.

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a great title to be the member of Parliament for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, one I have held proudly.

As a person who asked two questions today in the disruption that you were trying to deal with, I just want to add exactly what some other colleagues have said, for consideration going forward. It gets disruptive when somebody does what the NDP did today with the two questions I had. Ten seconds in, it was extremely difficult to get through the questions.

I agree with your point, but I would also encourage members—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, they are doing it now. We can see the irony of that. If they could let somebody finish their sentence, we could go on.

I will make the point again that where they are doing—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Eric Duncan: The king of gaslighting just called people gaslighters a second—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): This happens with almost every party in here, so I would ask members to please be respectful of each other.

The hon. member should wrap up.

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, I would encourage the Speaker to start ruling members out of order when somebody gets 10 seconds into a question and members do not like the preamble. The part that matters in question period is the actual question that comes at the end. Whenever they start yelling and going off at 10 seconds in, that is not fair to the members asking questions.

Lastly, I will point to the irony of any of the Liberal-NDP members, particularly the Liberals, questioning the integrity of a question when they themselves are terrible at giving the answers. The fact that they got—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is debate. There were questions that the official opposition was asking that had no relevance to the administration of the government, so I would ask members to please be careful. I would ask them to go back and make sure that their question is relevant; a few were not.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising again on a point of order.

• (1235)

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, it was the former Speaker, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, who put these rules into effect. If he wants to stand up and renounce what happened during the Harper regime and the fact that questions were systematically cut off after 10 seconds because they were not relevant to government administration, then he can certainly do so. However, that is jurisprudence and Conservatives do not seem to like to live by the rules. They should learn the rules first, because they are—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate that, but it is becoming a point of debate again.

The hon. deputy government House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I want to respond to the comments by the member for South Shore—St. Margarets. My understanding, from what I heard from the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, was not that he was saying the Chair should particularly cut off questions early. He was saying that the Chair, as in the position of the Chair, has already set a precedent. The precedent was set by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, and this was to do exactly what he was asking.

If the Chair is going to make a new ruling and start setting a new precedent, that has to be clear so that all members can follow it. Otherwise, we need to follow the precedent that has been set.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I thank everyone for their points of order. We will certainly take them under advisement; we are currently looking into what has been happening lately and the feedback that has been provided.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS***[Translation]***GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's responses to 23 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

* * *

*[English]***ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE DE MONTRÉAL**

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, 35 years ago, Canada was shaken to its core when a horrific act of gender-based violence devastated our country. On December 6, 1989, a gunman walked into a classroom at École polytechnique de Montréal, separated the women from the men, and brutally opened fire on the women. He took the lives of 14 young women and wounded 13 more simply because they were women.

On the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, we mourn the heartbreaking loss of these young women, whose promising futures were stolen from them. Today, we remember Geneviève Bergeron, Héléne Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte and Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz. These were 14 brilliant lives cut tragically short.

They were students, daughters, sisters, wives and friends. They were athletes, musicians, artists, future engineers, nurses and so much more. Each had unique talents and passions they never got to share, and we all missed out on what they could have contributed to their communities.

[Translation]

Although they are no longer with us, their memory and influence remain.

[English]

Thirty-five years later, these young women are still changing the course of history as we take action against gender-based violence. On this day, and throughout the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, we acknowledge that the misogyny, sexism and hatred that motivated the tragedy at Polytechnique remains very much a real threat for women in Canada and around the world.

From 2011 to 2021, 1,125 women and girls were victims of gender-related homicide. Of these homicides, 93% were committed by a male intimate partner or family member. While indigenous women account for approximately 5% of all women and girls in Canada, they accounted for 23% of victims of homicide in 2021. In 2023, 187 women and girls were killed violently in Canada. That is one woman every two days.

Gender-based violence leaves lasting scars that affect all aspects of survivors' being, including their health, finances and future. When it starts early, it can echo through generations, trapping women in cycles of violence. We must engage young boys so that they know what healthy relationships look like, so we can create a world where lasting gender equality exists. We must break these cycles and create a world where every woman can live free from fear and full of opportunity.

• (1240)

[Translation]

We need to create a world where there is no place for gender-based violence.

[English]

We must also recognize the relationship between femicide and gun violence. According to the Canadian Women's Foundation, the single greatest risk factor of intimate partner violence becoming lethal is the presence of a gun in the home. Our government has always taken the issue of gun control seriously. We have banned 1,500 assault weapons, including the gun that was used at École Polytechnique. Just yesterday, our government announced additional measures. We are banning 324 more makes and models of assault-style rifles to keep our streets safer.

Despite all the efforts over the last 35 years, we still have more to do, but we cannot do it alone. That is why we worked with provinces and territories to launch a national action plan to end gender-based violence and put in place bilateral agreements totalling more than \$500 million over four years, allowing each jurisdiction to address their respective priorities and challenges. We owe it to every life taken too soon to take a stand and fight for a future free from gender-based violence.

As we continue to address gender-based violence, we honour the lives taken at École Polytechnique, and we commit to doing more for those most at risk, including young women, indigenous women, Black and immigrant women, gender-diverse individuals, women with disabilities and those in rural communities. Today and every day, let us remember that we all have a role to play in creating a future where all women can live free of violence.

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, December 6 is always a hard day. It is always a harsh wake-up call. It brings back all the trauma. Exactly 35 years ago today, the unthinkable happened. It was in Montreal, on the eve of exams. The holidays were approaching. It should have been a time for celebration, but on that day, 14 female engineering students at the Polytechnique in Montreal were murdered in cold blood, because they were women.

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The tragedy left us stunned with horror. We could not believe what had happened. We were all in shock. These 14 young women were all university students in the prime of life. They were probably feeling carefree, like people are at that age, when they think that they have everything figured out, that they are invincible, that the world is their oyster. That is how it should have been for these women.

Remember the 14: Geneviève Bergeron; Hélène Colgan; Nathalie Croteau; Barbara Daigneault; Anne-Marie Edward; Maud Haviernick; Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz; Maryse Laganière; Maryse Leclair; Anne-Marie Lemay; Sonia Pelletier; Michèle Richard; Annie St-Arneault; and Annie Turcotte.

They were separated from the male students and murdered in cold blood because they were women. It is unspeakably cruel that a woman can be murdered and suffer this fate simply because she is a woman. In fact, it was so shocking that this Parliament decreed that every December 6 would be the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women.

I was in shock when it happened. I was 22. Obviously, we were all shaken by this tragedy. I also remember the moments surrounding the event. These women were my age. They were studying at university, just as I was. They had dreams and ambitions. In an instant, all that was shattered. Understandably, there were countless collateral victims, including family, colleagues and friends. Their journey came to an end, while mine continued. For all these reasons, they will forever be in my thoughts.

Today we pay tribute to these women, but we also pay tribute to the women in Canada and women around the world who are victims of hate and violence in all its forms. Thirty-five years later, this day is still necessary and just as relevant. Unfortunately, intimate partner violence, sexual assault and misogynistic speech still exist. The year is not over yet, but in 2024 alone, in Quebec, there have been 25 femicides. In Canada, there have been 169 so far in 2024.

In Canada, gender equality should not even be an issue. It should be settled question. It should be absorbed and learned from an early age. Gender equality is not up for debate. Everyone needs to understand that violence is never the answer, that women need to be completely free, free to study, free to govern, free to be MPs, free to be ministers, free from fear and from all forms of violence. They should never have to be in a constant state of hypervigilance when they walk down the street, as we are far too often. Only a woman can say that these days. Only women can say that.

At the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, I have incredible colleagues from all parties who I work with to improve this sad state of affairs, to ensure that women can move around freely and safely. We are making recommendations to the government.

● (1245)

Respectfully, I would like to make a few observations. This is not coming from a place of partisanship. I just want to share these ideas so that we can work together to fix this very sad trend of increasing violence. Violence has increased by 116% in Canada since 2015. Whether it is sexual assault or child abuse, all this violence is

happening right under our noses. In my riding, people are firing guns. We really need to put positive measures in place in order for things to improve.

Quebec's justice minister, Simon Jolin-Barrette, says that Bill C-5, which has been introduced in the House, allows people who commit violent acts to serve their sentences at home. Then there is Bill C-75, which allows violent offenders to be released on bail. Normally, we would not allow people who have committed such acts to serve their sentences at home or to be released on bail. This is something that worries us on this side of the House. I am not saying this in a partisan way. The police forces are telling us this. Quebecers are very sensitive to what the Quebec government says. It was Quebec's justice minister who shared this message about sexual assault. Women are being assaulted and men are walking around free. I say men because we know that 90% of sexual assaults are committed against women.

Today we are paying tribute to the victims. It is nice, and we are all giving fine speeches. We are joined in sadness. However, let us also take a close look at the actions we are taking and the decisions we are making as legislators. When we realize that something is not working, that we are not getting the desired results, let us have the collective intelligence to review, in this place, the measures that have been taken. I will pick up on something that was said earlier by the minister, whom I like very much. She talked about measures that have been put in place and an action plan she wants to table. I will just make this comment.

I would be remiss if I did not take a few seconds to commend the organizations in my colleagues' ridings and in my own riding, such as Fondation jonction pour elle, the Centre-Femmes Bellechasse, the Centre-Femmes l'Ancrage, and the Association féministe d'éducation et d'action sociale. These are all women helping other women in need, including women fleeing violence. These women welcome them and help them move forward.

In tribute to all the injured, abused and murdered women, I say this: We must never forget them.

● (1250)

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today is December 6, 2024, and 35 years have passed. This evening, 15 beams of light will illuminate the skies of Montreal a little. We have not forgotten.

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We have not forgotten them, sisters who were taken from us. We have not forgotten Geneviève Bergeron, 21, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Maryse Laganière, 25, financial services employee. We have not forgotten Hélène Colgan, 23, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Maryse Leclair, 23, metallurgical engineering student. We have not forgotten Nathalie Croteau, 23, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Anne-Marie Lemay, 22, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Barbara Daigneault, 22, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Sonia Pelletier, 28, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Anne-Marie Edward, 21, chemical engineering student. We have not forgotten Michèle Richard, 21, metallurgical engineering student. We have not forgotten Maud Haviernick, 29, metallurgical engineering student. We have not forgotten Annie St-Arneault, 23, mechanical engineering student. We have not forgotten Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz, 31, nursing student. We have not forgotten Annie Turcotte, 20, metallurgical engineering student.

We have not forgotten them, and there is hope in their memory. Tonight, women and men will gather for a candlelight vigil in their honour. Tonight, there will be tenderness, love, and determination. Tonight, there will be human warmth and a willingness for things to move forward. They, my sisters, will be with us, as they have been for 35 years. Though taken from us, these women are a driving force. They push us to move forward.

I am talking about hope because progress is possible. École Polytechnique has more women students than ever before. The school far exceeds the Canadian and Quebec average for female enrolment in engineering. In 2023, 34.6% of students enrolled at the Ph.D level were women. École Polytechnique exceeds 30% female enrolment year after year.

In the late 1980s, barely 15% of students were women, but that was already seen as too many because of misogyny, fear, hatred and guns. However, misogyny did not win. Fear did not win. Hatred did not win. Guns did not win. For decades, the victims of this attack have served as role models for thousands of women who carry their aspirations in their backpacks and who go on to use their degrees to help make Quebec society more vibrant and modern than ever.

My sisters must believe me. I know that the road is long, but we are also making progress on tightening gun control. We are working tirelessly and steadfastly to ensure that the weapons used against them can never be used again, either against women or against men. We still have work to do, but we are making progress with these women in mind. We must not go backwards. As we saw with the gun registry, the danger is very real. We must remain vigilant for them, for women, for our mothers, our sisters and our daughters, for the women yet to be born.

We will never forget my sisters who were taken from us on December 6, 1989. We will continue to fight against violence and for the emancipation of women. We will continue the fight with them at our side.

• (1255)

[*English*]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it has been 35 years since Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz,

Annie Turcotte, Annie St-Arneault, Michèle Richard, Sonia Pelletier, Anne-Marie Lemay, Maryse Leclair, Maryse Laganière, Maud Haviernick, Anne-Marie Edward, Barbara Daigneault, Nathalie Croteau, Hélène Colgan and Geneviève Bergeron were murdered for being women.

New Democrats will always remember the women of École polytechnique de Montréal who lost their lives to patriarchy and white privilege. This deadly combination continues with the upholding of male supremacy across the globe. It is called misogyny, an ingrained prejudice and contempt for women. It is misogyny that has kept women excluded from the hallways of power. It has limited their job opportunities, income, ability to move freely in the community, safety from violence or even access to the health care they need.

For indigenous women in Canada, the impacts are even more deadly. Indigenous women are killed at seven times the rate of non-indigenous women in Canada. This is a recognized genocide that has become so normalized in this country that, when an indigenous woman, girl or two-spirit individual goes missing or is killed, it barely makes the news. This reality is happening right now in Winnipeg, where murdered indigenous women have been abandoned in a landfill. It was not a given that the hallways of power would offer dignity to these women and search for them wherever they were. No, it took pressure from sisters to get it done.

I take a moment here to recognize the power of the NDP member for Winnipeg Centre, who fought alongside indigenous women and their families and created a red dress alert system to find and protect indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people. This is what action on violence against women looks like. It is shameful that women and gender-diverse people in this country need to stand on guard.

In 35 years, misogyny has not dissipated. In fact, it has increased. With the reach of online gaming and social media, misogyny now has a new name: manospheres. There are clubs, podcasts and books. Influencers use these platforms to radicalize young males through a combination of algorithmic design, social dynamics and exposure to extremist ideologies.

Let us remember these words: algorithmic amplification, gamification of hate, normalization of misogyny, recruitment of vulnerable men and lack of countermessaging. These are all enemies of human rights, and they are the new wave of violence against women and diverse genders. Right now, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights draws the country's attention to the fact that a "growing number of men spread hateful ideas about women, trans and non-binary [people] online. Some internet communities even encourage and celebrate gender-based violence."

The article continues, “Researchers have called for a variety of regulatory and technical improvements to reduce the reach and harmfulness of radical, hateful internet content. Simply banning users who engage in hate speech—deplatforming—has been shown to reduce their reach.” Legislatures must take action on this immediately; the Internet giants will not, because they are benefiting financially from hate and the abuse of women and people of diverse genders.

• (1300)

This is where Canada is, 35 years after 12 aspiring engineers, a nurse and a budget clerk were killed for being women and taking the chance to bravely step into the manosphere.

Today and every day, New Democrats honour the women who lost their lives at École Polytechnique and every victim of gender-based violence. We call on the government and the opposition to stop fuelling hate, take immediate action to end the amplification of misogyny, and end decades of governments' systemic failures to protect the fundamental human rights of women and gender-diverse people in this country.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I seek the unanimous consent of the House to add words on behalf of the Green Party of Canada on this very sombre day.

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

The motion is carried.

The Honourable Member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has the floor.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, today we remember Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte and Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz.

I thank the Chair and all my colleagues for their remarks. I thank the minister for her apt and sombre words. Thirty-five years later, this horrific event remains incomprehensible. I remember the murder of 14 women on December 6, 1989, as if it were yesterday.

We think of them on this day. We also say we know that ending violence is a job for us all. We must speak out against femicide. We must stand with those women still in Afghanistan and help them to survive. We must stand with all indigenous women and girls in Canada. We must say that it is time to end violence against women, violence against each other and the violence we carry in our hearts.

• (1305)

[*English*]

When we remember the horrific events of 35 years ago, we say on this day that these women were killed solely because they were women, but the killer in his note made it clear that these 14 women were killed because he saw them as feminists. They were killed because the misogynist killer saw them as feminists who had wrecked his life. We see this now, as other colleagues have mentioned,

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growing in things as strange as the incel movement that launched killings on the streets of Toronto. We see it in movements, as my friend from Port Moody—Coquitlam just mentioned, in online social media augmentation of hatred against women.

[*Translation*]

However, the most important thing is to remember that dark day. We will not forget the women who were killed 35 years ago today. We stand in solidarity with them and with men who identify as feminists. We must work together, always, to end violence.

[*English*]

We must end violence against women. We must move on legislation that deals with intimate partner violence. There are things we can do, such as limiting access to the type of weapon that killed 14 women 35 years ago today. We must never forget them as individuals, and we must work to end violence against women everywhere, all at once and for always.

[*Translation*]

We are all working together towards the same goal: to end violence.

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of ministerial statements, Government Orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

[*English*]

We will go back to the question of privilege. I just want to remind members that on a question of privilege, members are expected to be brief and concise in explaining the event.

The Speaker will hear the member and may permit other members who are directly implicated in the matter to intervene. The Speaker also has the discretion to seek advice from other members to help determine whether there is a prima facie question of privilege involved that would warrant giving the matter priority consideration over the House's business. When satisfied, the Speaker will terminate the discussion.

The hon. member for Thornhill has the floor.

*Privilege***PRIVILEGE**

ACCESS TO PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I left off talking about two reports of the committee, the 34th reports, one presented in 2015 and the other one in 2017. In response to the 2015 question of privilege in which concerns were raised about whether a 74-second delay of a shuttle bus rose to the level of a prima facie breach of privilege, one of your predecessors ruled, on May 12, 2015, at page 1379 of the Debates:

In this light, emphasizing the notion of balance, questions raised by the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons are pertinent with regard to defining what constitutes an impediment to unfettered access for members to the parliamentary precinct and buildings. It would indeed be unfortunate for members to carry the concept of physical obstruction to illogical and unreasonable lengths. However, I would caution that the House ought not either to fall into the trap of assessing these matters on the sole basis of the duration of a delay or impediment. One can easily imagine a situation where even a very brief obstruction, depending on its severity or nature, could lead a Speaker to arrive at a prima facie finding of privilege and to allow a debate in the House.

Most recently, Speaker Regan, on April 6, 2017, at page 10251 of the Debates, said:

The importance of the matter of members' access to the precinct, particularly when there are votes for members to attend, cannot be overstated. It bears repeating that even a temporary denial of access, whether there is a vote or not, cannot be tolerated....

Obviously these kinds of incidents, which have given rise to the issue now before us, have been all too frequent.

The 2017 report from the same committee, the procedure and House affairs committee, which followed that particular ruling, meanwhile noted, "In line with past precedents, the Committee strongly believes that the right of unimpeded access for parliamentarians to the parliamentary precinct is of the [utmost] importance and that obstruction or interference with Members engaged in parliamentary business cannot be condoned."

The relevant precedents are, I would respectfully submit, numerous and unequivocal, and I have laid them out. A temporary denial of access for MPs to the parliamentary buildings cannot be accepted and must be addressed.

● (1310)

What is unique here is that parliamentarians were a part of this protest, in an effort to impede and obstruct the work of fellow parliamentarians, members of the House. It is also, I believe, part of a broader pattern of unhinged behaviour on the part of New Democrat MPs, though I know that is already a matter on which the Speaker is currently deliberating on, given their behaviour in the House late last week.

This is also a continuation of the very tactics that we have seen on our streets from unhinged mobs that think that their petty grievances allow them to target Jewish neighbourhoods, firebomb Jewish schools, obstruct synagogues and wreak havoc on our Canadian values, while abiding and abetting groups that are designated as terrorists in this country. It is essential to recall that this issue, and this question of privilege, is not about some politicians looking out for their self-interest. Rather, as Bosc and Gagnon articulate on pages 59, "The privileges of the Commons are designed to safeguard the rights of each and every elector."

Later, on page 60 of that same book, Bosc and Gagnon, quoting from the 20th edition of Erskine May's guide on parliamentary procedure, which says, "The privileges of Parliament are rights, which are 'absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers'. They are enjoyed by individual Members because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members". A similar point is made by Maingot, at page 12.

Canadians send us to Parliament to represent them and to speak out in the impassioned debates of the day. In doing so, they also expect us to comport ourselves in a professional way. That does not, of course, include engaging in illegal, disruptive, harassing and potentially threatening conduct toward our own colleagues and the institution of Parliament. It definitely does not include the delay in the business of Parliament by not letting MPs walk into their own office buildings, and it definitely does not—

The Deputy Speaker: There is a point of order from the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, in referring to our procedural bible, and Conservative MPs may not be aware of this, but it says very clearly, on page 144, "Questions of privilege for which written notice has been given are raised at specific times, namely on the opening of the sitting, following Routine Proceedings but before Orders of the Day". In that sense, the member is not speaking to the question of privilege in the right order. We would have to complete Routine Proceedings and then, prior to orders of the day, go back to her hopefully completing, as she is being very repetitive, the question of privilege.

● (1315)

The Deputy Speaker: Because the hon. member started her question of privilege prior to being interrupted by orders of the day, she can continue. As it is a continuation of her original speech, I will allow it.

There is a point of order from the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I was here when the member began, and the Speaker then reminded the House that a question of privilege has to be focused and is not to be used as a filibuster. The member seems to be repeating things. The Speaker also said that. I believe we are way past the point. It seems that this is a tactic as opposed to someone who is actually concerned about their rights being upended.

The Deputy Speaker: I will encourage the hon. member for Thornhill to make her closing arguments.

The hon. member for Thornhill.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to, but I understand why the NDP does not want to hear about a breach of privilege that its members were involved in. I am going to continue. This breach of privilege certainly does not include indefinitely occupying a building where MPs were blocked, as tough it were business as usual.

I will close by saying that, the protest in itself, I would submit, is a contempt of the House. The engagement of NDP MPs in such behaviour is unprecedented and must be called out at every single opportunity. I believe it rises to contempt. We must stand up on behalf of the sacred traditions, the rights of this place and the democratic values that we share as Canadians. Should the Speaker agree with me, I am prepared to move an appropriate motion to instruct the procedure and House affairs committee to get to the bottom of this issue and recommend the appropriate accountability.

I will end with this: All of the protesters who were there will have to remember that they will not silence members of Parliament. The NDP MPs who joined that protest will never silence the voice of those who stand up for freedom-loving Canadians in this country, ever.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to add to the question of privilege that was raised by my colleague from Thornhill. I also just want to note that I am deeply offended by the previous interventions in regard to the point of order from the member for Timmins—James Bay. For him to suggest that this is a filibuster tactic is completely disrespectful. My safety and my staff's safety were jeopardized on Tuesday, and that is not acceptable. These events need to be looked at further by the Speaker.

I just want to run through what happened that morning with me. I had arrived to the front of the Confederation Building and I had my children with me on this day, which is not something that I normally do but for some reason I had brought them with me. I had noticed that there was more of a presence of security, but I honestly did not think anything of it until I went to go into the building.

I was stopped by PPS, who told me that I could not go in there because there were about 100 people who had stormed the building and were now occupying it. I obviously was alarmed by this. The officer went over to speak to another officer, who then said that I could go into the building and that it would be safe for me. I questioned this because my office building is located on the first floor in the Confederation Building, but I was told, "Do not worry; it is just a passive occupation."

My children and I were then escorted by PPS around the building. We entered through the accessible entrance. Once I was in my office, I already had staff there. She was advised by PPS to keep the door locked as we could hear chanting and singing, which made us very uneasy, not knowing what was going on. Knowing that protesters had also passed the entrance of the security portion of the Confederation Building, and some were standing outside the door of the member for Thornhill's office, was very concerning for me.

My mothering instincts told me this was not a safe place for my children to be with me. I then made the decision that I had to get them out of the building and, frankly, off the precinct altogether. There are not a lot of ways around that building, and I had to go through the basement. I was actually appalled and shocked at the number of people who were sitting in the accessible entrance going through security. These were stakeholders. These were Canadians who were coming for meetings. The fact that there was chaos at the front entrance of the building, and PPS was still allowing stake-

holders into the building and putting them through security, frankly and honestly, is just bananas to me. I do not understand it.

I do not understand how, with chaos erupting, it would be a good idea to add more chaos and this time with Canadians who might not necessarily be familiar with Parliament Hill but were there to meet with MPs. I eventually got my children out and away from the building. I still had staff in the building, so I felt like I had an obligation to go back to my office.

I then had another staff member from—

• (1320)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. The reality is that for a question of privilege the intervention has to be concise and has to deal with the question of privilege that has been raised. At the same time, if you, Mr. Speaker, believe it is a prima facie case of privilege, members then have the opportunity to make speeches such as the member is making now, which is perfectly legitimate after a ruling. The ruling obviously will not come today because we will want to examine the record and respond. Therefore, I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to keep the question of privilege to the privilege matter and not allow for speeches that are more properly the domain only after you have ruled.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for that intervention.

I see the deputy whip of the Conservative Party.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, with regard to that point of order, a personal first-hand account is very much part of the information that the Speaker must hear. It is not frivolous and it is not repetition. The member is speaking about a personal experience that is unlike anybody else's experience. That member has not only the right but the obligation to ensure that the details of her experience are detailed with regard to this matter.

I believe that, if it were one of my NDP colleague's members who had this experience with their children, he would be stopping at nothing to ensure that their voice was heard. Today, more than ever, I would hope that members of Parliament would allow my colleague, who has testimony about her experience with her children, to be heard today.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, for clarification, are we talking about something that recently happened in a parliamentary building or the convoy protest a couple years ago? If it is the latter, then I certainly have something to add.

The Deputy Speaker: That is getting into debate.

The hon. member for Surrey—Newton.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the Sikh genocide.

There have been consultations among the parties and I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move that the House acknowledge and recognize that the crimes committed against Sikhs within India in and following 1984 constitute a genocide—

Some hon. members: No.

Privilege

The Deputy Speaker: We will go back to the question of privilege. We need to be concise in the report of events so we can make a decision. Once we get there, then, of course, the Speaker's office will work on whether this is a prima facie case or not. We want to hear just the facts so we can bring that information up.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on my colleague who just pointed out that when we are bringing these points forward, they have to be clear and concise. They cannot be used to stretch out as a filibuster. Everyone's personal experience, and what happened to their aunt when they were visiting them, and that they feel that their rights were impeded, is not relevant to the question at hand.

We have heard about the protest. We know a protest happened. Was it undemocratic or was it democratic? Was it the right of citizens or was it not the right of citizens? It is a fairly simple question. Whether people liked the demonstration and whether they felt personally hurt because there was a demonstration are irrelevant to the question of privilege. Otherwise, we are descending into filibuster.

• (1325)

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, our safety as parliamentarians, those who are in this place and also our staff, should be of utmost importance in this place, and so I will continue.

I had a staff member from another member of Parliament's office knock on my door and advise me that PPS was going to be removing protesters and I should keep my door locked because officers were bringing them through my hallway. Why did PPS let members' staff in the building in the first place, given there was an occupation going on and it was not removing these people? Why did PPS not advise me, all the office staff and other members down our hallway of what its plan was? Why did PPS not remove the members of Parliament and staff who were down the hallway before it started removing the people who were illegally occupying the Confederation building, making it—

The Deputy Speaker: I have another point of order.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to raise questions about the judgment of my colleague, but that day we all received a special advisory. Maybe if the Conservatives do not read a special advisory, it does not mean their privilege—

The Deputy Speaker: We are getting into debate. If the hon. member wants to add to the question of privilege, I will allow him to speak after we have the speakers list. I know the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby will be up next on it.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: On the question, Mr. Speaker, this is new because saying the PPS failed this member is a false claim when we received the app warning. So—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I will let the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay finish up and then I will go back to the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, it is an important thing that is being introduced here. It is a new element. If someone did not read the warnings that were being given, it does not mean their rights were impeded, and so that is a false claim, as we all received regular updates on what was happening that day. Again, if the Conservatives are attempting to bring in side issues to continue a filibuster, they cannot bring in falsehoods about rights they claim were impeded if they did not bother to read the messages from PPS.

The Deputy Speaker: Again, as I said, if the hon. member wants to make a further representation when we get to the end of our speakers list, he is more than welcome to add his thoughts as well.

The honourable member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, just in response to that, the member for Timmins—James Bay should be very careful with what he is saying.

I came to the office at basically the time when we received the situational advisory. I had two children with me. There was no way for me to be able to do everything at once: checking my email, walking with my kids and entering the building. I would just ask the member not to be putting context into what I am saying when he does not know.

Through my office window, I could see that protesters were being removed from the Confederation Building. They were not willingly leaving; they resisted their removal. This was not peaceful. I know that there are people, including Parliament staff members, who were physically here and who witnessed and remember the terrorist attack that happened in Centre Block in 2014.

This incident that happened just this week is triggering for those who were here and who experienced that event. Not to mention, there were those who were feeling unsafe for the first time, in what was supposed to be a safe place.

What I was most uneasy about is that Global News reported on this on November 12, with the headline, "Teens accused of plotting to bomb pro-Israel rally on Parliament Hill". That information was fresh in my mind, and the fact is that I have a Jewish colleague whose office is near mine; this is the environment we are in. Anti-Semitism is violently on the rise in this country—

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, we know that the protesters called themselves Jews Against Genocide.

I find it very concerning that members are attempting to claim that, because someone who is of a Jewish faith was in a building where there was a protest by people who call themselves Jews Against Genocide, there is somehow an anti-Semitic threat. This is really taking us down a dark path.

Privilege

You, Mr. Speaker, have the obligation to hear whether it is credible.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1330)

The Deputy Speaker: We are far too deep into debate on this one. I will recognize the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, and I will ask her to wrap things up. A few other people are on the list and want to speak.

The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, this is going on across the country. This is the backdrop I have in my mind; it is going through my mind, and I am trying to figure out if it is safe or not safe.

This was described as a passive sit-in protest, which it was not. I heard the yelling and chanting; I felt the intimidation. Because of what he witnessed, one of my children felt scared for his mom, asking if it is okay for me to stay in the building and if I would be safe at work. That is unacceptable for anybody in this country when they go to work.

How is this not taken more seriously, given that any one of those who were protesting could have had a different motive, could have had different intent? Again, I will ask the Speaker to read the article that I referred to earlier. This place, this institution, must be safe and peaceful. That was not the case.

I heard the intervention before me from the member for Thornhill. To hear that members of Parliament joined in this occupation and then boasted about it is absolutely disgusting. Specifically, these were New Democrats. I believe this is added evidence that the New Democrats are not only contributing—

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, now we are being accused of supporting intimidation when we just had a Conservative tell us that he would be punching people in the mouth as he walked out.

Mr. Speaker, you are allowing this to descend—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: We are getting into debate. I am going to ask the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster to finish up; I have two other people who want to speak to this.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, this is what I have been trying to do. I have literally three sentences left.

As I was saying, I believe this is added evidence that the New Democrats are not only contributing to the hostile work environment in the opposition lobby and in the House of Commons but that they are also among the—

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I hope you will allow me to at least speak. New Democrats are being drawn in to this when we had nothing to do with the protest. This is a spurious political attack—

The Deputy Speaker: Hold on a second; I cannot hear you either.

I am going to ask the hon. members to quiet down just a little, so I can hear the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that this had nothing to do with her worry about her children. This was a spurious attack on New Democrats. We had nothing to do with the protest. They do not like the protest. They are using this filibuster to attack us.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to reject this totally. This is not a credible question of privilege because it is being targeted against MPs who were not in the building, who were not in the city and who had nothing to do with it. We are being targeted by the Conservatives because they are trying to draw us into a fight that we had nothing to do with. That is not privilege. That is an abuse of my rights as a parliamentarian. I am asking you to shut this down.

The Deputy Speaker: I have heard enough from the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, so I will go to the next person.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I have two sentences left. That is all I ask.

The Deputy Speaker: I said that I have heard enough. It is causing disorder in the House, so I have to move on to the next person.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: That is not fair. I literally have two sentences left.

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to stop this, because I see a number of people standing on points of order.

The hon. member for Miramichi—Grand Lake.

Mr. Jake Stewart: Mr. Speaker, to the point of order, I think what is important is that it was not passive. It was illegal. They targeted one of the members of Parliament. Some of those moronic thugs went right outside her door and protested. They were in there illegally. There was nothing passive about it. I heard more than 15 people were arrested and banned for five years from the precinct. That is what happens when something illegal is done.

The New Democrats helped them too.

• (1335)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it was a bit disturbing to me when we saw Conservatives cheering on the three-week occupation in downtown Ottawa. There was jeering and threats made to members of Parliament and not a single Conservative member of Parliament ever raised that as a question of privilege. In fact, they tried to block questions of privilege coming from other members of Parliament.

The member for Thornhill raised a frivolous question of privilege. That is a ruling you have made on past questions of privilege. We will consult, of course, what was said, and we will come back on Monday on this issue. I do not believe it is a prima facie case at all, but I do want to give the member the benefit of the doubt that maybe she has changed from previous frivolous questions of privilege.

We will come back on Monday.

Privilege

Mr. Philip Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, I rise to defend the right of the member to finish off her statement. She said she had two more sentences. Bosc and Gagnon is clear that privilege takes priority over nearly all matters. She was not repetitive. She was telling a story about her children. She was literally crying at points. My goodness, we have to decide: Are we parliamentarians, or are we humans?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, we saw the pattern. The member for Miramichi—Grand Lake just repeated it. He accused New Democrats of threatening and attacking people when we had nothing to do with this.

I ask you, Speaker, to ask him to withdraw that comment because it was a false comment. We had nothing to do with this. He came in here—

The Deputy Speaker: This is getting beyond what the question of privilege is actually about.

The hon. deputy whip for the Conservatives.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the last comment that New Democrats somehow were not involved in this, there has obviously been multiple news reports with regard to not only members of Parliament but also staffers of the New Democratic Party. There are pictures as well, which I would like to reserve the right to turn in to the House so that the Speaker can review the documentation as well as the photos that were taken during that entire episode.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, not to take away from the current debate in front of us, but I would like to seek unanimous consent to table the OPQs today.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, can the member—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I cannot hear.

An hon. member: I would like to finish my last two sentences—

The Deputy Speaker: If the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster can wait for one second.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby has the floor.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, because of the chaos caused by Conservatives, I did not hear the member and I said no because of that, so I would appreciate it if the member could repeat.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, we will do that again.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to table the Order Paper questions.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 3090, 3091 and 3093 to 3095.

[Text]

Question No. 3090—**Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to Health Canada's review of the manufacturing data, quality control and safety of lipid nanoparticles (LNPs): (a) was the purity of the starting materials for the lipids, such as residual halogenated solvents and elements, including metals, assessed for mutagenic risk in accordance with established norms and guidelines, and, if so, what were the results, and, if not, why not; (b) was the total amount of observed impurities assessed for mutagenic risk, and, if so, what were the results, and, if not, why not; (c) were any individual element impurities considered mutagenic; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, was this assessed with respect to multiple doses and with respect to the nature of transfection of the LNPs; (e) was any assessment of the LNP as a nanoparticle performed; (f) if the answer to (e) is affirmative, did this include an assessment of the PEG moiety; (g) was an assessment of the risk of complement activation-related pseudoallergy due to the PEG moiety performed, and, if so, what were the results, and, if not, why not; and (h) were any complement-related assays requested from the manufacturer, and, if not, why not?

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Health Canada undertook a preliminary search in order to determine the amount of information that would fall within the scope of the question. Health Canada concluded that without a list of products that contain lipid nanoparticles, or LNPs, Health Canada is unable to search and validate the information requested.

Question No. 3091—**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:**

With regard to the government's announcement in Prince Edward Island that it would partner with the provincial government to provide up to \$20 million to connect rural households to high-speed internet in Prince Edward Island: (a) what are the details of all projects approved through this funding, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) location, (iii) project description, (iv) amount of funding, (v) original projected completion date, (vi) actual completion date or current projected completion date, (vii) reason for the delay, if applicable, (viii) status of the project; (b) what is the total amount of funding provided to projects to date under the funding; (c) how many households have been connected to high-speed internet to date specifically as a result of this project; (d) how many households have received upgraded broadband service to date specifically as a result of this project; (e) what were the penalties for funding recipients that did not meet (i) the performance metrics, (ii) the timeline, (iii) all other requirements, outlined in the funding agreement; (f) what is the current funding breakdown between federal and provincial governments to date in relation to these projects; and (g) what are the details of all funding transfers to vendors to date as part of these projects, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) amount, (iii) transfer date, (iv) description of the goods and services?

Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since 2015, the Government of Canada has committed over \$46 million towards connectivity initiatives in Prince Edward Island. The \$20-million partnership with the Government of Prince Edward Island is being allocated to projects that provide coverage to areas not serviced by other ongoing connectivity initiatives.

With regard to parts (a), (b), (d), (f) and (g) of the question, details of projects approved under the \$20-million partnership will be available once negotiations with Prince Edward Island and the recipients are complete.

With regard to part (c), details of projects approved under the \$20-million partnership will be available once negotiations with Prince Edward Island and the recipients are complete. It is expected that approximately 2,000 homes will be connected as a result of this funding partnership.

With regard to part (e), the minister may declare a default under the agreement in the event of a recipient not meeting the performance metrics, the timeline or any requirements outlined in the funding agreement. The minister may, at their discretion, notify the recipient of the issue and allow 15 business days to resolve it or prove corrective action. If not addressed, the minister may declare an event of default. If the minister declares that an event of default has occurred, the minister may exercise any one or more of the following remedies: suspend any further payments to the recipient under the agreement, including payments in respect of claims that may have been received by the minister prior to the date of the minister's declaration of default; terminate the agreement, including any obligation to make further payments to the recipient under the agreement; require the recipient to repay all or part of the contribution that has been paid to the recipient, together with interest from the date of demand for repayment; and/or any other remedy available to the minister under the law.

Question No. 3093—**Mr. Blaine Calkins:**

With regard to the executive committee or EXCOM meeting held by the Correctional Service of Canada in Banff, Alberta, from October 8 to 10, 2024: (a) how many people attended the meeting; (b) what were the costs incurred by the government related to the meeting, including any travel costs, in total and broken down by type of expenditure; and (c) what are the details of each expenditure related to the meeting, including the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of the goods or services?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in October 2024, Correctional Service Canada participated in the 39th Canadian Criminal Justice Association Congress, as it has done for well over a decade now through a long-standing partnership. This year's conference was on reconciliation, and the theme was "Moving Forward Together: Exploring Pathways to Reconciliation, Healing and Public Safety". Given one of CSC's priorities is addressing the overrepresentation of indigenous offenders, CSC deemed it was important it be actively involved to further its commitments under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

CSC leveraged this opportunity to have executive committee members, 18 in total, attend the congress as well as hold their in-person executive committee meeting, which took place the day after the conference ended, at no additional cost for a meeting room. Participants stayed in campus-like accommodations at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and, during the conference, meals were included and not claimed by participants. Considering that the event took place less than a month ago, total costs are not yet available and disclosure of information at this time could lead to incorrect information being provided.

In accordance with the Access to Information Act, CSC proactively discloses travel and hospitality expenses for senior officers. The travel and hospitality expenses related to this event will be proactively disclosed on the Open Government portal within the timelines prescribed by the act.

Privilege

Question No. 3094—**Mr. Blaine Calkins:**

With regard to prescribed fires in Jasper National Park between January 1 and July 22, 2024: what were the dates, locations, and sizes of each such prescribed fire?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, due to Alberta's unusually early wildfire season, which began on February 20, 2024, and was fueled by widespread drought conditions in 2024, there was not a period in which the prescriptions required for controlled ignition could take place. The elevated fire risk associated with these conditions made it unsafe and contrary to prescriptions required to carry out such operations. Prescriptions for fires have the following science-based considerations: wind speed, fuel moisture, drought code, landscape topography, barriers to fire spread and fuel type that is present, that is, what you are planning to burn and what is in the area.

Parks Canada utilizes a variety of wildfire management tools and strategies, including prescribed fires, forest thinning and the creation of community fire guards, to mitigate the impacts of wildfires and protect public safety, local communities and critical infrastructure.

A prescribed fire is a carefully planned and controlled fire ignited by trained fire management professionals. It mimics the low- to medium-intensity fires that naturally occur in ecosystems adapted to fire, helping to restore and maintain ecological health and biodiversity. Parks Canada employs prescribed fires as a vital tool to promote ecosystem conservation, reduce wildfire risks to surrounding communities and protect cultural heritage sites.

Question No. 3095—**Mr. Marc Dalton:**

With regard to the Canadian National Security Council, since its creation was announced in 2023: how many times has the council met, broken down by year and by quarter?

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Special Advisor for Water, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the national security council convened its first meeting in October 2023 and has usually been meeting monthly while Parliament is sitting.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 3092 and 3096 to 3098 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled in an electronic format immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Privilege

[Text]

Question No. 3092—**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:**

With regard to the government's announcement in Prince Edward Island that it would provide up to \$1.5 million for a short-term project in partnership with Island Telecom and Xplornet to connect 1,046 homes in 56 communities: (a) what are the details of all projects approved through this funding, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) location, (iii) project description, (iv) amount of funding, (v) original projected completion date, (vi) actual completion date or current projected completion date, (vii) reason for the delay, if applicable, (viii) status of the project; (b) what is the total amount of funding provided to projects to date under the funding; (c) how many households have been connected to high-speed internet to date specifically as a result of this project; (d) how many households have received upgraded broadband service to date specifically as a result of this project; (e) what were the penalties for funding recipients that did not meet (i) the performance metrics, (ii) the timeline, (iii) all other requirements, outlined in the funding agreement; (f) what is the current funding breakdown between federal and provincial governments to date in relation to these projects; (g) what are the details of all funding transfers to Island Telecom to date as part of this partnership, including, for each, the (i) amount, (ii) transfer date, (iii) description of the goods and services; and (h) what are the details of all funding transfers to Xplornet to date as part of this partnership, including, for each, the (i) amount, (ii) transfer date, (iii) description of the goods and services?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3096—**Mr. Ed Fast:**

With regard to government funding provided to Thornhill Medical, since November 4, 2015, and broken down by department or agency: what are the details of all such funding, including, for each instance, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) type of funding (grant, loan, contract for goods, etc.), (iv) purpose of the funding, (v) program under which the funding came?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3097—**Mr. Ed Fast:**

With regard to government funding provided to Conavi Medical, since November 4, 2015, and broken down by department or agency: what are the details of all such funding, including, for each instance, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) type of funding (grant, loan, contract for goods, etc.), (iv) purpose of the funding, (v) program under which the funding came?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3098—**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:**

With regard to deportation or removal orders for individuals: (a) how many people are currently subject to a deportation or removal order, in total, and broken down by province or territory and by type of removal status or classification (monitoring, wanted, stay, working inventory); and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by country to which the individual is being deported?

(Return tabled)

[Translation]

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

● (1340)

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ACCESS TO PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the same question of privilege, I want to add first-hand testimony. I too was trying to access my office that morning. I was prevented access to the building by the Parliamentary Protective

Service. I was intending to go to my office to meet with stakeholders. I did make my way around to the back, through the basement, and as previous interventions have outlined, a number of stakeholders were in the basement. Unfortunately, instead of talking about AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis with stakeholders that morning, we spoke about how our building was being taken over.

The Deputy Speaker: Now we will hear the two sentences remaining of the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will close with this. Security of all staff, members of Parliament and those who are visiting this institution to see how our democracy works and to visit the heart of the nation must be taken seriously.

I ask the Speaker to look through the lens of those who were intimidated, traumatized and scared for their safety, and that he also review the procedures that were used and put in place by PPS that day, address the flaws and gaps, and ensure occupations like this will never happen again on Parliament Hill and in the precinct.

Mr. Chandra Arya: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. A few minutes back, the member for Surrey—Newton introduced a motion seeking unanimous consent, and I said no. I believe on the way out of this chamber, the member threatened that I would be effed up. Another member also aggressively accosted me in the lobby. I feel that as a member of Parliament, I should be able to express my opinion and my views freely in the House and I should not be threatened by any words or actions of my fellow members.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for bringing that forward. We will talk to the hon. member about the proper way to look into that particular issue.

Also, we have the hon. member for Spadina—Fort York on a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on the question of privilege raised by the member for Thornhill. Just like her and the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, as well as the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington, my office is in the Confederation Building. I am rising in support of the case put forward by the member that privilege was indeed breached. Moreover, I would encourage the Speaker to consider the alarming report of three NDP MPs as witting abettors and accomplices to what was a clear breach of privilege and contempt of Parliament and our sacred traditions.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the question of privilege raised by the member for Thornhill. The office that Canadians have elected me to occupy is also in the Confederation building. On Tuesday, with the illegal protest that happened, which was assisted by three members of the NDP, the Confederation building was targeted because its ease of access outside the fences of West Block and Centre Block made it an easy target. Therefore, the NDP was complicit. I was unable to do my duties as a member of Parliament. I had a meeting scheduled that day with the ambassador from Israel in my office to discuss issues going on in the Middle East, and the ambassador cancelled the meeting because his security team felt threatened by this.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, again, I go back to jurisprudence. I know Conservatives never even consult the Standing Orders; they just walk in. If they actually reviewed the procedural bible, on page 9374 of the Debates, they would see a ruling from June 13, 2012. The Speaker said to this point, “in the case of a question of privilege, the floor is not the members’.... The Speaker has the right to terminate [the] discussion if the Speaker feels that relevant points [to the question of privilege] that have not been previously raised have not been brought forward.” These are, more properly, debates for after your decision, and I would ask you to uphold the jurisprudence, the traditions of the House, and bring an end to this repetition by Conservatives.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1345)

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—COST OF LIVING RELIEF FOR CANADIANS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: We will be able to get back to the privilege motion after I do this.

It being 1:45 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 81(16), it is my duty to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the motion.

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

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, on the NDP’s plan for relief for so many Canadians, we would ask for a recorded vote.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Monday, December 9, at the expiry of time provided for oral questions.

Privilege

PRIVILEGE

ACCESS TO PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT

The Deputy Speaker: I will go back to the hearing of the privilege question. As I have said to all folks who have spoken, members should try to bring new, relevant information forward and try to be as concise as possible.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is new information because it is about my experience this past Tuesday, which is new and additional information. This is in spite of the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, who chooses to take his orders from the Liberals. He wants to shut down the evidence that his party was complicit in preventing members of Parliament, who have their offices in the Confederation Building, from doing their work.

As I was saying, I had scheduled meetings that day, including a very important meeting with Israel’s ambassador to Canada. I would think members of Parliament would be concerned when a member of Parliament cannot have a meeting with the representative of another government because of an illegal protest that breached my ability to do my job. Now—

The Deputy Speaker: I am seeing another point of order.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, again, Conservatives were unconcerned with a three-week occupation that did just that; it disrupted everybody—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: We are getting back into debate; I just want to make sure there is a point of order.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I would implore you to follow the judgments made in the past, including in 2012, which allow you to determine that you have heard enough on the question of privilege and to allow those speeches if, in the end, you indeed decide that there is a prima facie question of privilege over the next few days.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, it does not surprise me that the member for New Westminster—Burnaby is trying to prevent a question of privilege with regard to a meeting with the ambassador of Israel to Canada about the conflict in the Middle East. It does not surprise me that the NDP would be supportive in helping to organize the prevention of a member of Parliament from doing their duties with a protest that happened out of—

• (1350)

The Deputy Speaker: The member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, a question of privilege, very clearly, has to be on the facts. There is wild speculation and a whole bunch of frivolity being brought in by the Conservatives. It is not a bona fide response to a question of privilege. I would ask you again to cut off the member.

Privilege

Certainly the member will have more scope during a speech if and when there is a ruling, but currently this is not permissible and does not correspond with our procedural bible.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a few words and facts on the record concerning the privilege motion put forward by the member for Thornhill.

The Deputy Speaker: I want to try to finish up with the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets, then I will go to the member for Kildonan—St. Paul. Another member is standing up as well.

As I said, please keep it to new information and be as quick as possible because we really have heard a lot on the issue already.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets has the floor.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, the NDP member suggested that my intervention and how I was prevented from doing my job are frivolous. It is a point—

The Deputy Speaker: I am in the chair.

The hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul has the floor.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Speaker, I have a few more facts that have not been discussed regarding the privilege debate, and I will be brief. I am the—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Speaker, I will just wait my turn.

Mr. Rick Perkins: It's outrageous.

The Deputy Speaker: When someone stands on a point of order, they have the right to be heard.

Mr. Rick Perkins: And I suffer, and you take away my right to speak to the point of privilege as a result?

The Deputy Speaker: Are you challenging me, Sir?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: I am not removing your responsibility here.

Points of order are coming up. The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is standing on a point of order, and the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul is now standing on a point of order.

I understand that the hon. member is not finished, but I am also asking him to get to the point rather than taking on an attack. The attacks are happening from both sides, and it is not helpful to the debate we are having in the chamber right now.

I will allow the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets to finish up if he wants to get to the point he is trying to make.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Mr. Speaker, if I am not interrupted again, I can conclude my privilege intervention on how I was prevented from doing my duties as a member of Parliament by the illegal protest that happened.

When an ambassador from a foreign country cannot come into the building because of concerns for their safety, that is a major issue in the administration of our democratic duties and my ability to do my job. The fact is that the protesters were allowed to simply

walk into the building with such ease, prevent business and target specifically, from media reports, anyone coming in to do business with members of Parliament. In fact, preventing members of Parliament from getting into their own offices is a breach of our privilege.

I would ask you to consider all the experiences of members of Parliament who were subjected to the breach in the Confederation Building on Tuesday morning. I would also ask that you consider the NDP's role in preventing members of Parliament from doing their duties.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul has the floor.

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will try to be very brief.

I did want to put a few points on the record for your consideration of the privilege question, particularly from a public safety standpoint. As you know, I am the official shadow minister for public safety, and the RCMP falls under my portfolio. I am accountable to hold the government accountable.

My concerns are regarding the protective policing program. I just want to put a few words on the record from the government's own documents: "The RCMP Protective Policing Program (PPP) is facing significant challenges meeting increased demand for their services, putting unsustainable pressure on the PPP program." It also says, "Security and protection are of increasing concern due to a significant increase in the number of threats against public figures".

I did feel responsible to ensure that the public safety aspect of this is put on the record, because we do not know who the individuals are. We do know who the NDP members are who were supporting them, but we do not know who the other members are. We walked to our offices and had individuals blocking our way. We do not know who they are, but their purpose was to block us from going into our offices. If we allow it to transpire that there could be sit-ins in our offices, I do believe it would raise considerable safety concerns.

In particular, given the concerns raised by the government's own document, there is a reason we have the protective policing program in the first place. I cannot use props, but MPs are able to carry panic buttons for a reason—

● (1355)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, this is not speaking directly to the question of privilege or prima facie. This is involving other programs. This would be perfectly reasonable to bring up, if and when you rule on this, in speeches. It is not appropriate at this time when you are hearing the question of privilege. Conservatives do not seem to understand the rules. You can imagine if—

The Deputy Speaker: I will say to the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul that, I understand the information coming, but I just want to make sure that we are very concise and make it quick.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Speaker, I am not speaking quickly enough to the standard of the NDP member, but I will speak to this. I would say that I do believe the Speaker should consult with the the director of the PPP program for those considerations because I do have grave concerns in this regard. It increases the threat, the access that individuals have and the idea that they can come to a sit-in right in our offices, or right outside our offices, and block us from going to work.

If we allow this to happen with no consequences, I ask that you consider consulting the RCMP on the threat analysis of whether this is allowed to be permitted. Please ensure that is part of your consideration.

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I wish to very briefly add some additional information in respect to the question of privilege raised by my colleague, the member for Thornhill. Specifically, the member for Thornhill cited that three NDP MPs were actively involved in this illegal anti-Israel protest, and I would add that there was a fourth member of the NDP who was involved—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, again, this is debate. I say this with due respect.

I do understand that Conservatives do not read the Standing Orders. They have not read the procedural bible. They love to cause mayhem, but this is not directly—

The Deputy Speaker: I have two people on my list now. I want to make sure that the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton finishes things up, quickly.

Privilege

The hon. member has the floor.

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, it is highly pertinent, insofar as that there were NDP MPs who were actively involved in facilitating this illegal anti-Israel protest, and contrary to the—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, this is debate.

The Deputy Speaker: I am tending to agree.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Joliette.

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, what a day it has been in the House. I have never seen anything like it.

I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock as 3:00 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Having reached the expiry of the time provided for today's debate, the House will resume consideration of the privilege motion at 11 a.m. on Monday, December 9.

Pursuant to Standing Order 94, I wish to inform hon. members that Private Members' Business will be suspended that day.

It being three o'clock, the House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2 p.m.)

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