



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

Volume 152 No. 038
Friday, October 10, 2025

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, October 10, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1000)
[*English*]

MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM MODERNIZATION ACT

The House resumed from October 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-11, An Act to amend the National Defence Act and other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today with privilege in support of Bill C-11, an important piece of legislation that strengthens the National Defence Act, modernizes our military justice system and, most importantly, centres the rights, safety and dignity of survivors of sexual misconduct within the Canadian Armed Forces.

The legislation represents another critical step in our government's ongoing work to rebuild trust within the military community and to ensure that those who serve our country can do so in an environment that is safe, respectful and free from harassment or discrimination.

We ask a great deal of the men and women who serve in uniform. They are there for us in times of crisis, whether responding to natural disasters, supporting peacekeeping missions abroad, or standing ready to defend Canada. It is our duty to be there for them as well, to ensure that they are protected not only from external threats but from the harm that can exist within their own ranks.

In terms of responding to survivors and calls for change, Bill C-11 responds directly to recommendation 5 from the report of the former Supreme Court justice Louise Arbour, as well as eight recommendations from former justice Morris Fish's reports.

This bill would codify in law what has already been put into practice since 2021: that the Canadian Armed Forces no longer has jurisdiction over Criminal Code sexual offences committed in Canada. From now on, these offences will be investigated and prosecuted exclusively by civilian authorities.

This is a clear and necessary shift. The bill would provide survivors with clarity, with fairness and with the confidence that their

cases will be handled outside the chain of command. It would also help ensure that sexual offences are treated consistently and transparently, aligning military procedures with the Criminal Code and the civilian justice system.

Bill C-11 would also establish a victim liaison officer to support survivors throughout this process, regardless of jurisdiction. It would enhance the independence of key justice actors within the military system to prevent real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Following the leadership of survivors and advocates, I want to take a moment to highlight some of the tremendous work that is being done in my home province of Nova Scotia to advance justice for survivors of sexual violence. Nova Scotia has become a national leader in confronting the misuse of non-disclosure agreements, or NDAs. Thanks to the tireless efforts of survivors and these advocates, our province has recognized how NDAs have too often been used to silence victims of sexual assault, harassment and misconduct both in everyday life and in their work.

Through strong legislative leadership and community advocacy, Nova Scotia has taken bold steps, ending the use of NDAs that prevent survivors from speaking their truth. This movement is grounded in compassion, in fairness and in the belief that justice must never depend on silence. The courage of survivors to come forward, many from the military community, has brought us to this point today. Their voices have reshaped how we understand accountability and transparency, not just in the civilian world but within institutions that have historically struggled to face their own culture of misconduct.

In terms of the importance of implementing all of these recommendations, while Bill C-11 represents real progress, we must also see it as a broader commitment to implementing all 48 of Justice Arbour's recommendations and the recommendations of Justice Fish. We cannot stop at partial measures.

Government Orders

Implementing all recommendations is essential to building a durable culture of change within the Canadian Armed Forces. This includes addressing systemic discrimination, improving leadership accountability, enhancing victim support systems and ensuring that diversity and inclusion are embedded at every level of the institution. Our government has already implemented roughly 20 of Justice Arbour's recommendations, and we are on track to complete them all. As we move forward, we must also ensure that the survivors continue to be at the centre of every policy, every decision and every reform.

• (1005)

We need a culture of respect and trust. Culture change takes time and begins with clear action. It begins when we replace silence with transparency, when we move from protecting institutions to protecting people and when we show through legislation, not just words, that we are committed to justice and equality. Bill C-11 is about restoring confidence that victims will be heard, that justice will be fair and that no one is above the law. It is also about ensuring independence, that military justice actors are free from the influence of command structures and that survivors can trust the system to serve their interests, not its own reputation.

In closing, I want to recognize the strength and resilience of survivors in the Canadian Armed Forces and across the country, who demand better. Their courage has driven this change. As legislators, we have an obligation to honour that courage with meaningful action. Bill C-11 would do exactly that. Let us be clear that this is not a finish line. It is one more step in a larger effort to create a military culture grounded in dignity, equity and respect, a culture that reflects the values of the country our members have sworn to defend. As Nova Scotians have shown through their leadership on ending NDAs, progress is possible when we listen, when we act and when we refuse to accept silence as the price of peace.

I am proud to support the legislation, and I call on all members in all parts of the House to join me in supporting Bill C-11 for the women and men who serve, for the survivors who have spoken out and for a future in which every member in the Canadian Armed Forces serves with pride, safety and dignity.

• (1010)

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what I gather from the member's speech, as far as the seriousness of the government or the military commitment or leadership, is that the rights of those serving in the institution were neglected completely and ignored in terms of what happened in the last 10 years.

What in the bill would assure us that we are going to change the conduct of the past to give people the rights they deserve?

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I just spoke about in my speech. It is about rebuilding that culture of trust. We can talk about the last 10 years of government or the last 10 years of this, but the bill would address recommendations that have been given to us. It is about amending the NDA to address Arbour's recommendations, which will, in turn, support victims.

I look forward to your voting with us on the bill when it comes time.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I would remind members to address their comments through the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-11 is transformative in the sense that sexual assault and harassment will be put in civil court as opposed to the military court process. This is, as the member put it, a very strong step forward. However, it is also important to recognize that after the reforms came forward, we had already started the shift to do that. That has been happening for the last couple of years.

Passing the legislation is the right thing to do, and we look forward to its going to committee. I would ask the member for her thoughts on the importance of the bill's going through the system.

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, good morning to my colleague. When he asks that question, I reflect back to 2021 and how the military police has been asking complainants whether they wish for their cases to be investigated in the military or through civilian police. What we have been looking at, which is part of the recommendations list, is that we need to take the two apart and have it run through our civilian justice system.

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, cases of a sexual nature have been transferred to civilian authorities since the minister issued a directive to that effect in November 2021. Can the member speak to how that is working with regard, for example, to historical sexual assault cases, and I understand there have been some challenges with that, as well as the backlog we face in our courts and the implications of the Jordan decision?

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member about the backlog, and it is unfortunate that we even have to talk about backlog when it comes to violence of a sexual nature within the military or within civilian life. I would also like to mention that as of July 29, 2024, the military police had referred 150 case files of offences in the criminal sexual offences code to civilian police, through federal, provincial, territorial and municipal agencies, since 2021. Following these consultations, or complaints, of these 150 cases, 103 of them have been accepted while 46 files have been declined by civilian police. Although the numbers are not 103 for 103, this tells me there is progress being made.

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence is new to the job. He inherited a mess from his predecessors and is now trying to fix a decade of Liberal mismanagement and neglect.

I hear him saying the right things about Bill C-11. I am sure he believed it when he stated:

Government Orders

Canada's military justice system must reflect the values of fairness, accountability, and respect that Canadians expect. With this legislation, we are delivering on recommendations made by former Supreme Court of Canada Justices Arbour and Fish and taking decisive steps to strengthen trust in the Canadian Armed Forces. These reforms will help ensure that every member serves in a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment, one that upholds the highest standards of integrity, reinforces operational effectiveness, and honours the commitment of those who wear the uniform in service to Canada.

With bold words like these, it was, to put it mildly, disappointing to read in the *Ottawa Citizen* that Patrick White, the naval officer who brought to light an alleged serial sex offender in the Canadian navy whose crimes were being ignored by military leadership, is being released from the naval reserve against his will. Supposedly, there is no place for him, while, at the same time, the alleged perpetrator continues to serve.

What message does that send to members of our armed forces and to the Canadian public? The whistle-blower is dumped from the military, while the alleged criminal continues on as if nothing happened.

The issue is not which court and jurisdiction will deal with sexual assault charges involving those serving with the military, which is the scope of this bill. The issue is that those in charge of military justice and their superiors apparently do not see anything wrong with the status quo. If no charges are being laid, what does it matter which court has jurisdiction?

This is part of a disturbing Liberal trend on this issue. Covering up wrongdoing and avoiding transparency seem to be the norm. For example, in 2021, the then prime minister and his defence minister continually covered up information on sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces, going to great lengths to block investigations and hide the truth from Canadians. The former prime minister orchestrated a cover-up to hide the fact that his top aide and his defence minister had direct knowledge of a sexual misconduct allegation against the then chief of the defence staff. When sexual misconduct was studied at the national defence committee in 2021, the Liberals filibustered for weeks and then called an election before the committee was able to produce a report. This is an example of Liberal lack of transparency on this issue, something not fixed by a change in the justice system.

The Liberal government has had 10 years to tackle sexual misconduct in the military. In 2015, Justice Marie Deschamps issued her external review of sexual misconduct and sexual harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces. The former Liberal minister of national defence had that report on his desk when he was sworn in. Did he act? Obviously, he did not. The Liberals ignored the problem for five years, then asked for another report. Then, just to be sure, they asked for a third report a year later.

When will military sexual trauma victims get the justice they deserve? The previous Conservative government took significant steps to protect Canadians and to stand with victims of crime. We understand that the highest priority for any government must be to ensure the safety of its citizens. This is a responsibility that the previous Conservative government took very seriously. Putting the rights of victims back at the heart of the criminal justice system is important to us. Standing up for victims means helping to ensure that victims have a more effective voice in the justice system and

are treated with courtesy, compassion and the respect they deserve at every stage of the criminal justice process.

● (1015)

When a whistle-blower is told there is no place for him in the military while the alleged criminal keeps his job, it looks like the military criminal justice system is about the rights of criminals, not about supporting victims and certainly not about justice. No wonder our military is in crisis. It is not just antiquated and inadequate equipment. It is not just the lack of vision. It is a feeling that those in charge, the Liberal politicians and military leadership, cannot be trusted to do what is right for the men and women serving in our armed forces. They are not trusted to do what is right when confronted with allegations of a serious crime. No wonder enlistment is down and recruitment efforts are not gaining traction. Who would voluntarily enter what appears to be a toxic work environment?

It saddens me to say this, but I have little trust in the Liberal government's ability to bring justice to those who have been sexually assaulted while serving in our armed forces. I sincerely hope this legislation is not just Liberal virtue signalling. I hope to see a change in attitude towards sexual assault and a willingness to see prosecutions proceed swiftly and fairly. Changing the culture to make such crimes unacceptable may take time, but part of that culture change is showing that such behaviour will no longer be tolerated by leadership at every level of the Canadian military.

If moving jurisdiction for sexual assault away from military authorities to civilian ones results in an improvement in the way justice is administered in Canada, then, it would seem to me, this bill is worth supporting. However, is there any evidence this is actually the case, or will there still be cover-ups? The Liberal record for the past 10 years is one that has been soft on crime. We have seen violent offenders set free on bail to reoffend as a direct result of the Liberals' policy. Why would their attitude towards sexual assault in the Canadian Armed Forces be any different?

Conservatives believe we must continue to address sexual misconduct, discrimination, racism and other forms of harassment because all military members deserve a safe and respectful workplace. All victims of military sexual misconduct deserve timely justice. Does this bill deliver that?

Government Orders

The previous Conservative government accepted all recommendations in the Deschamps report to eliminate all forms of sexual harassment from the Canadian Armed Forces. After 10 long years of Liberal government and two more reports from Supreme Court justices, victims of military sexual misconduct are still no closer to having their cases dealt with properly. There are aspects of Bill C-11 that open the door to potential political interference and partisan appointments. Those include giving increased power to the Minister of National Defence to issue guidelines with respect to prosecutions, and having the director of military prosecutions, the director of defence counsel services and the provost marshal appointed by the Governor in Council.

Conservatives are proud of and support all men and women in uniform serving Canada. We believe they deserve a workplace free of sexual harassment. Maybe this legislation can be improved at the committee stage. Maybe the Liberals can convince us they are serious about dealing with sexual assault in the Canadian Armed Forces. This time, let us hope they are actually doing something instead of just telling us there is a serious issue to be dealt with.

● (1020)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that there has been no prime minister in the last 50 or 60 years who has done more for the Canadian Forces than the current Prime Minister, who was just elected a few months back, whether it is giving pay raises to members of our forces, the commitment of 2% of the GDP or looking at the true value of having this legislation brought in this fall and his commitment to trying to get it passed.

The biggest stumbling block, of course, on all three measures is getting the Conservatives on side and voting in favour of the types of initiatives the Prime Minister and the new government have put in place. When we look at Bill C-11, taking this from military into civilian courts is a good thing. We hope to get support from the Conservatives, but let us remember it has already been in process, in reality, for the last few years.

Would he not agree that—

● (1025)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Edmonton Manning.

Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, I was hoping the hon. member on the government side would at least recognize the 10 years of misconduct, the 10 years of mismanagement and not taking the issues that happened in the military seriously. He used the podium to praise the current government. He missed my point when I spoke about the last 10 years, the last prime minister and what they have done by filibustering at the committee level to downplay this serious issue. That is what he is missing.

I hope that he will admit to those mistakes.

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, something I took very much to heart from the hon. member's comments is the Liberal government's failure with regard to the justice system, specifically on bail and sentencing reform.

At the justice committee, we did a bit of math. We noticed that, in the last 557 days, the only two pieces of justice legislation the government brought forward have been the online harms act and Bill C-9. That is it. We have a crisis on the streets of Toronto. The government is not willing to get serious about the crime and chaos on our streets.

Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is absolutely correct. Canadians have seen complete neglect of the justice system in the way of approaching crime and the way of dealing with it. That is why I was hoping they would stand up today, admit to the mistakes of the past and assure us, and Canadians, that they can move forward seriously and honestly to make sure they correct the wrongdoing.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on the point of justice, I disagree with Conservatives. We do not advocate for an American-style criminal justice system. It is very different in terms of the whole "three strikes and you're out" thing.

Under the Prime Minister, again, through consultations, we have made a pledge to bring in bail reform. That means working with the different stakeholders.

Given the extent of consultations that have taken place and given that he knows we are going to receive bail reform legislation this fall, does the member concur that the Conservatives should get behind this type of legislation and, at the very least, when we do present it, allow it to get to committee stage so Canadians have the opportunity to provide direct—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Edmonton Manning.

Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, obviously, the government has not learned at all after the last 10 years. It is still the same rhetoric, name calling and talking about American politics to somehow convince Canadians otherwise. Liberals have to be serious. They are in government. They have to be serious about these issues and deal with them responsibly. That is what they are not hearing.

By the way, I insinuated in my speech that, if the government is serious, the bill could deserve to go to committee in order to enhance it, improve it and make it a better bill.

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-11, the military justice system modernization act. In short, the bill would amend the National Defence Act by removing investigative and prosecutorial jurisdiction in respect of sexual offences from the code of service discipline and would transfer such jurisdiction to civilian authorities on an exclusive basis to the extent that such offences are alleged to have arisen within Canada.

The legislation would implement recommendation 5 of the report of Madam Justice Deschamps, in which she undertook an external review of sexual misconduct and sexual harassment within the Canadian Armed Forces. Recommendation 5 is the only recommendation that requires a legislative change. I would note that the report of Madam Justice Deschamps was issued all the way back in March 2015. The government of the day, the Harper Conservative government, committed to implementing all 10 recommendations of the Deschamps report.

Of course shortly thereafter, there was a change of government. There was the election of the Liberals, and nothing was done. It is quite rich to see members across the way patting themselves on the back for introducing the legislation, because if in fact the legislation is the answer to addressing very real issues and challenges within the Canadian Armed Forces with respect to dealing with allegations of sexual assault and sexual misconduct, then the Liberals have a lot to answer for, because it has taken them a full 10 years in government to finally introduce the legislation. However, I digress.

With respect to the substance of the bill, it would transfer jurisdiction from the code of service discipline to civilian authorities with respect to the investigation and prosecution of offences of a sexual nature within the Canadian Armed Forces. By way of background, I will say that the purpose of the code of service discipline is to maintain discipline, efficiency and morale within the Canadian Armed Forces. That broad proposition has been recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in the 1992 *Généreux* decision and the more recent 2019 *Stillman* decision, and it is stated in section 55 of the National Defence Act.

Conservatives stand with victims first and foremost, and it is on that basis that we will be supporting the legislation at second reading. That being said, I would submit that the bill warrants careful scrutiny when it is studied at committee. The legislation essentially stands for the proposition that the code of service discipline, the military justice system, is not fit for purpose, is not suitable and cannot be trusted to investigate offences of sexual assault and other sexual misconduct. That is the essence of the bill, whether the government would characterize it in that fashion or not.

It begs the question then, if that is so, what about other serious offences? The code of service discipline, after all, would apply to all other criminal offences within the Canadian Armed Forces; indeed, it would continue to apply to offences of a sexual nature where those offences are alleged to have arisen outside Canada. If concurrent jurisdiction of the code of service discipline is objectionable in the case of sexual offences, then should it not perhaps be considered objectionable in the case of other offences?

I say that in recognition of the uniqueness of sexual assault cases in terms of investigating and prosecuting them. I recognize that, but it does raise questions about whether the bill is a piecemeal or ad hoc approach to reform rather than a fully thought-out and comprehensive set of reforms to our military justice system.

• (1030)

I would, furthermore, ask what evidence there is that simply transferring the cases to the civilian authorities serves victims. I say that because there was a directive to the Minister of National Defence issued in November of 2021 to begin transferring sexual of-

Government Orders

fence cases to the civilian authorities. I want to know to what extent that is working as intended. To what degree are these cases being prosecuted? What has been the rate of conviction? How are historical cases of sexual assault being proceeded with now that they fall within the jurisdiction of the civilian authorities? I understand there have been some challenges in that regard.

What about the extent to which prosecutions have been stayed because of a very real and serious backlog in our court system, having regard for the *Jordan* decision, which imposes a very strict timeline between the laying of charges and the conclusion of a trial, failing which there is a presumption of unreasonable delay and a stay of proceedings? I understand that this too has been an issue.

We need answers to these questions. We also need to better understand to what extent the bill would improve the maintenance of discipline, efficiency and morale within the Canadian Armed Forces now that the investigations of sexual assaults and sexual misconduct would largely fall outside of the chain of command and be transferred to the civilian authorities, absent a clear chain of responsibilities. To what degree would that impact how occurrences of sexual misconduct are handled, and to what extent might that put certain victims of sexual assault in a more vulnerable position? These are some of the many questions that need to be addressed.

I know that my Conservative colleagues on the national defence committee look forward to working with members on all sides of the House to hear from as many witnesses as possible, first and foremost from victims of sexual assault but also from actors within the military justice system, members of the Canadian Armed Forces, victims groups and so on. We need to have a thorough study to deal with some of the complexities that have to be addressed in what is a well-intentioned bill, the objective of which I support.

We need to get it right, first and foremost for victims of sexual assault within the Canadian Armed Forces who deserve a safe workplace, and we need to ensure, when it comes to the Canadian Armed Forces, that there is an improvement in the maintenance of discipline, efficiency and morale.

• (1035)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I concur with the member in the sense that I believe it is virtually unanimous in the House that the principle in the bill of taking the cases, including the investigations, from the military courts and putting them into the civilian courts, is the right step forward. We all agree with that.

The member raises valid concerns with respect to the transition. He is right; bringing cases over to the civilian system has been taking place for the last few years now. I would ultimately argue that the principles of the legislation are fairly well accepted. With respect to the details, I too share some of the concerns. I think there are variations between the different provinces and territories. The federal government has been working with the different stakeholders to try to iron out details of some of the situations.

Government Orders

I would concur, and I would ask the member this: Does he not agree that to get into that kind of detail, sometimes it is best to do that at the committee stage?

Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I fully agree with the member. There are a lot of nuances to the bill. There are a lot of details that have to be sorted, and there may very well be some amendments required to get it right, and that is why we are committed to seeing that the bill move forward to committee today.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech and I thank him for it. However, I would like to share an additional concern with the House.

We hope that there will be some changes in committee to allow for impartiality when there is a ruling. This being said, the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs is currently studying the issue of suicide among veterans.

Does my colleague agree that, beyond just the current legislation, there is a cultural phenomenon that exists and that we absolutely need to make a complete 180°?

[*English*]

Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I concur with the hon. member that there are cultural issues that have to be tackled.

There have also been well-documented instances of a failure to hold certain leaders within the Canadian Armed Forces accountable. It is not necessarily the systems that are in place and the code of service discipline that are the problem; it is what have been instances of a lack of accountability by individuals who have failed. Regrettably, the government was complicit in that regard when it played a major role in covering up the wrongdoing of Vance. That cover-up went all the way to the top, right to the former prime minister and to his chief of staff, Katie Telford.

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's speech very clearly outlines what our concerns are and what our interest is in having the bill properly studied at committee.

I have to ask the member how we got to this place. The Liberals have been in government for 10 years, and they have failed to prioritize and to take the proper action needed to redress the very deep issues within the culture of the Canadian Armed Forces that they have not only allowed to continue but in fact, through their actions, their complicity and the cover-ups, as mentioned by my hon. colleague, have also made worse for victims and for all members in uniform.

Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, that, sadly, is the record of the Liberals. At every step of the way, they have dragged their feet. They say that this is needed, that this is the solution: take jurisdiction out of the code of service discipline when it comes to sexual offences and transfer it into the civilian system. That recommendation was recommendation 5 of Madam Deschamps' report, which was 10 years ago. Then the Liberals proceeded to have Justice Fish issue a report, and then they asked Justice Arbour to undertake the

same study, the same review, that Madam Justice Deschamps had undertaken years earlier.

It is a record of inaction. It is a record of failure.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people from Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. Today is a particularly important day. No, it is not my birthday, and it is not my mother's birthday. This is a day that so many of us have looked forward to. Over my right shoulder is the other member of Parliament from Kamloops, the member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies. I stand before this House with tremendous pride.

For those who do not know, I was a prosecutor before I was elected here. Most people have heard that far too many times, I know. One of the things I mostly prosecuted was Internet offences against kids. The term “child pornography” disgusted me. Children cannot consent. It is sexual abuse. Pornography depicts consenting adults.

In 2021, when I was running, I said my first order of business would be to change that law. I stood on doorsteps saying we would change that verbiage. When I gave my first speech in the House, I spoke about that. I spoke about a number of other things, but I called upon this House to do it. With my colleague and friend, I drafted the bill and he presented it. He sponsored the bill and, together, it navigated through the House of Commons and the Senate, and it received royal assent on October 10, 2024, one year ago today. That means that today the term “child pornography” disappears from the Canadian legal lexicon. It is called what it is: child sexual abuse and exploitation material. I am profoundly proud of that today.

Before I begin, I want to recognize Walter Behnke of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, an exceptional individual who has given so much. I appreciate all that he has done. I thank Walter for his tremendous contributions to our democracy.

I also want to highlight Daniel Martin and Karen Martin, two people who have contributed tremendously to the vitality of the democracy that is Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. Daniel is a navy veteran, somebody who cares deeply for the flag, deeply for his country and deeply for others. The same goes for his wife, Karen, who I know volunteers as a lawyer. People think that lawyers are just there to make money. She actually retired at a relatively young age and still gives back to young lawyers. She still volunteers in any way she can. I thank them for what they have done for the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola and for their tremendous contributions and assistance to me.

Government Orders

We are speaking here to Bill C-11. The crux of Bill C-11 is about sexual offending in the armed forces. The bill has two elements of the debate that I would love to raise. The first element of the debate is the colossal failure when it comes to sexual offences, particularly sexual offences in the military, but that is actually just symptomatic of the tremendous failure of the current Liberal government when it comes to sexual offences, period. The other issue, then, is, what do we do with it?

At the outset of this speech, I spoke about my experience prosecuting sexual offences against children. Most of those involved the Internet, but I also prosecuted a number of sexual offences, and I will say this: Victims who experience sexual trauma, at whatever age but particularly at a young age, live a psychological life sentence.

Let us make no mistake about this. The fact that the Liberals have not legislated on this is on their hands. The Harper government legislated on sex crimes, drugs and guns. The Liberals have repealed legislation on guns. We saw that in Bill C-5. The Liberals have legislated with respect to drugs. We saw that extensively with conditional sentence orders. They have not legislated on sex crimes. If the Liberals are so ideological, why will they not address sex crimes?

• (1045)

Perhaps I am getting animated, but if there is something to get animated about, it is that there are victims each and every day who walk with demons they do not see but that they feel and hear. They carry this pernicious offending, particularly against children, although it happens to adults too, for the rest of their lives, and the Liberals have not legislated on it. Someone can still commit a sex offence against a child and serve house arrest.

Robbery is the taking of property by force. The maximum sentence is life imprisonment. Sex assault is the taking of dignity and consent by force. The maximum sentence is 10 years. If someone takes a child's innocence, it is 14 years, but not to worry, house arrest is still an option.

When I get up here to speak about the military and sexual offending within the military, and when I get up to speak about sex offences generally, I am appalled at what we have done, or failed to do. It is actually even worse when we know of a problem and sit idle in Parliament.

I put forward Bill C-299 to add life imprisonment to sexual offences and put most sex offences on par with property offences. I was heckled when I introduced that bill. Then we wonder why we are in the state we are in where this insidious offending happens, completely under-reported. If we think it is under-reported in the military, I am sure it is just as under-reported in society. Myths and stereotypes abound: "Who will believe me?" These are the problems, and they have been perpetuated in the military by this House's inaction.

I challenge the Liberals across the way. I will try to look each and every one of those who are here in the eye and question what we are doing here. Why are we sitting here? We are talking about a really nuanced subject. We are talking about transferring investigative authority and prosecutorial authority to civilians in the prose-

cution service. That is something we have to recognize as an issue. Prosecuting sex offences is not easy, and I do not say that to pat myself on the back. I say that because it is something I had to learn to do. Investigating sexual offences is even harder.

I came across something recently. A police officer said that a victim had not said no. For those watching at home, it is not "no means no". It is only "yes means yes"; that is it. These are the issues we are dealing with, and that was from a member of a police force that was not a military police force. We need widespread education, but if I can underscore one thing in this speech, it is that this House has failed when it comes to sex offences. We should all be ashamed.

We as Conservatives have faced push-back because we want mandatory minimums for an offence for which the victim is serving a psychological life sentence. People will say that it failed in the Harper era. It failed in the Harper era because all we needed was a safety valve to say "except in exceptional circumstances". That is it. I implore one of my Liberal colleagues, Conservative colleagues, Bloc colleagues or anybody else to put that forward.

If there is one thing we should be prepared to do, it is to send people to jail when they hurt people sexually, especially in the military. My commitment to victims is this: For anybody who touches a kid, if I am in a position to legislate on it, I will not take my foot off the gas pedal until those offenders see the inside of a jail cell for a very long time.

• (1050)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I look at what has been taking place over the last number of years, I believe there has been significant movement forward. It is one of the reasons that today we see sexual assaults being tried in the civil process as opposed to the military courts. Bill C-11, in essence, would put that into criminal law to ensure there is further clarity on the issue. This Prime Minister, understanding the impact on the Canadian Forces, has ensured that we have this bill before us today, and he has been the Prime Minister for less than six months.

We are hoping to see the legislation get to committee so that we can listen to what Canadians have to say about it. I agree that all members have a role to play on this, but I would also argue that all members are concerned about victims. The Prime Minister has demonstrated that by the commitment to having this legislation before us. Would the member not agree?

Statements by Members

Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, I know we are all concerned. I would never say that we are not all concerned, but I am troubled by the fact that I have been here for an hour and it has only been that member who has asked questions on behalf of the Liberals when there are many talented Liberals sitting in the House who can talk about it.

Let us take the member's logic here to its end point. The Prime Minister is so concerned about sexual offences that Bill C-11 has been put forward. Well, correct me if I am wrong, but was this not already discussed in Parliament on a past occasion? If the Prime Minister is going to be such a leader on this issue, where is the legislation to punish sex offenders writ large? The Liberals have washed their hands of it.

With all due respect, I will accept the proposition that we, as members, believe that sex offences need to be dealt with appropriately. I will not believe the contention that the Prime Minister has made it a priority, because he has not made it a priority.

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is easy to point fingers at the government in power but I would like to ask my colleague a question. How is it that the Conservatives had the nerve to appoint a chief of the defence staff whose record was not unblemished?

[*English*]

Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, I believe I know the case my colleague is referring to. Obviously, I am not going to justify any appointment of any wrong person, period. I am not sure who made what appointments. I do not want to presume that we are referring to the same person.

I know there have been cover-ups. I believe there have been cover-ups, frankly, by the Liberal government. Those cover-ups are completely unacceptable, and those cover-ups should end. We should be appointing good people. I thank my Bloc colleague for raising that.

Chris Malette (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his commitment to prosecuting sexual crimes of any nature.

As a former journalist of many years, I covered not only court proceedings as a “court and cops” reporter, if you will. I also covered CFB Trenton, Canada's largest air base. In that role, I had occasion to report on and cover sexual assault cases heard before a court martial in hearing rooms at CFB Trenton.

On more than one occasion, it struck me that the accused was present in the room, represented quite often by a civilian lawyer, but the complainant, in almost all cases a woman in uniform, had to make her complaint in a room full of other uniformed individuals. Would my friend not agree that this setting is not the ideal setting for this kind of complaint, and that it should be in the civilian realm?

Frank Caputo: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I have had the pleasure of meeting my colleague across the way. In case we have, I apologize, but I do welcome him to the chamber.

Under the Criminal Code, I believe under section 486.3 or something like that, there are witness accommodations that are available in the civilian system. I am not a military expert, so I do not know if those accommodations are available there, but I would support those accommodations being available. There are things like screens, or testifying from a separate room by CCTV. Victims should have access to those, so I would agree.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): 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.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Speaker, I ask that it carry on division.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

NIBUN CHORUS

Wade Chang (Burnaby Central, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the honour of welcoming the Nibun Chorus to Burnaby Central. This award-winning indigenous youth chorus from Kaohsiung, a city in southern Taiwan, represents the proud Bunun people. Through their extraordinary harmonies, they share stories of identity, resilience and belonging, offering songs that cross oceans and awaken the hearts of those who listen.

Their visit reminds us that reconciliation and respect for indigenous people are not bound by geography, but are universal values. From the Bunun people in Taiwan to the first nations, Inuit and Métis here in Canada, indigenous communities teach us the meaning of courage, culture and harmony with the land.

Thanks go to the Tian-Jin Temple and Jeffrey Yu in Burnaby for organizing this tour and allowing Canadians to experience the beauty of Bunun culture and the unifying power of music.

I invite all members of the House to answer the call to listen, to learn and to stand together with indigenous people, so that we may honour their legacy and build a future defined by mutual respect.

* * *

• (1100)

BLOOD TRIBE

Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker,

Statements by Members

[Member spoke in Blackfoot and provided the following translation:]

Greetings. My name is Sacred Horse Rider.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I had the honour of witnessing the opening of the Chief Crop Eared Wolf Peacemaking Centre of the Blood Tribe in Alberta. The Blood Tribe has invested tens of millions of dollars of its own sourced revenue to build its own judicial centre and system, which is true nation building. It is the first of its kind in Canada.

Throughout its history, the Blood Tribe has always sought to uphold self-determination and be good treaty partners alongside the Crown and government. However, it has been more than a year since the Supreme Court confirmed that the Blood Tribe was shorted over 162 square miles of land promised under the Blackfoot treaty, Treaty No. 7, and the Liberal government still refuses to make things right. The Blood Tribe patiently waited in good faith for 50 years, and even proactively sent a settlement proposal to CIRNAC, yet the Liberals hide behind silence and delay, and cannot progress on an agreement that both sides already accepted in principle.

Conservatives know that treaty rights are confirmed under section 35 of the Constitution. The Crown gave its word. It is time for the Liberal government to keep it.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

Tatiana Auguste (Terrebonne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, October 11 is International Day of the Girl Child. I would like to send a message of acknowledgement, encouragement and hope to all the girls in our country, from coast to coast to coast, from every community, including racialized and indigenous communities.

Their voices matter. Their involvement is invaluable. In every sphere of public life, whether it be education, health, the environment, technology or governance, their involvement infuses a profound humanity and quiet strength that transforms our society. I invite all young girls to believe in their potential, to never give up in the face of obstacles, to continue to dream, to take action and to make change happen.

Be ready. Every step forward is a victory for humanity.

* * *

[English]

BILL C-291

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, October 10, Bill C-291 from the 44th Parliament comes into force to eliminate the term “child pornography” from Canada’s Criminal Code and federal statutes. Thanks to the work of my colleague from Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, who is right behind me, and the support of both sides of the House, our laws will now call it what it really is: “child sexual abuse and exploitation material”.

Words matter. For too long, the Criminal Code contained a misnomer that failed to reflect the reality of child sexual abuse and exploitation material. This change to our laws is a small but important amendment that must be followed by other actions to fight child sexual abuse and exploitation. Parliament’s unanimous support for this bill reflects the common sense of the legislation, which formally aligns Canada’s terminology with that of our international enforcement partners, as recommended by the 2016 Luxembourg Guidelines.

I thank my colleague from Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola and fellow legislators for passing this bill and contributing to results that benefit all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THÉÂTRE CERCLE MOLIÈRE

Ginette Lavack (St. Boniface—St. Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the great French playwright Molière once opined, “The trees that are slow to grow bear the best fruit”. If that is so, the Théâtre Cercle Molière must have some mouth-watering fruit in store for us after just celebrating its 100th anniversary. More than an anniversary, this centenary is living proof of the strength, resilience and creative genius of Franco-Manitoban culture.

Last week, I had the privilege of attending “Le Siècle Molière” gala, a stunning celebration of the oldest theatre still operating in Canada, a true pillar of francophone artistic life in the Prairies. For a century now, the Théâtre Cercle Molière has been thrilling audiences, training generations of performers and showcasing our communities with a spirit, boldness and passion worthy of the illustrious Molière himself.

Congratulations to the entire Théâtre Cercle Molière team on 100 years of creativity and artistic dedication.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING

Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government’s own housing agency reports that mortgage delinquencies are up, but the worst is yet to come. The CMHC estimates that interest rates for homes will continue to climb. About two million Canadians will renew their mortgages next year, and they will face new rates that are 3% higher than they were during the pandemic.

Statements by Members

The housing crisis in this country is quickly becoming a catastrophe under the Liberal government. The Prime Minister's promise was to “build, baby, build”, but under his government, home starts have stopped in Toronto and Vancouver and mortgage delinquency rates are skyrocketing. In fact, since 2022, mortgage delinquency rates have shot up 64%. It is no wonder that nine in 10 Canadians are now worried about housing.

The Prime Minister's plan looks an awful lot like the last prime minister's. It is all talk and no action. Canadians need our Conservative plan, which will restore affordability, get homes built and restore the dream of home ownership to Canadians once again.

* * *

• (1105)

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mike Kelloway (Sydney—Glace Bay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in Cape Breton, hockey is more than a game; it is part of who we are. For almost 40 years, one voice has carried that spirit at Centre 200, and that is Dave Leblanc's. If anyone has ever been to an Eagles game, they have heard Dave. His voice did not just call goals; it was part of the soundtrack of our community. He has been through every season, every anthem and every young player's first shift on home ice. Now, after nearly four decades, Dave is hanging up the mic.

On behalf of Sydney—Glace Bay residents and everyone who has cheered at Centre 200, I want to thank him for being the voice of Cape Breton hockey. He is steady, proud and unmistakably one of our own.

Congratulations to Dave. I hope he enjoys every bit of his well-deserved retirement.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberal hug-a-thug policies have created crime and chaos in our communities. After 10 years of reckless Liberal laws, there are 29% more homicides, 76% more sexual assaults and 330% more incidents of extortion.

Canadians deserve to feel safe in their parks, streets and own homes. After years of Liberal catch-and-release policies, they do not. Countless Canadians are victimized every day in violent attacks, home invasions and carjackings. In the last two weeks in Richmond Hill, two brutal executions took place in broad daylight in once quiet and safe neighbourhoods. It should not be this way.

Earlier this week, the Liberals had an opportunity to vote with Conservatives to scrap Liberal bail, but they did not. We need jail, not Liberal bail.

Only Conservatives will repeal the disastrous Liberal soft-on-crime policies and laws and bring safer streets back to our communities.

[*Translation*]

CENTRE D'ACTION BÉNÉVOLE DE BEAUHARNOIS

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to proudly acknowledge the 45th anniversary of the Centre d'action bénévole de Beauharnois, a pillar of solidarity and generosity in our community.

Since its founding, the centre has exemplified civic engagement and dedication to those who are most vulnerable. Thanks to its passionate volunteers and dedicated team, it delivers essential services that make a real difference in the lives of people in my community. Whether through food aid, support for seniors or support for families, the Centre d'action bénévole is an inspiring model of kindness and mutual support.

I want to sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to its success. Their work is invaluable and their impact, immeasurable. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Louise Lebrun, the executive director, who is taking a well-deserved retirement after 32 years of service.

I wish the Centre d'action bénévole de Beauharnois a happy 45th anniversary and continued success.

* * *

[*English*]

WORLD EGG DAY

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, happy World Egg Day. It is a celebration that unites people around the globe in honour of one of nature's most perfect foods, the egg.

Across Canada, more than 1,200 egg farmers work every day to produce fresh, local, high-quality eggs for families to enjoy year-round. Here in South Shore—St. Margarets, incredible producers like DeLong Farms, a third-generation farm, carry on proud farming traditions, providing nutritious foods while supporting good, local jobs and sustainable agriculture. With a flock of nearly 40,000 hens, DeLong Farms has become one of the major wholesalers of eggs in western Nova Scotia, ensuring that families across our region enjoy nutritious, made-in-Nova-Scotia eggs.

As Roger Pelissero, the chair of Egg Farmers of Canada, reminds us, eggs are truly the perfect food. They are protein-packed and endlessly versatile.

Now, let us get cracking.

FIREARMS

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister is going to spend millions, if not billions, of taxpayers' dollars to confiscate the property of the good guys, law-abiding firearms owners, instead of going after the bad guys. Liberal laws have actually led to more gun crime. Incredibly, gun crime is up 130% under the government. Licensed firearms owners follow the rules, unlike the violent criminals shooting up the streets with smuggled guns, who are then released on Liberal bail over and over again.

In Cape Breton, the Liberals are spending \$103,000 taken from taxpayers, just in administration fees, to confiscate 200 firearms from vetted, law-abiding gun owners. It is clear to Conservatives, Canadians, police and even the Liberals' public safety minister that this gun grab will not make us safer, will not keep criminals in jail and will not stop smuggled guns from coming into Canada.

Liberals need to do the right thing and end this waste of taxpayers' dollars.

* * *

• (1110)

CAROLYN ROMPKY

Philip Earle (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this chamber today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of my dear friend, Mrs. Carolyn Rompkey. Mrs. Rompkey was the beloved life partner of the late William Rompkey, the former member of Parliament for Labrador and a senator for Canada.

On behalf of all Labradorians, the House and Canadians, I extend heartfelt condolences to her children, Peter and Hilary, and their families on her passing.

Mrs. Rompkey was admired and loved by many. Her guiding words were, "it doesn't take much effort to be kind", and she lived by that guidance every day. Throughout her husband's parliamentary career, Carolyn stood beside him with unwavering support while also providing leadership and inspiration in her own way. Her example reminds us that beside every parliamentarian stands a strong partner whose encouragement and sacrifice make public service possible.

Today, as we honour Mrs. Carolyn Rompkey, we also recognize all spouses, partners and family who quietly give so much to allow us all to serve.

* * *

PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's tenure has been marked by broken promises. Canadians want integrity. They want their government to keep its promises, and the Prime Minister has failed.

The Prime Minister promised us the fastest-growing economy but has given us the fastest-shrinking economy, the second-highest unemployment and the worst household debt in the G7. It is true.

Statements by Members

The Prime Minister promised that he could be judged by food prices at the grocery store. Meanwhile, prices are rising faster today than when he became Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister promised to "Build, baby, build", but all he has done is block, baby, block. "Elbows up", he said. He also said that dollar-for-dollar tariffs were coming. Instead, he has removed tariffs without getting anything in return. He says one thing; he does another.

The Prime Minister's corporate buddies at Brookfield are making out like bandits, while Canadians live cheque to cheque, lined up at the food bank. That is wrong.

* * *

[Translation]

THÉRÈSE FRÈRE

Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Thérèse Frère, a proud Franco-Ontarian from Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester who passed away recently at the age of 98.

Her courage and resourcefulness were put to the test when her husband passed away suddenly, leaving her to support six young children under the age of 13 alone. This strong and resilient woman worked in education before moving to the field of visual arts in 1974, where pastels were her medium of choice. She studied at the Ottawa School of Art and the Banff School of Fine Arts and captured the landscapes of Quebec, Europe, the United States and especially Newfoundland and Labrador, a place that she dearly loved. She donated 150 works to Patro d'Ottawa to support young people and another 83 to Fogo Island.

Thérèse was also well liked and well respected for her dedication to Franco-Ontarian heritage and culture. She received many awards and distinctions. Most notably, she was appointed a knight of the Ordre de la Pléiade. On behalf of the community, I offer my sincere condolences to her family and friends.

May she rest in peace.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign, the Prime Minister promised to "Build, baby, build." He promised to fast-track nation-building projects and that these projects would be built at a speed not seen in generations. He said he was committed to "building the strongest economy in the G7".

Oral Questions

Unfortunately, most of us thought he was talking about the Canadian economy, not the United States'. When the Prime Minister was in Washington this week, he promised to invest \$1 trillion in the American economy. That is on top of the \$500 billion in investment that fled Canada in the last five years and the \$50 billion that left just this year.

Canadians deserve a government that keeps its promises and stands up for Canadian jobs and Canadian investment in the Canadian economy.

* * *

• (1115)

RUTH PHYLLIS KAVANAUGH

David Myles (Fredericton—Oromocto, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to commemorate the life of a beloved constituent, Ruth Phyllis Kavanaugh. Ruth devoted her life to serving her community. She was a founding member of Fredericton's Women in Transition House in 1980, the province's first shelter for abused women and children. She would later take on the important role of coordinator at the Oromocto Food Bank. Under her leadership, the food bank expanded to include clothing and furniture, recognizing that nourishment comes in many forms, including warm meals, warm coats and a place to sit with dignity.

[Translation]

Her energy level never dropped, even as she approached retirement at the age of 72. Her spirit will be felt by the community for years to come, in every family she helped, in every volunteer she inspired and in every moment of kindness that is her legacy.

[English]

Her legacy is one of resilience, compassion and unwavering dedication to her family and community. She will be remembered by many.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

EMPLOYMENT

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberal policies are causing a deepening youth unemployment crisis, leaving the next generation in an increasing state of desperation. Today's unemployment numbers show a further spike in youth unemployment, now up to 14.7%, which is approaching half a million unemployed Canadian youth. Youth unemployment was already at recession levels before these further increases. The Liberals promised change, but their broken promises are pushing more young people out of work.

Do the Liberals understand that these unemployment numbers are not just hurting youth today but are setting them up for more struggle and pain throughout their lives?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about those jobs numbers today.

Statistics Canada reported that employment has increased by 60,000 jobs. That includes 28,000 jobs in manufacturing, 14,000 new jobs in health care and 106,000 full-time jobs.

We have a plan. We are making progress, and we are going to be there to create good-paying, career-starting jobs for all Canadians.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, only an out-of-touch Liberal would try to congratulate themselves when we have a significant increase in youth unemployment in this country. These are the facts: Over 17,000 young people in Ontario alone lost their jobs in the last month and overall unemployment remains at 17.1%. It continues to increase in major cities, including the city the parliamentary secretary is supposed to represent.

How can the Liberals try to pat themselves on the back when Statistics Canada today is showing that even more young people are out of work?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us deal in facts. These jobs numbers are for September. At the end of a summer, many youth are leaving jobs and going back to school or back to other work.

Coming back to what the Liberal government is doing, we are investing a billion dollars, for example, in Red Seal trades for apprenticeships. We are investing in work-integrated learning. We are investing in co-ops. Most importantly, we are going to be building the houses and investing in the projects that are going to create tens of thousands of jobs for all Canadians right across the country, beginning with our young people.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary said that these numbers might reflect young people leaving the workforce to go back to school. That suggests she does not actually understand how the unemployment rate is calculated, because the unemployment rate is the percentage of those in the workforce who are trying to work and are not able to.

The unemployment rate has gone up. It is approaching 15%, which is approaching half a million young people who are unemployed. That is one in seven. It is time for the Liberals to stop trying to pat themselves on the back and recognize that this is a crisis for Canadian young people.

It is time for them to reverse course. When will they?

Oral Questions

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the data does not lie. In September, we created over 100,000 new full-time jobs in this country. Those are good jobs for all Canadians. We are embarking on a plan that is not only going to build projects, but build homes and make those homes more affordable for young Canadians. We are bringing forward a budget next month that is going to make a generational investment in Canadian industry, Canadian workers and Canadian families. I really hope the members opposite can convince their whips to vote for it.

• (1120)

Eric Melillo (Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has the slowest-growing economy in the G7 and the second-highest unemployment, and young Canadians are paying the price. The youth unemployment rate is nearly 15%, which is, with the exception of the COVID years, the highest it has been since 2010. There are 17,000 young people in Ontario who have lost their jobs in the last month, and the Prime Minister wants to send \$1 trillion of investment to the United States, which will only lower wages and push jobs to the south.

With rising youth unemployment, why is the Prime Minister selling out young Canadians?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems the Conservatives have an allergy to the facts. It is a fact that Canada created 60,000 new jobs last month. It is a fact that Canada has experienced real wage growth year over year of 3.3%. Those are good stats. These are the economic fundamentals that will allow budget 2025 to make a generational investment in our economy.

I would offer the Conservatives a Benadryl, but maybe they could just accept the truth for once.

[*Translation*]

Bernard Généreux (Côte-du-Sud—Rivière-du-Loup—Kataskomiq—Témiscouata, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada still has the slowest economic growth of the G7 and the second-highest unemployment rate.

Worse still, things are not getting any better today. The unemployment rate remains stuck at 7% and, despite all the Liberal promises, only 22,000 net new jobs were created since January. The cherry on top is that the Prime Minister wants to send \$1 trillion to the United States.

Why is the Prime Minister sacrificing our workers to help the Americans?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always interesting to watch the Conservatives repeat the talking points that their leader prepares for them, but facts do not lie.

What are the facts? The fact is that Statistics Canada reported today 60,000 new jobs in Canada in September and 106,000 new full-time jobs. Those are the kind of results that can be delivered by a

serious government with a serious plan to grow the economy, to build one Canadian economy and to invest in our country.

Bernard Généreux (Côte-du-Sud—Rivière-du-Loup—Kataskomiq—Témiscouata, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they can applaud themselves all they want, but the reality is that we are shedding jobs in Canada, in our regions. The reality is that factories are closing and small and medium-sized businesses are struggling. Not everyone is making ends meet.

What is the Prime Minister doing? He is investing \$1 trillion in the United States instead of helping workers here in Canada. Why is the Prime Minister creating jobs in the United States instead of creating jobs in Canada?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it must be fascinating for those watching question period to see the Conservative Party's lack of understanding of economics. This should come as no surprise, since the leader of the party has spent his entire adult life here in the House thinking up clever one-liners for question period.

The reality is that, on this side of the House, we are working to create one Canadian economy, invest in our young people so they can have good jobs, invest in housing to build across the country and ensure that we grow the Canadian economy. The results speak for themselves. Today, Statistics Canada reports that 106,000 full-time jobs were created in September alone. We will not stop there.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the conflict with Donald Trump is far from over and yet Ottawa is already abandoning our workers. On October 11, Ottawa is set to make cuts to its emergency measures for accessing employment insurance and reduce the adjusted unemployment rates that allowed more workers to qualify. It is creating an additional distinction between different types of workers at the expense of seasonal workers, contract workers and other such workers.

Yesterday, all the major unions in Quebec demanded that the Liberals reverse course. Will they listen to the unions and continue to protect workers?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are supporting the retirement security of health care and home care workers. We are investing in union training and in the skilled trades. We are building major projects and new homes. We are creating tens of thousands of quality jobs across the country for unionized workers.

Our government will continue to support unions and unionized workers.

Oral Questions

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the same Prime Minister who returned from Washington empty-handed cannot now abandon workers as if the tariff war were over. Every Quebec labour union is demanding that Ottawa maintain all of its emergency measures related to access to EI.

They also point out that if the Liberals had reformed employment insurance like they have been promising for the past 10 years, we would not need emergency measures today. Workers need a reliable system, but in the meantime, will Ottawa at least cancel its October 11 cuts?

• (1125)

[English]

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we continue to invest in our workers right across the board and in making EI easier to access. In addition, we are investing in all sorts of union training and skilled trades, building major projects and new homes, and creating tens of thousands of good jobs right across the country.

Our government is going to continue to stand with workers, making sure they have access to the programs that are going to support them through these volatile times. I hope the members are on board with that.

* * *

[Translation]

TRANSPORTATION

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Driver Inc. truckers are a danger to the public. It is good news that Ottawa wants to tighten up income traceability for incorporated truck drivers, as the Bloc Québécois has been calling for. That is a first step. However, a first step is not enough when people are being killed on our highways and Quebec is launching a public inquiry. Temporary immigrants must be prevented from working as incorporated drivers. Highway controllers must be better equipped, automatic audits must be conducted and so on.

When will Ottawa finally use all the tools at its disposal to solve the problem of Driver Inc. truckers?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, licensing is a provincial responsibility, so it is up to the provinces to take appropriate action. We will stand up for truckers who deserve fair wages and who deserve to be protected under the law. Misclassification in the trucking industry is illegal and we are ensuring that the law is enforced. More than 1,000 inspections and awareness activities have been carried out since 2023.

Our top priority is keeping our roads and drivers safe.

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is what we know. Every dollar that the Prime Minister spends drives up inflation, which increases the cost of living for Canadians. He said he would be judged by the prices at the grocery store. The report card is in, and it is a big F, a failure.

Susie in my riding is a senior who is finding it difficult to be able to afford both rent and groceries. She has worked hard her entire life to make a go of it and has been rather successful. Now she is in a position where she is actually having to choose to skip meals to be able to pay her rent. That is not right. We live in Canada. It is one of the richest countries in the world. Why is it that, under the government, people like Suzie are struggling so much?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have good news for Susie and the member's riding and good news for all Canadians. This morning, our Prime Minister announced a package of more affordability measures, including making permanent the national school food program, which is great news for all Canadians. This program will feed 400,000 more kids per year.

I know the member opposite has voted against this program in the past, but I cannot understand how she can stand up here and try to lecture the Liberal Party on standing up for Canadians on affordability.

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member just told me that I should go back to my riding and tell Susie, a senior in my riding who has worked hard her entire life to make ends meet and now cannot pay for rent and groceries and is therefore skipping meals, that she should enrol in grade school so she can take advantage of the government's bureaucratic school program.

That is what the member just told me. Is he for real? If this is the definition of success, I would hate to see the definition of failure.

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to clarify for the member opposite. There is a package of three affordability measures. One is automatic tax filing, which will help millions of Canadians, including seniors, to access benefits to which they are entitled. This is thousands of dollars for many Canadians and includes the Canada child benefit, the GST rebate, the disability benefit and the many other benefits that Canadians will be able to take advantage of because of this government's actions. Automatic tax filing will make it easier for Canadians all across the country to access—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Cambridge.

*Oral Questions***EMPLOYMENT**

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that Canadians should judge him by the cost at the grocery store. Well, they have, and he has failed.

In Cambridge, the food bank saw over 23,000 visits last year, a 114% increase. One-third of those visits were children and youth, and 43% were first-time users. Families that have never used the food bank before are now lining up for food. Even people with jobs cannot afford groceries because the Prime Minister continues to take their lunch money to wine and dine abroad.

If this is what success looks like to the Prime Minister, what does failure look like?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in addition to the 60,000 net new jobs added to the Canadian economy, we have now announced more affordability measures for Canadians that will put money in their pockets.

A national school food program, made permanent in perpetuity, will benefit Canadians to the tune of \$800 per year. It is helping put food in the hungry bellies of kids all across Canada. I cannot understand how the Conservative Party can try to lecture us about food bank lineups and then stand up and vote over and over in the House against feeding hungry children.

• (1130)

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was not an answer.

The government took food off Canadian tables and then built a bureaucracy to take credit for giving some of the crumbs back. Liberals talk about all of these programs, but if they were working, a third of the people using food banks in Cambridge would not be children.

In my community, I have met parents who are working full time and are still skipping meals so their kids can eat. They are not failing; they are being failed, so on their behalf, I will ask this: Why is it no longer a guarantee that a full-time job will put food on the table for families?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that income insecurity touches a lot of people in Canada. It is one of the reasons that today we announced that the national school food program, a program that is going to help feed nearly half a million kids, is being made permanent. That program is going to save families up to \$800 a year.

We are also making progress on another important driver of income insecurity, and that is housing. We are going to be building affordable housing at a scale not seen since World War II.

If the members opposite care about affordability for families, they need to get on board and help us build housing, bring down rent and bring down costs. That will help—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for York Centre.

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just before the Prime Minister left Brookfield, he made sure that Brookfield's headquarters left for the United States. The Prime Minister loves creating jobs in the United States. That is why youth unemployment rose in September to 14.7%. In Ontario alone, 17,000 young people lost their jobs. In fact, the youth employment rate is sitting at a level not seen since 1999, with a brief exception for the pandemic.

With young people unable to find work, the Prime Minister wants to send \$1 trillion of investment to the United States. Why?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada, this morning, told Canadians that last month, this new government created over 100,000 new full-time jobs. That is progress.

This government is committed to building a strong Canadian economy, the strongest one in the G7. That involves creating major projects and building affordable housing. These plans are going to help employ tens of thousands of people and create career-starting jobs for all Canadians. At the same time, we are investing in apprenticeships and we are investing in co-ops. Why will the members opposite not vote in favour of these plans?

* * *

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, she should tell that to the 15% of young people in Toronto who cannot find a job.

With \$54 billion of net investment fleeing Canada, the Prime Minister is leaving Canada's automotive workers destitute. With job losses at GM and Stellantis, we now learn that auto tariffs are here to stay.

Christmas is just around the corner, but thousands of Ontario's auto workers are on the chopping block. Why did the Prime Minister sell out Ontario's auto workers?

Oral Questions

Hon. Ali Ehsassi (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy (Canada-U.S. Trade), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada currently enjoys the best deal among U.S. trading partners. This is not up for debate.

However, as the member would like to see us do, our government is committed to ongoing negotiations and to securing greater tariff relief for all of our industries. We are laser-focused on protecting Canadian businesses and Canadian workers. Trade discussions are ongoing, and we will not apologize for it.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians would not need food banks if not for failed Liberal policies.

Year over year, youth unemployment is up 1.2%. B.C.'s forestry workers are worried they may be next. Almost 10 years ago, the foreign affairs minister was to come up with a framework within 100 days. The new Prime Minister promised to negotiate a win. Instead, softwood lumber tariffs have doubled.

Why will the Prime Minister not fight for Canadian lumber mills, the jobs they create and the families?

Claude Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have announced amazing programs to help the forest industry. We have \$700 million to help them with liquidity, \$500 million to help them with the transformation and \$50 million to help workers in the industry.

We will not rest until we help all of our industries affected by tariffs.

* * *

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lestiguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the people of the Gaspé have been abandoned by Via Rail, which refuses to reinstate the service it used to provide there, despite the \$1.3 billion it receives in federal assistance for things like operating regional routes, and despite the \$355 million that Quebec has spent on repairing the rail line as far as Port-Daniel. Via Rail takes money from Ottawa to serve the regions, but it refuses to provide the service and fulfill its obligations to the people of the Gaspé.

Will the government call on Via Rail to reinstate service between Matapédia and Port-Daniel as soon as possible?

[*English*]

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like the member, our government supports and believes in the importance of passenger rail service.

Via Rail is committed to returning to Gaspé as soon as the rehabilitation work on the rail infrastructure has been completed and service can resume safely all the way to Gaspé.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Via Rail receives \$1.3 billion from Ottawa to provide regional connectivity, yet nothing has been spent on improving services in eastern Quebec.

In Rimouski, the train comes barely three times a week, at about 2 a.m. This is completely disconnected from the reality of a regional capital and especially the reality of residents who need to travel for medical treatment, school or to see family members.

Since this government is paying Via Rail to serve the regions, will it insist that Via Rail quit ignoring eastern Quebec?

[*English*]

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, rail is important to us. It is important to the people of Gaspé. It connects all of us to jobs, recreation and other things.

We are committed to rail rehabilitation. We will continue to be committed to rail rehabilitation. Why? It is because it is the right thing to do to build Canada strong.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers have always been proud to live in safe communities. However, the most recent statistics show a significant rise in crime, particularly violent crime and home invasions.

Tourism is important in Montmorency—Charlevoix. Tourists tell us time and time again how safe they feel in my region. The rise in crime is a worrying trend. Prevention is important in health, but it is also important when it comes to crime. Allowing criminals back on the street time and time again puts public safety at risk.

Why does the government insist on downplaying violence?

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities. We agree on that. Our government will crack down on repeat violent offenders with new legislation to strengthen the bail system, sentencing and the efficiency of our courts.

We are working closely with the provinces and territories to reform bail and sentencing in order to give police and Crown prosecutors more substantive tools to keep violent offenders off our streets.

Oral Questions

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was yet another answer about the future.

We all know the expression about crocodile tears. The Liberals caused the problem, and now they are saying that their hearts go out to the victims of that problem.

Canadian and Quebec families do not want empty words and superficial compassion. They want meaningful action against crime and strong, effective and ambitious measures that will truly ensure the safety of the public, as well as the safety of victims across Canada.

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are good at playing with numbers. Here is a statistic: In the United States, there are three times as many homicides as in Canada, particularly involving guns. We should ask ourselves a question: Why are all the Conservatives' measures copied from American measures that we know do not work?

Canadians want Canadian methods for fighting crime. There is a good reason for this. It is because we are better than others.

Our government is working to improve this. I hope that the Conservatives—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

* * *

[*English*]

JUSTICE

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, weak Liberal bail laws like Bill C-75 require courts to release repeat violent offenders at the earliest possible opportunity and under the least onerous conditions. Just days ago, a man in York was violently injured during a home invasion, and one of the accused was already out on bail for crimes as serious as attempted murder.

The Prime Minister promised Liberals would flip-flop on bail, but that was just the same old Liberal trick; everyone knows it, the one where they promise one thing but do nothing. Liberal bail laws are still on the books six months after the Prime Minister took power.

Will the Prime Minister scrap Liberal bail, or get out of the way so we can do it for him?

• (1140)

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it is time for a quick criminal law lesson for the member opposite. As the Conservatives know, Canada follows the rules of common law, so the principle of restraint they keep citing was already law way before Bill C-75, as confirmed by the Supreme Court in the case of *Antic* in 2017.

In our laws, it is clear that an accused person may be denied bail when detention is necessary for the protection of the safety of the public. That is section 515, paragraph 10 of the Criminal Code. I do

not have my code with me here today, but I will be happy to email the article to my colleague.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Liberals on bail reform, when because of their laws, in places like Vancouver, the same 40 criminals were arrested 6,000 times in one year. The Liberals claim they are consulting on bail reform, but Canadians are not waiting for meetings; they need action now. Since weak Liberal laws have been put on the books, violent crime is up 50%. Innocent people are dying. Bailey McCourt was murdered just hours after her abuser was released on bail. How many more victims will it take?

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing, scrap Liberal bail and stop obstructing, or will he get out of the way so we can do it for him?

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have risen already on the issue before, and the members opposite say to let them do the work. Should we let them do the work? The Conservatives adopted six crime bills during their time in government, and every single one of them was struck down by the Supreme Court, including the most recent one in 2023 in the *Hills* decision. The member opposite should do his homework and get informed.

Let me assure the House that on this side of the House, we are working on serious bail reform in collaboration with the provinces, the territories and law enforcement. It will be fully constitutional on repeat violent offenders. This is the kind of leadership—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Richmond Centre—Marpole has the floor.

* * *

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' taxpayer-funded safe supply is anything but safe. In British Columbia, the drugs are flooding the black market, funding organized crime and feeding the very addiction crisis they claim to solve. The Liberal government is subsidizing the drug trade, while the public safety minister refuses to acknowledge this public safety crisis.

When will the Liberal government end its reckless drug supply scheme that is poisoning Canadians and pouring profits into the hands of criminals?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, everyone in Canada deserves to be safe and feel safe. That is why we are giving police services and the CBSA the resources and tools they need to fight crime. Whether it is fighting fentanyl trafficking, illegal firearms imports, human trafficking, online pornography or money laundering, we are taking action.

Canadians elected the Liberal Party of Canada because they know they can count on us to keep them safe.

* * *

[English]

SPORT

Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, champions lift up their communities and, over the last few weeks, we have seen the Toronto Blue Jays lift up the spirits of Canadians from coast to coast with their ALDS championship win over the New York Yankees.

However, the Blue Jays organization is not just about winning ball games. Can the Secretary of State for Sport update the House of Commons on his work with the Jays Care Foundation to bring sports opportunities to more youth across Canada?

Hon. Adam van Koevorden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and fellow team Canada Olympian for his dedication to community sport.

He is right. Champions lift our communities up and the Jays Care Foundation is making baseball and softball more inclusive and accessible right across Canada. Through Sport Canada's community sport for all initiative, the government has coinvested \$450,000 with the Jays Care Foundation for a million-dollar impact to ensure that young women and girls, indigenous youth, persons with disabilities, justice-involved youth and lower-income families all benefit from the power of sport.

For the Blue Jays, can I get a "let's go, Blue Jays"?

Some hon. members: Let's go, Blue Jays.

* * *

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are breaking their campaign promise to stand up for auto workers and to stand up against tariffs. This week, we all saw the Prime Minister sit down in the Oval Office, meekly nodding while President Trump threatened to steal more of our auto workers' jobs. I did not see any elbows go up. I saw a promise to send another \$1 trillion of Canadian investment over to the U.S.A. as a reward for Trump's aggression.

Canadian auto workers expected to see more fight than that. Why is the Prime Minister letting them down?

• (1145)

Hon. Ali Ehsassi (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs and One

Canadian Economy (Canada-U.S. Trade), Lib.): Here we go again, Mr. Speaker. I want to reiterate that Canada currently enjoys the best trade agreement with the U.S., and this is not up for debate.

However, we are not entirely pleased. Discussions are ongoing because, as the member knows, the Prime Minister has consistently emphasized that we will only accept the best agreement for Canada.

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, none of those words provide material support to the 8,000 of my neighbours in my hometown who work at the largest car plant in Canada. They depend on those jobs to put food on the table this Thanksgiving. They depend on those jobs to pay their rent at the end of the month. Let me be clear: This plant cannot survive the current tariff regime, and Trump officials said that the regime is staying.

We are in extra innings now. Will the Prime Minister fight for these jobs before the game is over?

Hon. Mona Fortier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is focused on protecting Canadian jobs, workers and businesses. We have stabilized supply chains through initiatives like our strategic response fund. We have provided direct support to affected industries like steel, aluminum, manufacturing, auto and agriculture. We are doing this all while maintaining Canada's enviable fiscal position and AAA rating. We are Canada strong.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal government, Canada has the fastest-shrinking economy of any G7 country. Since the Prime Minister's visit to Washington, the U.S. commerce secretary stated that car assembly is going to be in America and there is nothing Canada can do about it.

The Liberal Prime Minister recently promised the President that \$1 trillion of new investment will flow into the United States. Are those the jobs of Canadian auto workers, including those at the GM plant in St. Catharines?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is standing up for auto workers in all tariff-impacted industries in Canada. We put out a package of supports to support industries, offered a remission framework and much more.

Oral Questions

Today I want to highlight some good news for all Canadians regarding affordability. We have made the national school food program permanent. That will feed 400,000 more kids in perpetuity. We are also offering automated tax filings for Canadians so that millions of Canadians can get access to supports like the Canada child benefit. That is going to help families across the country.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member should talk to the residents in his riding who lost their jobs when GM cut the third shift in Oshawa.

This summer, GM announced plans to invest \$4 billion in three auto plants. That does not include the \$800 million in Tonawanda, New York, just across the border from us, and it is not St. Catharines. As billions of dollars flee Canada for the U.S., Canadian auto workers are watching in dismay.

Why does the Prime Minister seem more interested in helping U.S. auto workers than those here at home?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, apparently, common sense does not survive the Conservative caucus any longer. It seems like common sense is not so common over there.

Common sense would suggest that, when a country is in a trade war, a responsible government would support its workforce in industries, which is exactly what this government has been doing. We launched a \$5-billion strategic response fund, a rescaling and retraining program for up to 50,000 workers. There is \$10 billion in liquidity support, a remissions framework and a buy Canadian policy.

We are doing the heavy lifting to ensure that our industries survive—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we were treated to an incredibly embarrassing display as the Prime Minister stood here and bragged about a 10% tariff on Canadian auto. I had the privilege of meeting with Unifor auto workers earlier this week, and they told me a 10% tariff on auto will mean the end of the Canadian auto industry. Either the Prime Minister is unbelievably uninformed about what will hurt the auto industry or he actually does not care when President Trump says he wants to take the auto sector.

Is that why the Prime Minister is going to send \$1 trillion of investment to the United States, so they can build more auto jobs for the Americans?

• (1150)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives need a reality check. At the end of the day, there were 60,000 jobs created. Almost half of those are in the manufacturing industry. When the leader of the Conservative Party sat with Stephen Harper, the manufacturing industry was devastated in the province of Ontario.

Conservatives should not try to give us a lesson when we have a Prime Minister who understands the needs of Canadians. That is why we are building Canada strong.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, giving the Liberals a lesson would imply that they could actually learn something, so we are not going to try.

Here are the facts: GM just laid off 750 workers, and the Brampton Stellantis assembly plant has been on layoff for eight months waiting for retooling money. Meanwhile, Stellantis is going to invest \$10 billion in the United States. Why? It is because the Prime Minister has failed to negotiate an agreement with the United States after promising elbows up.

Is this also why he is promising \$1 trillion of investment in the United States? Is that so Stellantis and other companies can build more factories there? Why have the Liberals abandoned auto workers in Canada?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives go around telling people that Canada is broken, when Canada is the best place in the world to call home, here are the facts: We have a Prime Minister who is committed to major developments, five major projects and 60 billion dollars' worth of investments in all regions of Canada.

We are building Canada strong, and we are going to wait until we can get the best deal for Canadians. We are not on the Conservatives' agenda. We are on Canadians' agenda, and that means building our country.

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FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the coastal forest industry is in crisis. Harvest volumes have been cut in half. Nine mills have closed, and thousands of hard-working Canadians have lost their jobs. What the people want to know is where the federal government is. The PM promised to negotiate a win with the United States. Instead, lumber tariffs have doubled since he became Prime Minister. Meanwhile, permitting and legal issues have only gotten worse.

How many more forestry workers across B.C. have to lose their jobs until the Liberal government comes up with a plan that actually works?

Oral Questions

Corey Hogan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government is right there with Canadian workers and affected Canadian communities. We have announced \$50 million in supports for workers, \$700 million in liquidity support and \$500 million to innovate both products and markets.

We are more than happy to work with the members opposite if they have ideas to continue to support the forestry sector, but we have not heard any.

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a quote: “We are one pulp mill closure away from the total collapse of coastal forestry.” That is from Kermit Dahl, the mayor of Campbell River, articulating just how dire the situation has become. On Vancouver Island, every single mill is running at reduced capacity due to lack of fibre and crippling tariffs, tariffs that the Prime Minister promised to have removed by July 21. Instead, they have increased by 100%.

What does the Prime Minister have to say to the thousands of Canadian forestry families he is selling out by not keeping his word?

Claude Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear that the U.S. tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber are absolutely unjustified, and we are working at every level to resolve the softwood lumber dispute. I have 40 years of experience in business, and never do I negotiate in public. That is what our Prime Minister is doing to support all of our workers.

Scott Anderson (Vernon—Lake Country—Monashee, CPC): Mr. Speaker, has the Prime Minister ever had to choose between buying groceries and paying the rent? Has he ever felt the panic of not knowing how to make it until the end of the month? That is the reality for thousands of B.C. forestry workers this winter while he jets around the world handing out jobs to his wealthy friends and making concessions to the Americans. He bragged that his elbows would stand up to Trump, but Canadians are worse off than ever since his elbows arrived, so I have to ask this: How many B.C. lumber workers will lose their jobs because of the Prime Minister's failures, and why will he not fight for Canadian families?

Corey Hogan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is going across the world finding new trade deals and new markets for Canadian products, including forestry products. This is part of a diversification effort backed by \$500 million that is going to support new markets and new innovations. We have supports for workers of \$50 million, we have liquidity supports of \$700 million, and we want to work with people to find more and do more, but we have not heard any ideas from the opposition, so I would welcome them at any time.

• (1155)

[Translation]

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Giovanna Mingarelli (Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected this new Liberal government

to cut costs. Investing in families is how we can help them get ahead. This is different from the Conservative Party's approach, which is to eliminate benefits.

Can the parliamentary secretary tell us how we are helping families get ahead?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Prescott—Russell—Cumberland for the question.

Good news: Our new government is making the national school food program permanent. This will provide access to the nutritious food that all students need to learn. It will also save families approximately \$800 a year on their grocery bills.

We are lowering costs for families so that children can thrive and parents can get ahead.

[English]

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the controversial \$1-billion loan to BC Ferries continues to take on water thanks to a CHEK News exclusive that shreds the bogus talking point that these ferries could not be built in Canada. We know that BC Ferries was presented a report that showed that Canadian shipyards could build these new vessels, creating thousands of jobs, billions in economic growth and pride in Canada's craftsmanship. Shamefully, they rejected this made-in-Canada option and instead went to Communist China.

With so many Canadian workers at the food bank, can a member remind us again why the Prime Minister is continually selling us out?

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have expressed our disappointment with how this process went. This is a Crown corporation. We were not part of it. However, I will tell the member what we did. We did set a policy to buy Canadian. We are encouraging all Canadian procurement to buy Canadian. We have also launched a defence procurement agency to encourage our companies. We are building Canada with Canadian workers and with Canadian materials. This is how we are building a strong Canadian economy, not by peddling slogans.

Oral Questions

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they are cutting cheques to China. The Liberals can pretend that this was all BC Ferries' sole decision, but it was the government that created the Canada Infrastructure Bank, filled it with billions of taxpayer dollars and allowed the loan to go forward with no questions asked. Conservatives believe the loan should be cancelled, because if Canadian shipyards, Canadian steelworkers and Canadian jobs do not qualify for support, what is Canadian about it?

If the government is more comfortable funding shipyards in the People's Republic of China than jobs here in Canada, why not just call it the "Beijing infrastructure bank" and be done with it?

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again the opposition is showing how they just want to divide Canadians. We are standing by Canadian workers. We are standing by Canadian industry. We are investing. We launched Build Canada Homes in order to build affordable homes in Canada. The last time Conservatives were in power, they lost 800,000 affordable homes, so please do not give us a lesson about affordability. You lost 800,000 affordable homes and built six affordable homes—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Again, members will address their comments to the Chair.

The hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain.

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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, canola is not just a prairie success story; it is a national powerhouse, bigger than our steel, aluminum and auto sectors combined. However, while unfair Chinese tariffs continue to crush the canola sector, the Liberal government is silent; there is not a word, not a plan, not a single success.

When will the Liberals stop abandoning Canadian farmers and finally, for once, stand up for the good people who feed this country?

Sophie Chatel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, canola is one of the best products in the world.

China's tariffs are completely unfair. As we are resolving this trade dispute, we are there to support our farmers with programs. We have announced \$370 million in support, and we have changed the regulations to allow more biofuel in this country, which will use the product from our canola producers.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the world is changing. Global challenges are on the rise, and we are witnessing profound shifts affecting peace, prosperity and co-operation around the world.

The United Nations recently turned 80, and leaders from around the globe convened in New York for the UN General Assembly's high-level week.

Could the Secretary of State for International Development update the House on the overall outlook at the UN and the discussions he participated in?

• (1200)

Hon. Randeep Sarai (Secretary of State (International Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has built a strong and enduring reputation as a trusted partner in international development. For over 50 years, we have fought poverty, hunger and disease, and we have been a consistent champion for human rights, dignity and equality.

At the UN General Assembly, one thing that stood out loud and clear was the deep trust our allies and partners place in our country as one that always stands ready to support shared action on global challenges. At a time when the rules-based order is coming under strain, many are looking to Canada as a clear voice for shared progress and co-operation.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if we install automated external defibrillators, or AEDs, in police cars to be used when the police are the first on the scene in a 911 call for a heart attack, we can save a lot of lives.

Municipal police across Canada have been saving lives with AEDs for years. RCMP officers are already trained on how to use AEDs. Equipping all RCMP vehicles nationwide with AEDs would save upwards of 300 lives per year. Therefore, after 10 years in government, why have the Liberals not installed AEDs in all RCMP cruisers?

[Translation]

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this option has been considered before and is entirely valid. It involves costs and coordination with law enforcement and local organizations. A number of provinces already have similar programs that are producing good results. We can confirm that defibrillators are an effective way to save lives.

Routine Proceedings

[English]

EMPLOYMENT

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, September's job numbers are out, and it is more bad news. Unemployment remains at a 10-year high, and the situation is getting worse for young people, who face the highest unemployment rate since 2010.

One in six youth is out of work, with many more underemployed and unable to gain experience in their chosen careers. This is not only unfair to them, but it is damaging our economy as their skills and talents go untapped.

What is the government doing to address this unprecedented jobs crisis, especially for young Canadians?

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today's job numbers are actually good for Canadians. They show that there are 60,000 net new jobs, 100,000 new jobs in full-time work and over 28,000 new jobs in manufacturing.

The government is squarely focused on young people and making sure that we are going to have good, career-building jobs for the future. That is why we are making major investments right now in major projects right across the country, building homes at a scale we have not seen since World War II. These are the types of initiatives that are going to create tens of thousands of good jobs for Canadians going forward.

* * *

CLIMATE CHANGE

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, higher unemployment for young people is not good news.

Yesterday, I met with the elbows up for climate coalition, a national group of mayors calling for federal investments to prevent and mitigate the ravages of climate change. They explained the real cost of failing to do so, from catastrophic destruction in such places as Jasper to the high cost of food because of crop failure and drought. Folks cannot get insurance, and they need help to retrofit their homes.

Will the government help their communities, take action on the climate and put young people to work through the NDP's Youth Climate Corps?

Wade Grant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the last two people I talked to were my children, who are 17 and 14. I think about their future. I know the Liberal government has a strong message: We want to fight, protect and build Canada strong while protecting our environment. That is the commitment I have for my children. That is the commitment this side has for all children and youth right across this country. This country will be one that is even better and brighter for them to inherit in this generation and the next generation.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During question period, the parliamentary secretary claimed that the jobs numbers were good news for young people.

I would like to request the permission of the House to table the actual jobs report—

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1205)

[English]

ARAB HERITAGE MONTH ACT

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (York South—Weston—Etobicoke, Lib.) moved that Bill S-227, An Act respecting Arab Heritage Month, be read the first time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce Bill S-227, an act respecting Arab Heritage Month. If passed, this bill would designate April of every year as Arab heritage month across Canada.

I want to thank Senator Mohammad Al Zaibak for reintroducing this important bill in the other place, and the member for Winnipeg North for seconding it. I also want to thank the member for Ottawa South, who first introduced it in this House during the 44th Parliament, where it passed unanimously on March 8, 2023, before unfortunately dying on the Order Paper in the other place.

The Arab world spans 22 nations, from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. It is diverse in geography, climate and culture, yet united by shared traditions and the Arabic language. The first recorded Arab immigrant to Canada, Ibrahim Abou Nader, of Lebanese origin, arrived in Montreal in 1882. Today, over one million Canadians proudly trace their roots to the Arab world.

I urge all colleagues to support Bill S-227. By supporting this bill, we affirm that Arab Canadians are an olive branch on the Canadian family tree. Let us come together to ensure that Arab heritage month becomes a permanent fixture in our national calendar.

Shukran.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I suspect that if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to call it 2:30 p.m.

I will take a moment to wish everyone a very happy Thanksgiving. I wish all the best to all members and their families.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday, October 20, at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Orders 28(2) and 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12:08 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Friday, October 10, 2025

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Military Justice System Modernization Act

Bill C-11. Second reading	2653
Fancy	2653
Aboultaif	2654
Lamoureux	2654
Cooper	2654
Aboultaif	2654
Lamoureux	2656
Baber	2656
Cooper	2656
Lamoureux	2657
Gaudreau	2658
Barrett	2658
Caputo	2658
Lamoureux	2659
Gaudreau	2660
Malette (Bay of Quinte)	2660
(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)	2660

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Nibun Chorus

Chang	2660
-------------	------

Blood Tribe

Morin	2660
-------------	------

International Day of the Girl Child

Auguste	2661
---------------	------

Bill C-291

Arnold	2661
--------------	------

100th Anniversary of Théâtre Cercle Molière

Lavack	2661
--------------	------

Housing

Aitchison	2661
-----------------	------

Retirement Congratulations

Kelloway	2662
----------------	------

Public Safety

Menegakis	2662
-----------------	------

Centre d'action bénévole de Beauharnois

DeBellefeuille	2662
----------------------	------

World Egg Day

Fancy	2662
-------------	------

Firearms

Moore	2663
-------------	------

Carolyn Rompkey

Earle	2663
-------------	------

Prime Minister of Canada

Caputo	2663
--------------	------

Thérèse Frère

Fortier	2663
---------------	------

The Economy

Kram	2663
------------	------

Ruth Phyllis Kavanaugh

Myles	2664
-------------	------

ORAL QUESTIONS

Employment

Genuis	2664
Church	2664
Genuis	2664
Church	2664
Genuis	2664
Church	2665
Melillo	2665
Turnbull	2665
Généreux	2665
Lightbound	2665
Généreux	2665
Lightbound	2665

Employment Insurance

Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)	2665
Church	2665
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)	2666
Church	2666

Transportation

DeBellefeuille	2666
Church	2666

The Economy

Thomas	2666
Turnbull	2666
Thomas	2666
Turnbull	2666
Cody	2667
Turnbull	2667
Cody	2667
Church	2667

Employment

Baber	2667
Church	2667

Automotive Industry

Baber	2667
Ehsassi	2668

Forestry Industry		Hogan.....	2672
Arnold.....	2668	Gunn.....	2672
Guay.....	2668	Guay.....	2672
Rail Transportation		Anderson.....	2672
Deschênes.....	2668	Hogan.....	2672
Kelloway.....	2668	Families, Children and Social Development	
Blanchette-Joncas.....	2668	Mingarelli.....	2672
Kelloway.....	2668	Church.....	2672
Public Safety		Marine Transportation	
Hardy.....	2668	Albas.....	2672
Lattanzio.....	2668	Desrochers.....	2672
Hardy.....	2669	Albas.....	2673
Ramsay.....	2669	Desrochers.....	2673
Justice		Agriculture and Agri-Food	
Guglielmin.....	2669	Bonk.....	2673
Lattanzio.....	2669	Chatel.....	2673
Guglielmin.....	2669	Foreign Affairs	
Lattanzio.....	2669	Royer.....	2673
Mental Health and Addictions		Sarai.....	2673
Au.....	2669	Public Safety	
Ramsay.....	2670	Reid.....	2673
Sport		Ramsay.....	2673
Fonseca.....	2670	Employment	
van Koeverden.....	2670	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway).....	2674
Automotive Industry		Church.....	2674
Strauss.....	2670	Climate Change	
Ehsassi.....	2670	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway).....	2674
Strauss.....	2670	Grant.....	2674
Fortier.....	2670		
Baldinelli.....	2670		
Turnbull.....	2670		
Baldinelli.....	2671		
Turnbull.....	2671		
Seeback.....	2671		
Lamoureux.....	2671		
Seeback.....	2671		
Lamoureux.....	2671		
Forestry Industry			
Gunn.....	2671		

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Arab Heritage Month Act	
Hussen.....	2674
Bill S-227. First reading.....	2674
(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time).....	2674
Questions on the Order Paper	
Lamoureux.....	2674

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