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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)
[English]

PETITIONS

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to present petition e-6770, signed by over 2,000 Canadians in solidarity with survivors and victims of intimate partner violence. I present this petition on behalf of B.C. resident and survivor Carrie Wiebe, in memory of Bailey McCourt, who was tragically killed in an act of heinous violence by her ex-partner earlier this year.

The reality is that across Canada, one woman is murdered by an intimate partner every six days. The intimate partner violence prevention and enforcement act would introduce evidence-based and life-saving reforms to prevent and protect against intimate partner violence.

I gratefully recognize the ongoing work the government is already doing with recent announcements on bail reform legislation that supports the basis of this petition. The petitioners call for bail reform, restriction of legal name changes for IPV offenders, a requirement for criminal record checks for marriage licences, and court-ordered treatment programs and monitoring of high-risk offenders. The act further calls for the establishment of a specialized IPV enforcement unit, a fatality review committee and an independent IPV commissioner to enhance oversight and accountability.

The petitioners call upon this House to honour the memory of these women and to prevent further tragedies by considering the intimate partner violence prevention and enforcement act without delay.

NATIONAL SILVER ALERT SYSTEM

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly two years since the tragic disappearance of Earl Moberg, a beloved husband, father and grandfather from my community who suffered from dementia. Despite exhaustive search efforts, he has not been found and is presumed deceased.

By 2030, nearly one million Canadians will be living with Alzheimer's, with almost 60% going missing at some point. If not found within 12 hours, half will be seriously injured or will lose their lives, highlighting the urgent need for rapid alerts. Mr. Moberg may have been seen after he went missing, but the person who saw him was not aware he was missing and did not alert the authorities. That is why Canada urgently needs a national silver alert system, like the amber alert system for children, to quickly notify the public when a senior with cognitive impairments goes missing using geo-targeted technology.

Today, I am honoured to table petition e-6491, with over 7,300 signatures, launched by the Moberg family. It calls on the federal government to work with provinces and police to create a national silver alert system.

The Mobergs have shown tremendous courage. We must act now to protect our most vulnerable and prevent future tragedies.

* * *

• (1005)

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 would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

CANADIAN CANOLA INDUSTRY

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that I have received a notice of a request for an emergency debate. I invite the hon. Leader of the Opposition to rise and make a brief intervention.

Government Orders

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadian farmers are the backbone of our economy, in particular our canola producers. I would add that producers in the great riding of Battle River—Crowfoot are particularly renowned. Unfortunately, this \$5-billion industry is under attack by unfair Chinese tariffs imposed by the regime in Beijing. This goes along with tariffs on seafood harvesters and other Canadian agriculture and agri-food producers.

The Prime Minister promised that he would be a master negotiator, that he would open new markets and that he would negotiate wins. Of course, that was a bait and switch. His broken promises and failed diplomacy are costing our farmers a fortune, in addition to which we see that his failures with regard to the United States have resulted in a doubling of U.S. tariffs since he was elected on the promise that he would get a deal by July 21.

Going back to the issue of farming, this \$5-billion-a-year industry is critical to our overall economy and to the prairie economy in particular. We know that this sector is under immense pressure, as Beijing has hammered our producers, therefore artificially lowering the price they can get for their sales. We have had much debate, and rightly so, about the tariffs the Prime Minister has allowed to be imposed on our metal-making sectors, our automakers and others, but not enough debate on canola producers. There are family farmers watching right now and relying on you, Mr. Speaker, to do the right thing and allow for an emergency debate.

This is also an important matter of national unity. Western producers need to see that their sector is given fair attention and floor time in the House of Commons. They do not begrudge steelworkers, aluminum workers, auto workers and others for having a lot of debate in the House of Commons, but they expect that they too will have their voices heard.

Given the enormity of this sector and the unfairness of the tariffs the Chinese government has imposed, we are asking for you, Mr. Speaker, to do the right thing and allow for an emergency debate. I note that this is particularly timely because the Prime Minister is meeting with President Xi later this week.

There is a great expectation that all tariffs on canola and on our fish harvesters will be eliminated. After all, the Prime Minister promised that he would be a master negotiator and that he knew how to handle these conversations. We know that he will be coming back with an end to the tariffs, but to make sure that is the case, let us have an emergency debate of which the Prime Minister and President Xi can take note before their meeting and before their announcement of the cessation of tariffs.

This is timely. It cannot wait. If it is delayed, this House will miss the window in which to have the conversation prior to the two heads of government meeting. We ask that the Speaker honour our farmers and allow for this House to take urgent action to defend their interests.

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for his intervention. However, I am not satisfied that this request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

That being said, I know this is a topic of great interest to many members. I want to assure the House that I am open to reconsidering the request at a later date if the situation warrants it.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1010)

[*Translation*]

AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT THE PROTOCOL ON THE ACCESSION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE COMPREHENSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE AGREEMENT FOR TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (for the Minister of International Trade) moved that Bill C-13, An Act to implement the Protocol on the Accession of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Steve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoulu, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the bill to enable the accession of the United Kingdom to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

This is an important step in advancing Canada's trade diversification strategy and in strengthening one of the most ambitious trade agreements in the world. Before I get into the details of what this means for Quebec and my riding of Beauport—Limoulu, I would like to take a moment to talk about what this agreement represents and how the accession process works.

This modern trade agreement is based on clear rules between Canada and 10 other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. It eliminates or significantly reduces tariffs, improves access to government contracts and investments, and strengthens the protection of services, labour and intellectual property. It is important to note that the agreement includes a structured accession process that enables other economies, such as the United Kingdom, to join it provided that they meet the high standards of the agreement and engage in bilateral negotiations with each member.

For Quebec, this agreement is not an abstract measure. It is a tangible gateway to high-growth markets of strategic importance that can transform our province's economic future. Many of Quebec's key sectors, including aerospace, agri-food, advanced manufacturing, aluminum, forestry and value-added wood products, as well as clean technology, are already benefiting from reduced tariffs and clearer and more predictable market access thanks to this agreement.

Government Orders

For businesses throughout Quebec, this agreement represents an opportunity for innovation, competition and the forming of new partnerships across the Pacific and beyond. Quebec exporters are now better positioned to grow in markets such as those in Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia, countries where trade barriers used to be high but are now in the process of being lifted.

It is not just the large multinationals. Small or medium-sized businesses, from Sherbrooke to Chicoutimi and from Trois-Rivières to Gaspé, are finding new international clients interested in their know-know, products and creativity. Whether it comes to maple products from the Lower St. Lawrence, aircraft components manufactured in Mirabel, fine cheeses and products from Lanaudière or advanced manufacturing equipment produced in the Eastern Townships, this agreement makes it easier for Quebec businesses to compete on the world stage under clear and enforceable trade rules.

These are some examples of ambition and excellence that define Quebec's modern economy, an economy that combines tradition with innovation and local pride with openness to the world. Quebec has always looked outward. From our first experiences with transatlantic trade along the St. Lawrence River to today's high-tech exports and green innovations, Quebecers have always understood that prosperity comes from engaging with the world.

We are not strangers to trade. It is part of who we are. It is part of our history, our geography and our entrepreneurial culture. Our ports, railways and research hubs, not to mention our skilled workforce, all reflect this deep connection to global trade. Montreal, Quebec City and our regional centres have long served as gateways to Canadian trade, connecting North America to Europe and, increasingly, to the Indo-Pacific region.

• (1015)

Quebec's exporters embody that spirit of openness. They are backed by an economy that is recognized for its creativity, precision and excellence. Quebecers understand why labour is essential. A recent Nanos poll on Canada's international trade approach found that Quebecers were some of the strongest advocates for expanding free trade beyond North America. They view trade diversification not as a risk, but as a gateway to security and resilience.

In a world where global supply chains are transforming and protectionism is gaining ground, Quebecers recognize that putting all our economic eggs in one basket, be it a single country or a single region, exposes us to greater risk. Diversification is not just an economic strategy. It is a strategy for sovereignty, stability and sustainable growth.

The bill before the House to ratify the United Kingdom's accession reflects that mindset. The U.K. is a G7 economy. It is a long-standing ally and a reliable trade partner that shares Canadian values on labour rights, environmental protection and the rule of law. Its accession will expand one of the world's most robust trade agreements, give it more purchasing power and make it more dynamic.

For Quebec's exporters, this means more opportunities to access new markets under one consistent framework. It means more integrated global supply chains in areas in which Quebec excels, such

as aerospace, pharmaceuticals, artificial intelligence, clean energy, and processed agri-food products.

It means more certainty and more options in an increasingly unpredictable world. Members will recall that Quebec is home to many industries that define Canada's reputation on the global stage, including aircraft manufacturing in Mirabel and Saint-Laurent, aluminum refining in Saguenay, forestry products and clean energy innovations developed in our research institutions. All of these exports rely on fair and reliable access to foreign markets.

Every trade agreement we sign and every barrier we break down supports real jobs here in Quebec and empowers our workers to compete based on skill, rather than political barriers. Quebec's economy prospers when it can go head-to-head with global competitors. It is driven by innovation, the ingenuity of its people, and a profound commitment to excellence. That is why trade diversification is so important. This agreement, which is now being expanded to include the U.K., provides Quebec businesses with more tools to connect with clients that value quality, sustainability and reliability, all the hallmarks of Quebec products.

There is a broader vision at work here. Our government has set a clear and ambitious goal: to double Canada's non-U.S. exports in the next decade. This goal cannot be met without Quebec. With its leadership in the clean energy, next-generation manufacturing, technology, agriculture and culture, Quebec's contribution will be vital. The province's export sectors already account for a significant portion of Canada's trade outside North America, and they are ready to grow even more as we strengthen our partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe.

Expanding the reach of Quebec's exports also means more opportunities for workers, for engineers in Longueuil, for machinists in Saguenay, for farmers in the Lower St. Lawrence, for software developers in Montreal, and for innovators at our universities and research centres.

When Quebec exports increase, all our communities prosper. More global trade means more investment here at home, more training, and more sustainable, skilled jobs for Quebecers.

• (1020)

As we look ahead to the next decade, Quebec will be central to Canada's success in diversifying trade. Our industries stand ready. Our entrepreneurs are motivated. Our citizens understand the value of engaging with the world. With an agreement like this one, and now, with the United Kingdom joining us, we can ensure an open, predictable and level playing field.

Government Orders

Quebeckers can be proud that their province and their country are not content to simply participate in global markets, they are actively shaping them. They are setting the standards for human-centred innovation, sustainability and growth. When Quebec businesses succeed abroad, they also export our values, like respect for hard work, the environment, diversity and quality.

The positive impacts of this approach can be felt everywhere. They support rural regions and urban centres alike. They stabilize our supply chains, attract investment, and strengthen Canada's overall competitiveness.

They also strengthen our ties with countries that share our democratic values and our commitment to fairness. That is why this agreement is so important for Quebec and Canada and why the U.K.'s accession is such a positive development. It amplifies what is already working. It integrates our closest European partner into a peaceful framework that represents nearly 500 million consumers and more than 15% of global GDP.

For Quebec exporters in the aerospace, agri-food, manufacturing or digital services industries, this prospect will lead to increased growth, security and opportunities. Historically, Quebec has always been creative, resilient and open to the world. From our artists and innovators to our farmers and engineers, Quebeckers have proven time and time again that they can compete with the best, not by lowering standards, but by raising them ever higher. This spirit guides our approach to trade. We are committed to negotiating agreements that defend human rights, protect the environment, and promote transparency, values that are dear to Quebec.

In conclusion, let us reaffirm our commitment to the workers, exporters and communities that depend on open, fair and principled trade. Let us continue to build a diversified and forward-looking trade strategy that will lead Canada and Quebec to a more prosperous and secure future. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership has already delivered results. Now that the United Kingdom is joining it, it will be even more successful.

As the government pursues its objective of doubling Canada's non-U.S. exports over the next decade, Quebec will be at the forefront, confident in its strengths, proud of its people and ready to seize every opportunity that the global economy has to offer.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, one thing our Prime Minister talks a great deal about is the importance of trade and broadening Canada's opportunities by looking elsewhere, outside the United States, for example. In recent days, he has talked a great deal about trade relations and the potential for trade relations between Canada and the Philippines. There are just over one million people in Canada of Filipino heritage, and using the diversity we have in Canada puts us in a great position to ultimately expand trading opportunities.

I wonder if my colleague could provide his thoughts on why and how it is so important that Canada looks at ways in which it can increase trading opportunities around the world.

• (1025)

[*Translation*]

Steve Lavoie: Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to work at banks for over 20 years, in business for over 10 years and at the Quebec City chamber of commerce and industry for four years. To ensure the growth of our businesses, we need to open up the global market. We know this, and we have seen it. We need reliable partners, and we must diversify our markets.

As I said earlier, putting all our eggs in one basket is not the best economic solution. Today, we have the opportunity to open a market for all Canadian businesses.

[*English*]

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to ask my colleague some questions. I have had the chance to meet and work with him on the trade committee. He has wonderful insights, but I think he is missing a key component. Canada has agreed to allow the U.K. to join the CPTPP, but what did Canada get for allowing the U.K. to join? There are outstanding trade disputes with the U.K., especially with respect to our pork and cattle farmers, that are still unresolved. Nevertheless, Canada has now allowed the U.K. to join the CPTPP while still leaving these issues outstanding for our cattle and pork producers.

I wonder if the member could just give the House an example or point to one thing that Canada received from the U.K. in exchange for allowing the U.K. to join the CPTPP.

[*Translation*]

Steve Lavoie: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague. I hold him in high regard and I enjoy serving with him on the Standing Committee on International Trade.

We recognize the concerns of the beef and pork industries. We are committed to working with them to get rid of certain barriers. It is a fact that, currently, nearly one in five companies in the market does business abroad and relies on exports for its livelihood. We have always taken our workers and their families into account, and we will continue to do so.

The United Kingdom will enable us to continue and expand this export and growth.

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to start by thanking the Liberal government.

A few years from now, the Liberals are going to tell us that there is no guarantee that a new country will honour the agreements it was party to when it left a customs union that had previously negotiated those agreements. By supporting the United Kingdom's bid to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Liberals are showing us that the opposite is entirely possible. I am grateful to them because this will give them one less leg to stand on in the coming years when they fight our move toward sovereignty.

Government Orders

That being said, last week, we debated Bill C-228, a Bloc Québécois bill that would improve transparency. We were told that there was no need for it because there is already a policy that provides for a 21-day period after an agreement is tabled and before a bill is introduced, but the Liberals just violated that policy. The proof is that the bill was introduced 15 days later.

Does my colleague agree that we need a law rather than a policy, and that we now have proof of that?

Steeve Lavoie: Madam Speaker, during the last election, Quebecers and Canadians were clear: They want action from us and they are tired of waiting. From its first days in office, this government has shown that it has heard their plea. We have rolled up our sleeves, put on our work boots and already started making agreements. That is what Canadians expect from us. That is what businesses expect from us.

With everything happening right now with our neighbours to the south, Canadians need us to diversify our markets and open up new ones. They do not need us to pass endless laws that only delay this new business.

The new government is currently helping businesses by opening up new markets. Diversification is part of the solution.

• (1030)

[*English*]

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleagues have highlighted that there are outstanding issues right now in terms of our relations with Britain. Colleagues are well aware of the unfair treatment of British pensioners living in our country. Canada is home to 144,000 British retirees, yet their pensions are frozen at the rate first received because Canada does not have a reciprocal indexing agreement with the U.K. Seniors here are losing tens of thousands of dollars over the course of their retirement. That costs the Canadian economy over \$1 billion annually and leaves many seniors in poverty. These include veterans, nurses, people who have lived in Great Britain and served their country.

We do not do that. We look after our seniors when they retire abroad.

Will this be part of the negotiations in terms of this agreement? When will the government make British pensioners a priority?

[*Translation*]

Steeve Lavoie: Madam Speaker, a trade agreement like this one is not the right framework for negotiating those kinds of things. Right now, people need diversified markets because of what is going on south of the border. That is what we intend to focus on.

[*English*]

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the government for bringing forward this bill, but it will forgive me if I do not give it a pat on the back for doing something it should have done years ago.

It was no surprise that the U.K. was going to need trade agreements with countries around the world. It had Brexit in 2017. We had a trade continuity agreement that the Liberals let expire, to the detriment of our businesses. They suffered by paying higher tariffs

going into the U.K. because the Liberals let that continuity agreement expire.

Why did it take five years to get an agreement that is worse than the one we had previously? We used to have the CETA with the European Union, which provided better and more liberalizing access for Canada. Why did we have to wait five years to get a worse deal?

[*Translation*]

Steeve Lavoie: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to hear that my colleague supports this agreement, that he supports its evolution and that he welcomes the United Kingdom's accession to it. It is good for Canadians and good for our businesses. I want to emphasize that the new government did not wait before taking action.

We have only been in power for six months, and we have already rolled up our sleeves to get to work serving Canadians. Our Prime Minister is already engaged in negotiations aimed at expanding Canadian markets.

I thank the Conservatives for supporting us.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I found the last question interesting. I would emphasize to the member across the way that over the last 10 years, our government has signed off on more trade agreements than any Conservative government ever did. That is an absolute fact. We have a Prime Minister who, in a short period of time, has been negotiating all forms of additional trade opportunities. We already have a deal on the table for the legislature.

I am wondering if my friend and colleague could provide his thoughts regarding how this government and, in particular, the current Prime Minister are aggressively pursuing trading opportunities for Canada.

[*Translation*]

Steeve Lavoie: Madam Speaker, we know that we can no longer count on the market predictability that we once had. Businesses need this predictability to be able to invest, but we no longer have it. We have two choices. We either sit back and wait for it to return, or we go out and find new markets. There is actually a good book on this subject that I often recommend called *Who Moved my Cheese?*

We are going to open up the market for our Canadian businesses. That is exactly what our Prime Minister is doing.

[*English*]

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today.

Government Orders

Before I get into my speech, I have to chuckle a bit about the last intervention by the member for Winnipeg North. At every opportunity, whenever there is anything negative to be said about the legacy of the last 10 years, the Liberal government says that was an old government and this is a new government. However, whenever there is something it wants to take credit for, its members are quite happy to remind us that it is the Liberals who have been in power for the last 10 years. They cannot have it both ways. They have to either accept the legacy or run away from it, and the member needs to decide which one he is going to do.

Canadians know exactly what the legacy is of the last 10 years. It is a higher cost of living, higher crime, inflation, a carbon tax and making life more unaffordable for Canadians. That is the legacy of the last 10 years.

It is nice to be here to talk about adding the U.K. to the CPTPP.

Before I get into my remarks, I would like to recognize some wonderful local individuals: Luke, Roy, who I sometimes call “the Emperor”, Reg and Kevin, who are great musical talents, and Mark and Kyle. Kyle is starting a new business, and I wish him the greatest of luck as he starts his new venture.

Trade is about reciprocity, and that means getting something in exchange for giving something. The fundamental question we should be asking the government, after it has had multiple years to consider whether it would agree to allowing the U.K. to join the CPTPP, is what Canada has received in exchange for allowing this to occur. Our pork and cattle producers have had incredible difficulty accessing the U.K.'s market, while at the same time, beef exports from the U.K. into Canada have doubled in just one year. They were at about \$48 million in 2024. We have now allowed the U.K. to join the CPTPP, while leaving these non-tariff barrier disputes, or trade irritants, with the U.K. to persist.

Why would the government allow this moment to pass without negotiating a win for Canadians? Does this sound familiar?

I was very pleased to see my hon. colleague from the NDP raise the U.K. pensioner issue. There are well over 100,000 U.K. citizens living in Canada, or maybe even as high as 140,000, who do not have a cost of living increase on their U.K. pension. One might ask what is so wrong with that. What is wrong is there is inequity and unfairness, because had that same retiree chosen to retire in a different country, like the United States, they would have gotten a cost of living increase on their pension.

Why has the government not made it a priority to solve this on behalf of this very large group of individuals, just as a matter of fairness? We are told that the Prime Minister is a master negotiator and has worldly relationships and a global network, which he was going to bring to bear to solve Canada's problems, yet we stand here today and the government has nothing to show for agreeing to allow the U.K. to join the CPTPP.

It could have solved the pensioner issue had it asked. It is unclear whether it has even brought this up with the U.K. In fact, in response to many questions to the former minister of foreign affairs and the Minister of International Trade, the answer has been that it is not a priority at this time. Have fun trying to tell that to the U.K.

pensioners who believe that, as a matter of fairness, they deserve a cost of living increase, and they would be correct.

• (1035)

It is difficult to take that same position with our cattle and pork producers. They have worked very hard to expand their markets in the world, only to be met with unfair trade practices and non-tariff barriers to trade from the U.K. specifically, which prevent our producers' products from reaching U.K. shelves. At the same time, U.K. products are free to come into Canada.

Why would we allow this moment to pass without negotiating a resolution to these problems, or at least demonstrating that the government is aware of these issues and has a path to resolve them? The Liberals have been absolutely silent on resolving these problems. It is reasonable to assume that they have not even attempted to resolve them because they do not talk about them or acknowledge that they exist. The Liberals barely want to recognize that these issues exist because it would be an admission that they have had multiple years to fix them and have not been able to deliver.

These unfair trade practices, especially with respect to cattle and pork producers, are not rooted in science. I bet the first thing a U.K. citizen or diplomat does when they visit the wonderful Calgary Stampede is visit a steak house. I am sure they have no problem consuming our wonderful steaks in Alberta, Canada, but they want to work to keep that product out of the U.K. and off its shelves.

This is a government that is unwilling to do the hard work. The Liberals walked away from the bilateral trade negotiations, probably because they believed the U.K. was going to join the CPTPP anyway. They thought, “Why bother with the bilateral trade agreement?”

We had a trade continuity agreement. They let that expire, by the way, to the detriment of many businesses, including small, artisan cheese shops, for example. Many have struggled significantly and some have unfortunately closed, including one in Simcoe North. It was a wonderful operation, but because of the government's lack of ability to negotiate with the U.K., it had to close.

What has the government achieved by allowing the U.K. to join the CPTPP? What did we get for it? These are questions that the public, the cattle and pork producers and the opposition want to know the answers to. In a negotiation, we give something to get something.

These are questions that U.K. pensioners deserve to know the answers to. This is a country with which we have a wonderful, shared history. Why is it that a U.K. pensioner living in Canada is treated differently from one living in the United States? It does not seem fair and I do not think anyone would think it is fair on its face.

Government Orders

If we break it down, we have a request from an ally to allow them to join a very large trade agreement. On its face, that seems completely reasonable. Canada believes in free trade and we are a free-trading nation, but we should also believe in fair trade and reciprocity.

Out of curiosity, I looked at the top 10 Canadian exports to the U.K. I will give members a hint for what the first one is. Madam Speaker, sometimes you like to wear it, and you look good in it. Gold is the number one export to the U.K., which leads me to another question: Where is all the gold in Canada? Where are the reserves? Canada has no more gold reserves at the Bank of Canada. Guess who sold some of those reserves. The Prime Minister did when he was the central bank governor. He sold them to the U.K., which is interesting.

● (1040)

Out of the top 52 countries in the world that have gold reserves, guess where Canada ranks. It is not even on the list, because we have zero reserves. While other countries around the world have been piling up their gold reserves, Canada has been selling them all. The U.S., China, Poland and Turkey have reserves, and the list goes on and on, but Canada has made the choice to sell its gold reserves, thanks to the Prime Minister.

In the Prime Minister's defence, he is not the only central bank governor who has sold Canada's gold; that has been going on for many years, but he continued it. It is funny that he sold it to the country of which he then went on to become the central bank governor. I guess he was okay to keep it when he was the central bank governor in the U.K.; it did not sell its gold reserves.

If we think about the entire agreement, it might seem benign on its face, but we are left with some questions. What did Canada get? Why are our cattle and pork producers still left out in the cold? Why do U.K. pensioners still have their pensions unfairly lowered by the government's inaction on negotiating anything? Can the government even point to any wins it has achieved on any negotiating front, period, other than signing an agreement?

If we look at the Canada-U.S. discussion, we see that Canada has made a litany of concessions, although the minister of Canada-U.S. relations says he would not call them concessions. Actually, I have never heard anyone describe them as anything other than concessions. We gave in on DST. We withdrew complaints about softwood lumber. We have made significant other concessions to the U.S. in exchange for waiting for an answer, for basically zero agreement, not really even a path to agreement apparently. They are not even talking anymore.

The Prime Minister has also said we might be close on a deal on aluminum and steel. Well, that is nice. What about autos? What about lumber? What about the folks in the canola sector who are kind of caught between Canada and the U.S.? It does not appear that the government is moving with a sense of urgency.

I appreciate the intervention of my colleague just prior; the Prime Minister has said a very similar thing, which is that the government's goal is to increase Canada-U.S. exports by 50% over a decade. Well, golly gee, is that really the moon shot we think it is? What are we supposed to do for the next 10 years? How are we go-

ing to survive as a country if we have to wait 10 years before we can diversify 50%, increase our trade by non-U.S. exports by 50%?

What is going to happen to our industries over the next decade while we wait? How much is it going to cost the Canadian taxpayer? How much is it going to cost the auto workers and their families in Ontario, or the farmers out west, or the people who work in the lumber mills, the paper mills and elsewhere in that sector? What are we telling them?

We need to act now, but the government does not really act with any sense of urgency. If we just look at GDP per capita, on that basis Canada is poorer today than we were in 2019. The government does not seem to care about that, but everyone else recognizes that GDP per capita is a measure of living standards. We are going in the wrong direction.

● (1045)

It is nice that we are here debating free trade. As I have mentioned, of course, Canada's Conservatives support free trade, but we support fair trade. We support getting good deals for Canadians. In this case, we have given something and gotten nothing in return.

One might be asking why we are even debating the bill today. Is it because the government has not made a deal with our largest trading partner, the United States? Is it because the government would enjoy not talking about the failure to get a deal with our largest trading partner and closest ally? It has had multiple years to sit on this piece of legislation to consider moving it forward. Why are we moving it now? What did we get? What is coming next?

We are left with all these questions, and we are left wondering what Canada, Canadians and our producers receive in exchange for allowing the U.K. into the deal while the U.K. is still unfairly punishing our cattle producers, our pork producers and U.K. pensioners. We would think that the Prime Minister, who is very close personal friends with Prime Minister Starmer, would have been able to deliver some pretty big wins for Canadian industry and even for the U.K. pensioners living in Canada.

One would have thought that maybe the Prime Minister would have asked Prime Minister Starmer to do him a solid, asking whether he could give him something for allowing the U.K. to join the agreement. It is not clear whether there were even any negotiations about this. The government has not even disclosed whether it is on the radar. It has been brought up in the House multiple times.

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Next week, the U.K. pensioners are going to be in Ottawa. I invite members of all parties, including the government, to go speak to them, to look them in the eye and say that we just negotiated a big trade, an agreement, with the U.K.: the CPTPP. Look them in the eye and say that we gave the U.K. something. What are the pensioners going to say back? Maybe they would ask, "What about us? Did the government get anything for us?"

Members should go to the cattle producers and say that there is good news: We are going to expand the markets. The cattle producers will say that they still cannot get into the U.K., that the agreement does not help them. They will ask what they got for it.

These are completely reasonable questions that the government needs to answer, questions that reasonable Canadians would have and that reasonable producers in cattle and pork and other agricultural products would have. Why are we agreeing to something without getting anything in return?

I come back to reciprocity. We need to get the United Kingdom back to the negotiating table on a bilateral agreement. I worry that the government thinks its job is done now because the U.K. is going to join CPTPP, but the trade irritants still exist. The government has not indicated that there is a path to even talking about them, let alone resolving them. There are no negotiations currently happening bilaterally with the U.K.

While I appreciate the government's trying to advance Canada's interests around the world, we have to ask ourselves what we are getting when we give things up to other countries. That has to be a fundamental question that the government should answer, especially when we have glaring groups not just of people generally but of producers and industry that have concerns with the United Kingdom and how it does its trade practices, and that, in the case of the U.K. pensioners, are just asking to be treated fairly.

In summary, Canada's Conservatives support free trade. Of course we do, but we support fair trade and negotiating wins for Canadians at every single opportunity. This looks like a missed opportunity for Canadians by the government.

• (1050)

James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there is a lot of material to cover in the hon. member's words. I just want to remind him that I know he is much younger than I am, but Canada, like other countries, went away from the gold standard in 1971. Canada sold its gold reserves to diversify its portfolio into more interest-bearing types of investments. He knows that.

I know that the British pensioners are coming to Ottawa next week, because I am part of a group of people who are hosting. I have met with them on a regular basis for the last several years, as have a number of the member's colleagues. I have raised the issue with British politicians at every opportunity, and so have his colleagues, side by side with me. We have written letters to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

It is not a partisan issue, frankly. The member is absolutely right that the British pensioners in Canada are not being treated properly by their own government. Will he acknowledge that the Govern-

ment of Canada and the MPs of the House have actually been working hard on the issue?

• (1055)

Adam Chambers: Madam Speaker, I might be younger, but I was not born yesterday. If Canada had not sold its gold, we would have \$125 billion U.S. of extra money in the government coffers. I appreciate that the member might question that strategy, but it is entirely reasonable to ask why we have been selling gold, why we do not hold any gold and why central banks are borrowing it.

With respect to the member's fundamental question, I firmly and fully accept that members of the House have advocated for U.K. pensioners, and I appreciate the member's advocacy on their behalf. However, this is a question about what the government has delivered for U.K. pensioners. This is a question about the government's being in negotiations with the U.K. and not bringing this up to the degree necessary to get it resolved.

That is the issue. It is not whether any member of the House individually is trying to advocate, because a lot of people are, but the best people able to negotiate on behalf of U.K. pensioners are the government members, because it is the government that is allowing the U.K. to get something in joining CPTPP, and we have not gotten anything in return for our pensioners.

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to work with my colleague at the Standing Committee on International Trade.

First, I would like to know what he thinks about the fact that the government violated its own policy on tabling treaties by introducing the bill 15 days after the announcement of the content of the agreement itself, and not 21 days as set out in the policy.

Does he not think that this illustrates the importance of Bill C-228, which would also allow us to debate an agreement, not a bill? The Conservatives spoke against our bill.

Second, it was the fact that we were debating and studying a bill, rather than the agreement itself, that led to all of the Conservative amendments being ruled out of order by the Chair when we studied the agreement with Ukraine.

Does my colleague not think it is time to make the process more democratic?

[*English*]

Adam Chambers: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for using the opportunity to discuss process in this place, which is very important.

Government Orders

There is actually no reason why there seems to be a rush to have the bill come to the table today. The Liberals could have provided the appropriate notice, as my colleague points out. This place and the level of debate would be improved if we had further scrutiny and an appropriate timeline to look at the agreements. It seems to me there is no reason why we would need to rush this.

Why not wait the appropriate 21 days? That is a very reasonable question from my colleague. I look forward to working with him as the bill may move through the rest of the process at the trade committee.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for raising the issue around British pensions. I think about Anne Puckridge, who moved to Canada in 2001 to be with her daughter. Anne was a veteran who served the U.K., and the U.K. has abandoned her. It has abandoned a veteran who put her life on the line to serve her country and who put herself forward. I point out that British pensioners in countries like the United States and Jamaica and across the European Union receive a pension that is fully indexed annually, unlike Canadian pensioners.

I know that we have all been advocating from different parties, but it has not worked. This is our opportunity.

Does my colleague agree that this needs to be a critical component of all trade negotiations when it comes to the U.K. and that veterans, especially U.K. veterans, should not be abandoned? We do not do that; we give indexing to our veterans when they retire abroad.

Adam Chambers: Madam Speaker, mark the time and the date, because I agree with my hon. colleague in the NDP in his intervention with respect to U.K. pensioners.

This is the moment that the current government has let pass to negotiate on behalf of U.K. pensioners. If and when the bill is passed, we will have lost negotiating leverage with the U.K. to support U.K. pensioners living in Canada, and of course I have to mention again our cattle and pork producers, who are being unfairly treated by the U.K.'s unfair trade practices.

● (1100)

Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the member two questions specifically. There is a huge trade deficit on Canadian cars entering the U.K. versus U.K. cars coming into Canada. It is about 20:1. How can there be a trade deficit in Canada with U.K. beef? There is more beef from the United Kingdom entering Canada than Canadian beef heading into the United Kingdom.

How can we do anything with the United Kingdom until we straighten out those two issues?

Adam Chambers: Madam Speaker, I thought my hon. colleague was also going to ask about the gold standard, but maybe that is for another day.

He is correct. About 48 million dollars' worth of U.K. beef comes into Canada, and virtually zero, or a very small amount, leaves Canada and makes it into the U.K. This is solely on the basis of non-tariff barriers related to trade and unscientific questions

about the use of hormones and carcass washing in the case of our pork producers.

Why would we give a trade ally something by allowing them to join the CPTPP without resolving those issues now in the moment while we have this opportunity, when they are asking for us to do something? We are missing an opportunity to stand up for our cattle and pork producers and the U.K.'s pensioners. We need to stand up for our producers.

In this global environment, it is absolutely critical that we stand up for Canadian producers, Canadians living here and the health and safety of our country.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the member tried to give what I would suggest is a false impression. Stephen Harper divested Canada of its gold reserves. By the time we got to 2016, it was all done. The member gave the impression that the number one export to the U.K. is gold. The member is right that it is gold, but it is not because of depleting reserves; it is because we have gold mines in virtually all the different provinces, with Quebec and Ontario leading the way.

This is about Canadians exporting gold. It is not about depleting reserves, yet the member intentionally tries to mislead Canadians. Then he talks about the indexing of pensions. Tell me of one agreement wherein the Conservatives ever incorporated concerns related to seniors or pensions specifically.

We are doing what we can as a government to diversify our trade, and the last time we had a trade agreement with a European country it was with Ukraine. I will remind my friend across the way that the Conservatives voted against trade with Ukraine. Shame on them, number one, for voting against Ukraine, and, number two, for trying to mislead this House.

Adam Chambers: Madam Speaker, I guess we will have to get a ruling on whether we can say a member is intentionally misleading the House, but I cannot believe the government broke its own trade agreement with Ukraine. Do members know what it did? It got rid of the carbon tax. It broke its own agreement. It is unbelievable.

I appreciate the member mentioning that we have all of this wonderful gold production in Canada. Is it not shameful that the central bank does not just keep a bit of it?

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-13 as the Bloc Québécois critic for international trade.

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As members know, the bill enables the U.K.'s accession to the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Let me end the suspense and say that we are voting in favour of the principle of this bill. Although it changes a lot for the U.K., it does not change much for us. However, I will be voting no in committee during clause-by-clause review. I will be voting against the legal provisions that implement investor-state dispute settlement. I will come back to that later. Our final vote will depend on what happens there.

The question of process is an important one to return to. As the saying goes, the medium is the message, and very often, the process is the agreement. The process itself perfectly illustrates the need for the Bloc Québécois's Bill C-228 dealing with transparency around treaties. When we debated our bill last week, I found it ironic that the Liberals said there was no need to pass it because a policy was already put in place back in 2008 and it is working. Under that policy, there has to be a 21-day period between the announcement of an agreement and the tabling of a bill for its implementation. At the very moment this argument was being served up, the Liberal government had violated this same policy only a few days earlier when it tabled Bill C-13 15 days after announcing the agreement. If my math is correct, 15 days is less than 21 days. The government violated its own policy, which it held up as absolute. This is proof that a mere policy is not enough and legislation is required.

With Bill C-13, as with all agreements before it, what we debate, study and vote on is not the agreement itself, but rather an implementation bill. We can therefore amend only a handful of clauses in a bill that is only a few pages long, and not the underlying provisions that in some cases run to thousands of pages. In the end, Parliament's function is simply to rubber-stamp it. We have been reduced to that in a very short time.

In that regard, last week I listened to Conservative members tell us that they were opposed to the Bloc Québécois's bill because it was too long and too complicated. However, it was the Conservatives' proposed amendments to the agreement with Ukraine that were all rejected and ruled out of order. If we had undertaken a clause-by-clause study of an actual agreement rather than a bill, the Conservatives would have been able to put forward their proposed amendments. Personally, I disagreed with all of their proposals. I voted against all of them, but I voted with the Conservatives to challenge the chair's decision to rule them out of order, because to me, that is democracy. The Conservatives should at least have the right to put their proposals forward. We are democratically elected representatives with a mandate to administer communities and public assets. That includes what we want to see in international agreements.

I would remind the House that Bill C-228 provides for the systematic tabling of treaties in the House of Commons, a requirement to wait 21 days after tabling before taking any action to ratify a treaty, the publication of treaties in the Canada Gazette and on the Department of Foreign Affairs' website, the obligation to obtain the advice of the House before ratifying an important treaty, and consultation with civil society by a parliamentary committee before Parliament votes on the treaty.

Let us review some facts. In the United States, Congress assigns negotiating mandates, and this makes it harder for negotiating teams to reach unsatisfactory agreements. In Canada, the executive

branch acts unilaterally without any parliamentary guidelines. In most industrialized countries, treaties are adopted by parliaments, and this forces the executive branch to maintain an ongoing dialogue in order to keep elected officials on board during negotiations, even if it means having to change directions at the negotiating table. In Canada, Parliament simply changes its domestic laws and has no ability to intervene in the treaty itself. Elected officials can only vote for or against it, and that is it. They no longer have a say in the matter.

• (1105)

By the same token, while provinces are responsible for implementing the parts of the treaty that pertain to their jurisdictions, they are not involved in the negotiations, as opposed to what is done in Europe, for instance, where member states play an integral part, even if the treaty is with the European Union. We often invite senior federal officials to committee hearings, and they tell us that they talk with the provinces. However, do they really seek their opinion?

The practice in Quebec for mandatory publication and parliamentary approval is modelled on the practice in the majority of European countries. The practice is already in force in Quebec. It is a practice, but it is not anchored in legislation. In 2016, Belgium almost refused to sign on to the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, even though it supported it. Under the Belgian constitution, the country cannot ratify an agreement without the consent of all its regions. Well, Wallonia was not in agreement and so even though Belgium had agreed to the treaty, it found itself in a bind and was forced to concede that its constitution prevented it from ratifying the agreement.

In the United States, negotiating mandates are vested in Congress. Congress is kept abreast of discussions and must approve the text prior to ratification. In Europe, the European Commission requires authorization from the European Parliament and a mandate from member states represented in the European Council before initiating trade negotiations. In many countries, parliamentary ratification of treaties is considered so vital that it has been embedded in their constitutions. This the case in France, Germany, Denmark, Italy and the United States, which have a constitutional requirement to seek legislative approval for some categories of international agreements prior to ratification.

Let us talk about the agreement itself. As I said earlier, the agreement will not change much. Canada is already party to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. The United Kingdom is also a party, because most of the partner countries have also agreed to its accession. In this case, we also agree, as long as this does not result in new breaches in supply management and cultural exemption is confirmed, but we do not agree with investor-state dispute settlement.

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The 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement made this concept more mainstream. Although it existed before, NAFTA popularized this system that allows a foreign company to sue a state. I use the adjective “foreign” loosely, because all a company has to do is incorporate in a state where it is considered to be foreign, even if, in fact, it is inside the country it wishes to sue. A foreign company can sue a state that has democratically adopted public policies in favour of, for example, more social justice, a higher minimum wage, a tax on soft drinks, as we saw in Mexico, environmental measures such as cancelling projects that could be harmful to the environment, or even the introduction of plain cigarette packaging that does not include a company's logo, as was the case in Australia. These are real examples. In defence of their right to make a profit, foreign investors have sued states for measures that were democratically adopted.

That makes it increasingly difficult for a state to legislate on issues related to social justice, the environment, labour conditions or public health if a transnational company believes that its right to profit has been violated. Some will say that those companies are unlikely to win. However, according to a 2013 report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, or UNCTD, states won those lawsuits 42% of the time, compared with 31% for corporations. The remaining disputes were settled out of court. That means that plaintiffs were able to override the political will of the states, either in whole or in part, in 60% of cases. However, that is a quantitative figure that overlooks the fact that, beyond the lawsuit itself, states proactively self-censor. Before adopting a policy or making a decision, they say to themselves that they could be sued and end up in court. A company that does not like a government's decisions could cause it to lose millions of dollars. States are under constant pressure as a result.

In 2014, a report by the European Union's Directorate-General for External Policies stated that this mechanism had a deterrent effect on public policy choices. It should also be noted that these disputes are very lucrative and involve lengthy processes. According to a document published by the non-governmental organizations Corporate Europe Observatory and Transnational Institute, it is well known that large law firms specializing in commercial law have an interest in getting involved in this area and are lining their pockets with such provisions.

• (1110)

The Bloc Québécois has always opposed such provisions and its position has not changed. We actually put it on the agenda for the convention. I take pride in the fact that it was my personal proposal; it came from my riding. At the Bloc Québécois convention in 2023, we included in the party's platform our rejection of investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms. I said it before: I will vote against those provisions when we proceed to a clause-by-clause review. After that, we will see what we do with the bill as a whole.

CUSMA, the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, eliminated that possibility when it replaced NAFTA, which made this mechanism mainstream. CUSMA eliminated this possibility for litigation between Canada and the United States, but the mechanism is still in force with respect to Mexico. We do not want to reopen that. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the CPTPP, featured a version of the mechanism that

was maybe not quite so bad, but in 2021 when the time came to vote for the Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement, there was no mechanism that allowed that. It was part of the agreement, but if it was not in force in the European Union, it did not apply. Here, unfortunately, it will apply with the United Kingdom's accession to the CPTPP. This is legally a bit complicated. While the mechanism that was in our agreement with the United Kingdom did not apply, it will now apply. This is a major sticking point for us. We will vote against these provisions. That is our promise to this House.

Now, there is something I find interesting in the agreement. By supporting the United Kingdom's accession to the CPTPP, which is a first, Ottawa is reinforcing the argument in favour of Quebec's independence. We know that in a few years' time, the government will begin fearmongering again, but it will be in a bind because it will have proven the opposite point.

The United Kingdom is the first country to join the CPTPP since it was established. It is the first country to join even though it is not part of the Pacific Rim. Bill C-13 seeking to ratify the UK's accession to the CPTPP, which we are debating today and will soon be voting on, is somewhat a continuation of Brexit when the British people voted for independence from the European Union. The European Union is a customs union that provides for the free movement of goods and services within the European Union and for uniform rules in external trade. It is like Canada. External trade is what the European Union refers to as a “Community power”, meaning that trade falls under Europe as a whole rather than with member states. Trade agreements are therefore signed with Europe and not with each individual member state. Agreements are not made with France, Belgium, Germany, and so forth.

In this regard, with respect to trade issues, Great Britain's experience with Brexit offers a glimpse of what Quebec will experience when it becomes independent. When Quebec exits Canada, which is a customs union like the European Union, with a central authority responsible for trade, the province will no longer be party to the trade agreements that bind us as a province of Canada.

During the 1995 stolen referendum, which is about to have an anniversary in two days, the “no” side amply highlighted this uncertainty by arguing that Quebec would lose its guaranteed access to export markets. People warned that Quebec would not automatically be a party to agreements negotiated and signed by Canada, which naturally included NAFTA. At the time, Jean Charest, the Conservative-Liberal-Conservative—no one can say for sure—said that we were entering a black hole. He used that term. He said that we were about to enter a period when businesses, perhaps only temporarily, would be denied their guaranteed access to other markets because Quebec would be excluded from agreements until it renegotiated them.

At the time, the “yes” side said that this assumption was illogical, that all of Quebec's partners would want to preserve their business ties with Quebec and that money talks. Back then, the uncertainty was pervasive.

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When the Bélanger-Campeau studies were updated, constitutional expert Daniel Turp pointed out that, where treaties are concerned, countries apply a presumption of continuity if the newly minted country expresses an intention to remain bound by the treaty. An assumption is made that the country is going to remain a party to the treaty. However, Mr. Turp's demonstration dealt with UN treaties only. The trade agreement issue remained unresolved. The only trade treaty precedent at that time dated back to 1973, when Bangladesh separated from Pakistan to become independent.

• (1115)

Pakistan was part of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or GATT, the forerunner of the World Trade Organization, and Bangladesh automatically became a member, so there was no period of limbo. However, GATT was a multilateral treaty that did not need to be renegotiated to admit a new member. It could be said that history had yet to be rewritten.

Brexit set the first precedent for a territory leaving a customs union to which it previously belonged and through which it was a signatory to a series of trade agreements. That issue was first resolved with the Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement, a temporary trade continuity agreement. That allowed us to see what happens when a trading nation acquires or regains its trade sovereignty. In reality, it works very well.

After the Brexit referendum, all the countries that had an agreement with Europe rushed to approach the United Kingdom to propose agreements that would ensure that nothing changed in terms of trade relations. The Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement maintained the status quo and ensured stability until the agreements could be permanently renegotiated. That prevented any gap in trade relations during the transition period.

As we speak, Canada has not renegotiated its permanent agreement with the United Kingdom, but it still has its temporary agreement, so free trade continues and trade relations continue. The U.K. concluded such an agreement with all the partners that had concluded an agreement with Europe. It even concluded an agreement with Japan, which did not have an agreement with Europe. There is no change in the access to global markets that British products enjoyed.

In the next few years, when the time comes to actively discuss choosing independence for Quebecers, the federal scarecrows will return, but they will all have been deflated by the federal government itself. In real life, there is no vacuum in the aftermath of independence. Furthermore, by joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership while the European Union is not a member, the United Kingdom is even demonstrating an interest in regaining the freedom to choose its trading partners. By supporting it today, Ottawa is reinforcing the argument in favour of Quebec independence.

• (1120)

Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, which was as passionate as ever.

Bloc Québécois members are still discussing a hypothetical project, whereas we are engaged in hands-on work. Let me give one example of a no-nonsense report we recently received.

According to a report by Investissement Québec, Quebec companies have made significant progress in the export field, and have signed agreements amounting to \$4.3 billion in exports. Additionally, foreign companies have generated \$6.5 billion in investments in Quebec.

The more we diversify our economy, the better it is for Canadians and Quebecers. I would like to ask my colleague across the way if he is going to join us in the push to diversify Canada's economy.

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, I will respond in a very practical manner because my actions, our actions, speak for themselves. We have always supported this. We have always been in favour of it.

That said, a trade agreement is not a religion. When there is something in an agreement that is not good, then of course, we have a right to reject it.

We support the principle, which is even part of the legacy of the sovereigntist movement in Quebec. Jacques Parizeau and Bernard Landry are the ones who convinced the Quebec public to get involved in foreign trade, first with the United States. We are certainly not against diversification.

However, what bothers me about this bill is the fact that it reactivates provisions that allow multinationals to undermine political decision-making, public policy and democratic decision-making. I will vote against those provisions, and I hope my colleague will do the same because we work together on the same committee.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton focused a lot on transparency in the process and on the fact that we need to have access to the text that we are voting on. We know that, most of the time, we end up debating texts that we do not even have yet. We cannot consult or amend them.

I would like my colleague to tell me whether he thinks it is right that we have to take a stand and accept things when we are not fully aware of the implications.

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, we are unable to change any agreement, although we may be able to understand its implications. That is the main problem, the issue. Treaties are quite lengthy. Last week, when we were debating Bill C-228, some members said that it would be hard work. Sorry, but that is our job.

International agreements may be complicated and complex, but they have a profound impact on the day-to-day lives of our constituents. I find it scandalous that we are voting on only a few sections of an implementation bill that is rarely more than 15 pages long, while agreements sometimes contain 1,500 pages and 5,000-page annexes. That is where the crux of the matter lies.

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At the very least, we should be consulted early on to establish mandates. We might be less particular when it comes time to study the final version if we had been consulted before the negotiators were sent out. Before they even get on a plane, we could tell them what we want and what we do not want.

• (1125)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member knows full well, from the debates last week on the Bloc's private member's bill, that we are talking about literally hundreds and hundreds of treaties of all sorts, sizes and forms.

It is just not feasible, let alone being able to use 300-plus members of Parliament, as a way to negotiate an agreement. Traditionally, it has worked exceptionally well for Canada.

As has been pointed out, the number one export to the U.K. is in fact gold. Quebec and Ontario are the biggest benefactors, because they produce the most gold. Virtually all provinces produce gold.

Recognizing this, would the member not see that as a very strong asset for the province of Quebec and indeed all of Canada?

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, I do not understand the question. I have already said that we are in favour of this trade relationship. We like doing business with the United Kingdom. It is our largest partner after the United States, even though it is very far behind and not comparable. We have a number of strong companies in the aerospace industry. It is in our best interest to do business with the U.K. We have no problem with that; the matter is settled. As I said, we will be voting in favour of the principle for that reason. We will then see whether the cons outweigh the pros, but we are in favour of the trade relationship.

Five years ago, I rose right here to speak in favour of the temporary agreement with the U.K. I have no issue with that. I cannot be any clearer. That is not a hypothetical. Now, as far as treaties are concerned, the bill has a definition for major treaties. I sit on the Standing Committee on International Trade. My colleague does not, because that would mean he would be in the House less often.

I was elected in 2019, six years ago. I am trying not to forget any of the agreements that the Standing Committee on International Trade has studied. We studied the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, the agreement with the U.K. and the agreement with Ukraine. We did a study on a hypothetical agreement with Ecuador, but that is not an agreement that we have before us. Maybe I am forgetting some, but I count three. We are nowhere near the thousands. We have studied three agreements in six years, so it is not that bad to demand a little transparency and some serious work.

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to come back to Bill C-228. I would like my colleague to comment on something that is unique to Canada, which is likely one of the least democratic places when it comes to international treaties.

Quebec has set up a mechanism for examining international treaties in its National Assembly. Canada has been slow to do the

same. What we are doing today is simply ratifying the agreement. As my former leader used to say, we are like voting fodder. We cannot necessarily take a position on this.

I would like to hear my colleagues' thoughts on the undemocratic nature of the Canadian system.

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, we live in a monarchy, so that comes with certain stipulations. I think that there is no better example of this than what happened in late 2020, when the committee had to study an agreement with the United Kingdom without having received the text of that agreement. I remember it well. We heard from witnesses, representatives from businesses, organizations and institutes, who were talking about what they recommended or did not recommend, what they would like to see more of and what they hoped to get. At one point, I raised my hand and asked them whether they had seen the agreement, because I had not. I told them that it seemed as though they were basing their comments on something they had seen, whereas I had not seen anything. They all told me that, no, they had not seen the agreement.

I think nothing illustrates the fact that we are in a Parliament with rather serious shortcomings more than when we see that we have policies but no firm law requiring a deadline, and that those policies are not being respected, as we see today with 15 days instead of 21 days. It is all well and good for the government to mention on the website that there is a treaty policy. It is all very well for the Liberals to puff out their chests and say that we have been democratic since 2008. The fact remains that we are never consulted beforehand. There is never any debate beforehand. We have also noticed that, instead of adopting agreements, we adopt bills that are only a few pages long. We cannot really change or amend anything. When we look at the history of Canada, we see that, initially, there were a few monitoring mechanisms and annual reporting obligations, but little by little they have all been abandoned over time. I think we simply have a parliamentary monarchy that is heavy on monarchy and light on parliament.

• (1130)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am glad the Bloc will be supporting the legislation. That is a very strong and encouraging sign. When I was a provincial MLA, provinces often signed off on MOUs, memorandums of understand. Many of them were of an economic nature.

Would the member apply the same principles, for example, to the province of Quebec? Should Quebec not sign off on something until it is thoroughly debated and discussed inside the provincial legislature by all political entities?

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[Translation]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Speaker, there is so much I would have liked to say about that because, for starters, there is the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine. There are procedures in place for a high level of transparency regarding Quebec's National Assembly. That said, to take things a step further, I think we need a law that provides a place at the negotiating table for Quebec and any provinces that want it, at least with respect to sectors that directly affect a given province.

There has been only one instance of such a thing occurring, and it was during the negotiations with the European Union. It was not Canada that wanted it. It was because the European Union demanded that its countries ratify the agreement one by one and wanted the provinces interested in being part of it to be part of it—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I have to interrupt the hon. member. His time is up.

The hon. member for Mississauga East—Cooksville.

[English]

Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today I rise to support this legislation, which would welcome the United Kingdom into the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or, as we know it, the CPTPP. This debate gives us a chance to reflect on what trade really means to communities across Canada.

Today, I want to focus on my community of Mississauga, a city that I am proud to represent in this chamber and in government. It is a shining example of Canada's diversity, innovation and economic vitality.

Mississauga is home to a tremendous business community, from manufacturers and tech start-ups to food processors and service providers. Many of these businesses have built their success on serving local and regional markets, but increasingly, they are looking beyond our borders, recognizing that to be able to grow, they need to reach customers around the world.

Some businesses have already taken that leap. They are exporting goods and services across continents, tapping into new markets and growing their footprint. These success stories are so inspiring, and I have met many of these business owners. They show what is possible with the right products, the right team and the right opportunities.

However, I know there are many businesses in Mississauga that have not exported yet. They may have thought about and considered it but perhaps are hesitant. I can understand that exporting can be a very big step for a business.

I failed to mention that I will be sharing my time with the member for Cape Spear, whose comments we will welcome on this legislation.

With regard to exporting, what businesses have to think about involves the risk of exporting, uncertainty, questions about tariffs, regulations, language barriers, cultural differences, shipping logistics, payment terms and more. For small and medium-sized businesses, especially those operated primarily in local markets, the

idea of exporting can feel overwhelming, but it does not have to be this way. Our government is here to help and to be in their corner.

This is where Canada's trade diversification strategy truly shines, not only through agreements like the CPTPP, but through the strong network of trade commissioners across the country and around the world who work tirelessly to support Canadian businesses. Trade commissioners are on the ground in these key markets around the world. They provide personalized advice, market intelligence and connections. They help businesses understand how to use trade agreements to their advantage, to identify potential customers and to navigate through regulatory requirements. They open doors that previously seemed shut.

For example, a manufacturing firm in Mississauga that produces packaging solutions has probably never thought about selling to Japan or Vietnam, which may need their products and services, but a trade commissioner could introduce it to these potential partners, explain how tariff reductions under the CPTPP would improve their competitiveness and assist with market-entry strategies. That personalized boots-on-the-ground support reduces risk and gives entrepreneurs the confidence they need to take the leap into exporting.

Trade agreements like the CPTPP play a vital role. By reducing or eliminating tariffs on a wide range of goods and services across the 11 countries that are part of the CPTPP, covering nearly 500 million consumers with a combined GDP of more than \$13 trillion, the CPTPP creates a more level playing field for Canadian businesses and gives them more certainty. This means products manufactured in Mississauga, whether in advanced machinery, food production or software services, become more affordable and attractive to buyers in these countries. It also means Canadian companies benefit from common standards on labour, the environment and intellectual property protection, which help ensure fair competition.

● (1135)

Trade diversification is essential for businesses in Mississauga and across our great country of Canada. The global economy is complex; it is ever-changing. Relying too heavily on a single market can leave companies and entire communities vulnerable to shocks, which we have seen in recent times.

We have seen this during recent disruptions, whether from the COVID-19 pandemic, trade disputes or geopolitical tensions. By diversifying their markets, companies can spread the risk, tap into new demand and increase their resilience. That is why the national goal of doubling Canada's non-U.S. exports over the next decade matters so much to Mississauga and Canada. It is not just a number; it is a target that represents real opportunities for our businesses, workers and local economies. For my city and our country, it means more manufacturers exporting advanced products, more tech start-ups breaking into global markets and more service providers creating high-quality jobs that benefit families right here at home.

This is especially important for small and medium-sized businesses, which make up the backbone of Mississauga's economy. I was delighted to have the Mississauga Board of Trade appear as a witness at the trade committee here in Ottawa, and it explained how important diversification is for small and medium-sized enterprises in Mississauga. These companies often do not have the resources to absorb big shocks or to easily pivot without support. Trade agreements combined with government services can help level the playing field to ensure these businesses can fully participate and chart their paths to growth.

It is not just the exporters that benefit. The jobs created by increased exports ripple through the economy, from manufacturing floors to supply chains to marketing teams, with all of them working together. When these businesses grow, they hire more people, invest in innovation and contribute to a more vibrant local economy. This also helps with something we have been challenged with for a long time, which is our productivity. These companies become much more productive when they invest themselves in looking at new markets and staying as competitive as they possibly can be.

Mississauga's diversity is a major strength. Our city is home to people from all over the world, many with deep knowledge of languages, cultures and business practices in the countries where the CPTPP operates. This gives our businesses a unique advantage, one that can be leveraged with the right tools and supports.

I will now go to the United Kingdom. Welcoming the U.K. into the CPTPP adds an important new dimension to Canada's trade diversification strategy. The U.K. is a major economy with long-standing ties to Canada. Its accession expands the agreement's reach and opens new opportunities for Canadian businesses, including those in Mississauga.

U.K. inclusion also sends a strong message to the world that the CPTPP is a high-standard, inclusive trade pact that continues to grow. This stability and scale give exporters greater confidence and make it easier for them to engage in international markets.

Supporting this legislation means supporting businesses in Mississauga that are ready to grow, want to take the next step and need the right tools to make it happen. It means backing the government's efforts to build a trade ecosystem, agreements, services and infrastructure that help Canadian entrepreneurs reduce risk and seize these opportunities. It means investing in communities and workers by creating the conditions for sustainable economic growth.

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Mississauga's story is Canada's story. It is a story of innovation, diversity, resilience and ambition. The CPTPP and U.K. accession are critical parts of that story. Let us give our businesses the tools they need to write their next chapter, from the main street to the global stage.

We have set the goal of increasing our international trade beyond the United States by over 50% over the next decade. That would be from \$300 billion, where we are today with exports, to \$600 billion for Canada. What does that mean? It means jobs in our communities. It means a stronger Canada, a Canada strong.

● (1140)

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, when we make trade negotiations or trade deals, it is an opportunity to actually make a deal. I am wondering what we got in return for signing on to this U.K. deal and allowing them into the CPTPP. I am thinking particularly of our beef and pork industries for cattle and hogs. Did we get any concessions? There are trade barriers there right now. Did those trade barriers get eliminated?

Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, I will speak to this trade agreement with the U.K.'s accession into the CPTPP. We have other agreements, be it with CETA or agreements with other countries around the world. Canada is a trading nation.

Those agreements allow for open dialogue. I understand the concerns of the beef producers, but having open dialogue with the U.K. allows us to put our story forward, to make ground, to be able to open up markets.

It is very important that we continue to keep those communication channels open. By having an agreement like this, those communication channels continue to stay open so that we can continue to make our case for our great beef producers here in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I understand what my colleague means when he talks about open dialogue to develop new markets, but the big problem is that Canada is one of the countries with the poorest democratic framework for studying this type of treaty, as our Bill C-228 clearly demonstrates.

I have a very simple question for my colleague. Does he think it is appropriate that this legislative body is hardly consulted when trade agreements are being drafted and negotiated?

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• (1145)

[English]

Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, it is imperative that government, when it is doing a trade deal, reach out to a vast array of stakeholders. That is all levels of government and stakeholders in every sector. That is what has happened with the CPTPP, as well as with the accession of the U.K. into the CPTPP: reaching out to those stakeholders. That has happened. The vast majority of those stakeholders are in favour of our moving forward.

I sit on the international trade committee. It is a privilege here in this House. At that trade committee, there is an opportunity to debate, to go through the bill, to look at parts of the bill and to really dissect any issues within the bill in which we think there could be improvements.

We have a robust model here in Canada to be able to bring these trade agreements to our country and to help with our trade. We are a trading nation. While 2.5% of the world's trade is done by Canada, we make up only 0.5% of the world's population.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the member could reflect back on this, in the last federal election, the Prime Minister made a commitment to Canadians to look at ways in which we can expand trading opportunities that go beyond the United States. This is a good example of the commitment that the Prime Minister made to Canadians.

I am wondering if he can provide his thoughts on that.

Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is quite right. As soon as that election was over and we won it, the Prime Minister made sure to visit our greatest trading partners, one being the U.K. It is our number three trading partner.

We have increased trade with the U.K. From 2016, it has gone up almost 53%. We want to continue on that track and to continue to increase that trade. The way to do that is for our Prime Minister and our government to reach out to other like-minded countries to be able to open those doors and open trade because it is good for our—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): There is time for one last question.

The hon. member for Huron—Bruce.

Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Madam Speaker, one comment the member made defies logic. It is not in the fact that open dialogue is not bad. It is good; I agree with that part. However, CETA has been around a long time. Mary Ng was negotiating the Canada-U.K. trade agreement, but it broke down on one of the things around some of the trade irritants we have with the U.K. Now we are looking at CPTPP and more access. There will be more access, certainly for dairy and other things.

Does the member agree that the time for talk is over, and it is time for the U.K. to live up to its end of the deal?

Peter Fonseca: Madam Speaker, I will say that there is always time for talk and keeping up those communication channels, keeping them open. It may be through a different forum, but there is always an opportunity to see movement when there is dialogue.

When there is no dialogue is when things break down. We want to make sure that those channels are always open.

Tom Osborne (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for the accession of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the CPTPP, to include the United Kingdom. This is not a matter of just adjusting a trade framework or fine-tuning an international treaty; this is a decision with direct impacts on the people, businesses and communities of Canada, particularly in my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador. In supporting this agreement, I want to highlight what it truly means for my province, in particular the seafood sector, which forms the backbone of many coastal communities, the economy in those communities and our crucial identity.

Newfoundland and Labrador has long drawn its strength economically, culturally and historically from the sea. Our relationship with the ocean is not just transactional, but foundational. For generations, our fishers, processors and exporters have built a reputation of delivering world-class seafood, from crab and shrimp to halibut and beyond, harvested from the cold, clean waters of the North Atlantic. These products are not just goods on a ledger; they represent the life work of thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. They support families, drive small business and sustain coastal communities that rely on fishing-related activities to survive and thrive.

In 2024, Newfoundland and Labrador was Canada's third-largest fish and seafood-exporting province, with exports valued at \$1.4 billion, representing 117,000 tonnes of high-quality seafood. This is why trade agreements like the CPTPP and strategic decisions like the U.K.'s accession matter so deeply to my province.

Let us talk about what the agreement does in practical, tangible terms for seafood producers and the sector in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Under the agreement, tariffs on key seafood exports are either immediately eliminated or significantly reduced. These tariff changes are not small adjustments, but real competitive gains for our producers. They translate to lower costs, better margins and stronger competitiveness. They help our businesses grow, hire and reinvest. They ensure that our seafood products can enter high-demand markets on an equal footing with global competitors. This is critical, because over 80% of Newfoundland and Labrador's seafood production is destined for export.

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Our economy depends on access to reliable, fair and open markets. This speaks directly to our government's broader commitment to expand and diversify Canada's trade footprint. The Prime Minister has made clear that our future prosperity depends on looking beyond traditional markets, and Canada must work to double our non-U.S. exports over the next decade. For our province, this means ensuring that products like crab, shrimp and halibut have a clear path to new consumers across Asia and Europe.

The CPTPP is not an abstract policy or an academic exercise. For the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, it is a concrete, actionable opportunity to support sustainable industries, protect jobs and build long-term prosperity. In today's uncertain global environment, our exporters and fishers need more predictable trade conditions. This agreement provides that. It offers a rules-based system, with care obligations and fewer surprises when it comes to tariffs, regulations and market access. By operating under this agreement, our seafood exporters face less risk and enjoy greater certainty, allowing them to make better investment decisions, plan ahead and become more deeply integrated into a global supply chain.

• (1150)

This is about more than balance sheets. It is about the future and the future prosperity of coastal communities in my province: sustainability, the stability of small business owners and the well-being of workers and families whose livelihood depends on the sea.

I will turn to why the United Kingdom's accession into this agreement makes this already valuable agreement even stronger for Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as for Canada. The U.K. is not a stranger to us. It is a country with which we share deep historical, cultural and economic ties. Many of our exporters already have long-standing relationships with the U.K. Formalizing the U.K.'s place in this agreement would offer us three major strategic advantages.

The first advantage is expanded market access and opportunity. With the U.K. becoming part of this agreement, businesses from the U.K. would now operate under the same high-standard trade rules as their Asia-Pacific counterparts. This means that Canadian exporters, including those in Newfoundland and Labrador, would gain dual access. On one side, we have Asia-Pacific markets, such as Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam and Australia; on the other side, we have enhanced access to a major European economy that links directly into the broader global economy. This dual market strategy increases opportunity while decreasing dependency on any single trade corridor.

The second advantage is strengthening the rules-based system. The inclusion of the U.K. boosts the prestige, credibility and reach of this agreement. When major economies commit to a high-standard agreement, it strengthens the foundation on which all member countries operate. This is especially important for my province and the seafood exporters who rely on transparent, consistent and fair trade rules, not just to compete but to flourish in a market in which sudden tariff shifts or other barriers can have impacts. With the U.K. involved, we would not just expand the agreement's scope; we would reinforce its core values of sustainability, fairness and openness.

The third major advantage is diversification of export risk. Our province is already heavily dependent on export markets, but concentration brings risk. If we rely too much on just one or two regions, any disruption can have outsized effects on our businesses and workers. The U.K.'s participation offers the enhancement of a critical pathway to spread and manage that risk. It would provide an improved channel to markets. It would reduce our vulnerability and open new doors for collaboration, investment and expansion. To put it in practical terms, for a Newfoundland crab or shrimp processor who already sells to the U.S. and Japan, with the U.K. now part of this agreement, the same business would gain another avenue to the U.K. market along with our bilateral trade continuity agreement and potentially, through the U.K., supply chains to even more markets. This is a strategic advantage, one that would strengthen our seafood industry for the long term.

This approach is exactly in line with the Prime Minister's vision for a more resilient and outward-looking Canadian economy. By pursuing new partnerships and deepening existing ones, our government is laying the groundwork for a trade future that is more secure, more sustainable and more diverse than ever before. The U.K.'s accession to this agreement would be a strategic move for the next generation of Canadian trade. It would demonstrate that Canada is serious about building resilient, high-standard and inclusive trade networks to build Canada strong.

• (1155)

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his interpretation of the bill.

The previous speaker, the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville, mentioned that there is ongoing dialogue about the issue of our farmers' not being able to participate fully with their cattle and hogs, their beef and pork. He said that there had not been any concessions in allowing the U.K. to be part of the CPTPP and that there would be ongoing discussions.

Once the ink is dry, is it not too late to make a deal? Should the deal not have been made before signing it?

Tom Osborne: Madam Speaker, there is ongoing discussion not only in terms of the U.K. but also in terms of Asian markets, Indonesian markets and Mexican markets. There is ongoing discussion because the Prime Minister is committed to doubling the amount of export outside the U.S. and into other areas of the globe. This is important for Canadian companies, for Canadian producers, for Canadian workers and for Canada's economy.

I have great confidence in the Prime Minister and the ongoing dialogue with many countries around the world that will build Canada strong.

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• (1200)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, throughout the debate, many Liberal members have been talking about market diversification. I understand that this is essential, but right now, the forestry sector is experiencing an unprecedented crisis. Without swift government action, market diversification will simply not exist because there will be no players left in the forestry industry.

I would like my colleague to talk about what his government plans to do for the forestry industry in the short term. Is he aware that this sector is going through an unprecedented situation, which could wipe out many forestry companies in the coming months or even weeks?

[*English*]

Tom Osborne: Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister, government and cabinet will be doing is building 500,000 homes across Canada, which will improve the efforts of our forestry sector and softwood lumber providers. We are building trade corridors with many other countries, which will include our softwood lumber and forestry sectors. We are working to improve Canada's economy and Canada's trade corridors so that we are less reliant on the United States.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the member's comments in regard to the importance of world trade.

We have a prime minister who made a commitment to expand beyond the American border, and we have seen an extraordinary amount of effort made by the Prime Minister and the Liberal caucus to move towards this. We have heard about discussions with India, which is a quickly growing economic superpower. More recently, the Prime Minister was talking about having a potential trade agreement with the Philippines in 2026, and we are debating this today about the U.K. These are important trade opportunities that enhance Canada's ability to grow its economy and provide jobs into the future.

I am wondering if he can provide his thoughts as to why we need to continue to push the trade file, because it is in the best interest of all Canadians.

Tom Osborne: Mr. Speaker, it is important. The Prime Minister's legacy will be building a stronger economy, one of the strongest in the G7. His goal is for us to have the strongest economy in the G7.

This means becoming less reliant on the United States and building trade corridors with other countries. It means using our own materials within our country, such as building 500,000 homes for Canadians while using the materials within Canada and our own labour sources to build Canada strong.

David McKenzie (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House today on behalf of the citizens of Calgary Signal Hill.

I wish to advise the Chair that I will be splitting my time with the member for Beauce.

A Canada-U.K. trade agreement is, on the whole, a good thing. It goes without saying that the relationship between Canada and the U.K. is long in duration and extensive in nature. Our cultural ties are great, and strengthening these ties is fundamentally a good thing. We are two countries joined by a shared history and deep links. Our institutions, traditions, Parliament and legal system have all been inherited from Great Britain. We are united by our constitutional monarchy.

I will note that it was my honour to shake hands with His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen when they were here in Ottawa on the occasion of the opening of Parliament in May of this year. It was a great honour for our country.

We are united through the Commonwealth of Nations, an institution that provides common ground for positive relationships among diverse nations in different areas of the world.

I say all of this to underline the fact that Conservatives favour, in general, closer and freer trade with the United Kingdom. This is a standing position of the Conservative Party. The issue with this bill is not the concept of closer trade ties with our old friends across the pond. The issue is that, in this bill, there is nothing being returned to Canada. There is nothing for Canadian farmers, families and small, independent business people making their living on the land by feeding Canadians and people around the world.

Also, farmers have not been treated fairly by the U.K. government under the auspices of the current trade continuity agreement. Under that agreement, the TCA, the U.K. government has not been acting in good faith toward Canadian producers. It is the sad truth that British authorities have imposed non-tariff barriers on our pork and cattle exports that are neither fair nor science-based.

Conservatives have reservations about this bill precisely for these reasons. We expect that supporting the accession of the United Kingdom to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership will result in the normalization of the trade irritants that currently exist with our close friends and allies in the U.K.

Let us be clear about what is at stake. The U.K. refuses to approve the carcass wash that is standard practice in Canadian slaughter plants, a measure approved by the World Health Organization and used safely around the world. The U.K. also continues to block Canadian beef and pork produced with growth promotants, again without credible scientific evidence to justify its actions. These objections have evolved over time not to protect consumers but to keep Canadian products out of the U.K. market. That is not how allies or fair traders should behave.

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The story does not end at the technicalities. Canadian ranchers and producers say that this is a pattern of exclusion. According to the Canadian Cattle Association, exports of Canadian beef to the U.K. have been effectively zero over the last two years while British exports to Canada have sharply increased. Tyler Fulton, the President of the Canadian Cattle Association, said, “The U.K. has not made any effort to address the non-tariff barriers that are keeping Canadian beef out of the U.K. market”.

Let us be clear about the scale of the imbalance. According to the Library of Parliament, Britain exported 16.6 million dollars' worth of beef to Canada in 2023, 42.4 million dollars' worth in 2024 and 28.3 million dollars' worth in the first half of 2025. I note the increase. Meanwhile, Canada exported 85,000 dollars' worth of beef to the U.K. in 2023, 25,000 dollars' worth in 2024 and has had no beef exports in 2025. Again, according to the Library of Parliament, Britain exported 5.6 million dollars' worth of pork products to Canada in 2023, 9.1 million dollars' worth of pork products in 2024 and 3.6 million dollars' worth in the first half of 2025. Meanwhile, Canada exported no pork to the U.K. in 2023, 75,000 dollars' worth of pork products in 2024 and 122,000 dollars' worth in 2025 so far.

● (1205)

These figures illustrate one-way trade. That is not free trade or fair trade. We believe in free trade at a time when it is increasingly under attack around the world. We also believe in fair trade, which means reciprocity. It means that when one side enjoys access to our market, our producers deserve the same in return. It means standing up for our farmers, our ranchers and our rural communities, which have been unfairly harmed by the U.K.'s actions under the TCA.

What we do not have at this point in time, as the Liberal government seeks to have the House support Bill C-13, is fairness for farmers. I note that this situation exists while the Liberal government is led by a former U.K. central banker and at a time when that same former U.K. central banker has made several visits to the current U.K. Prime Minister. They certainly appear to be quite friendly. Was there really no time between the Earl Grey tea and the cucumber sandwiches for Canada's Prime Minister to speak up for Canadian farmers or beef and pork producers in this country?

I would be remiss if I did not weigh in on a concern that has already been expressed in the House today and, according to other members, for months and years without resolution under the Liberal government: the more than 100,000 U.K. pensioners living here in Canada. These are retirees who worked in the U.K. and retired in Canada. They do not receive cost of living increases to their U.K. pensions, or simple indexing, something that U.K. pensioners in other countries, such as the United States, do receive.

These pensioners have been very vocal about their unfair treatment, and they are right. I have spoken to U.K. pensioners in my riding who are facing this unfairness. It is a shame that the U.K. government has not done more to help these folks and correct this imbalance. I think the Liberal government should have tried to secure some fairness for them. If there ever was a moment to use the Prime Minister's close relationship to fight for Canadian interests, especially in a cost of living and inflation crisis, it is now. Once again, the government is asleep at the wheel.

This points to a larger concern Canadians have about the government: Nothing gets done. The trade irritants I described should have been resolved years ago, but the unfair non-tariff barriers on Canadian beef and pork remain exactly where they are. If there is anyone who thinks that it is going to be easier to resolve those trade problems under the CPTPP, they are mistaken.

This points to a larger concern that Canadians have about the government. The question is this: If the Liberal government cannot secure a fair deal with our oldest ally under the most favourable circumstances possible, how on earth can Canadians trust the Liberals to negotiate effectively with the United States? How can we expect the Liberals to deliver results on lumber, autos and steel, or to strike a fair agreement with India, a country with which they were practically at war earlier this very year? I sincerely hope I am wrong for the sake of Canadians, but what we are seeing in the agreement and the bill does not give me much confidence. These overall circumstances are not a good model for going forward.

We will hear talk from the Liberals about trade diversification. I was a foreign service officer for a number of years in some past part of my life, and I remember that, more than twenty-five years ago, under another Liberal government at the time, the slogan of the day was “trade diversification”. Nothing happened then, and I am terribly concerned that we will see the same lack of results now.

At the end of the day, this is not just about tariffs or technical trade barriers. It is about trust between allies, trust between governments and trust between Parliament and the Canadians we serve. Our farmers and ranchers did not ask for special treatment. They only ask for a level playing field, science-based standards and fair market access. They do not have that right now, and this should make every member of the House deeply concerned.

The Liberal government has failed to deliver. It has failed to secure meaningful progress for Canadian agriculture under the TCA. It has failed to stand up for U.K. pensioners, who have been waiting decades for fairness. It is now prepared to wave through Britain's accession to the CPTPP without demanding a single concession in return. That is not leadership. That is managed decline. It is weakness disguised as diplomacy.

● (1210)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, the member is wrong; it is as simple as that. Obviously the understanding of trade and trade opportunities, and the concept of agreements, seems to be foreign to the Conservative Party.

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We have a Prime Minister who, coming out of the last federal election just six months ago, was first building internal trade within Canada, meeting with the premiers, bringing in legislation and ultimately passing legislation to build a one Canadian economy. He then reached out and went to numerous countries around the world, from his talking last week about Asia and expanding trade opportunities, to being able to bring forward the bill that we have before us today, or to the connections that he has in the European Union.

I would suggest to the member that the Prime Minister is second to no other prime minister in virtually the last number of generations, 50 or 60 years. I would compare and contrast him to the leader of the Conservative Party any day.

David McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I am terribly heartened to hear the comments of the member opposite, because clearly a single phone call will resolve the issues around the phytosanitary non-tariff trade barriers that are in place right now. I am so glad that soon the House will be able to report to Canadian beef and pork producers that the very close relationship my friend has just extolled will solve their problem with a single phone call.

It is the first time in generations that this opportunity come to us. What wonderful news that is. Perhaps the member opposite will tell us when that phone call will take place.

• (1215)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, all morning long, I have been hearing about market diversification. We know very well that market diversification is not something that can be hastily cobbled together. It will take several years to replace part of the U.S. market.

Right now, the forestry sector is experiencing an unprecedented crisis. Including the latest 10% increase threatened by Donald Trump, the forestry sector is facing 55% in countervailing duties and tariffs. No industry can survive with a deficit margin of 55%. Immediate federal government support is needed if we want the forestry sector to have any players left standing at the end of this crisis.

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

[*English*]

David McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, there is no question that diversification is a process that takes time. There is no question that the size and the immediacy of geographic access of the American market will not be readily replaced, which is why it is all the more important that we have some real leadership from the Liberal government. Promises do not put food on the table for Canadians.

We have to see some real progress. Our trade commissioner service, of which I was a part more than two decades ago, is a competent group of individuals who are there to support Canadian business in those ongoing efforts, but we have to get moving, and we have to get moving now.

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member for Calgary Signal Hill gave a great speech, and I thank him for his great understanding of trade deals and for the work he has done for our government in his previous work.

Our Prime Minister billed himself as a world-class deal maker, but he has not brought us a world-class deal yet. He had an opportunity to get some simple concessions out of the U.K. as far as allowing our pork and beef industries to access the markets, but he failed to do it. In fact the Liberals are suggesting that the ongoing discussions will create some kind of deal, and then we will continue to talk this thing through. Well, talk is cheap, and deals are made before the ink is on the paper; that did not happen. I think our Prime Minister will go down as a global concession maker instead of a deal maker.

In light of that, does the member have any confidence that our Prime Minister will get us a favourable deal with the Americans when CUSMA is up for renewal?

David McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, I share a great concern with the member about the future of the negotiations that are going to take place between Canada and the United States. It is a difficult position to be in, and that is without question, but clearly we have to have firmness and strength; that is something all trading partners understand. Unfortunately, in waving through and taking this approach to Bill C-13, approving the U.K. accession without any reciprocal concessions or rebalancing of the trade relationship with the U.K., we would be setting a terrible precedent.

[*Translation*]

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise as the member for Beauce to speak to Bill C-13 on the accession of the United Kingdom to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or CPTPP.

In essence, this bill is about trade. Trade is at the very soul of Canada and the Beauce region. We have always been and will always be a region and a country of entrepreneurs.

Common-sense Conservatives have always supported free trade. We know that when Canadian workers, farmers and producers can compete on equal terms, they can rival anyone in the world. We also know that free trade has to be fair. It is a two-way street.

Unfortunately, under this Liberal government, our trade relations have not been fair, especially for our farmers and Canadian businesses. Just look at the fiasco, the abject failure, of our current relationship with the United States.

Under the Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement, Canadian farmers have not been treated fairly by the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom continues to impose non-tariff barriers that are not based on scientific data and that in practice have closed their market to our pork and beef.

Beauce is a farming region. Canada's finest producers of beef and pork can be found right here, on our land and our neighbours' land.

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The United Kingdom has long locked these products out of its market, without the government taking any action to rectify the situation. The United Kingdom refuses to recognize the use of carcass washing solutions in Canadian abattoirs, even though this practice is approved by international scientific authorities and has been used safely for decades. The United Kingdom's tactic is to impose non-tariff trade barriers, despite the use of these solutions being approved and strictly regulated by Health Canada and by the World Organisation for Animal Health.

These objections have nothing to do with food security and have no basis in science. They are all about protectionism pure and simple. Again, these are non-tariff trade barriers designed not to protect consumers, but to keep Canadian products off British shelves. In this case, the potential pork exports being blocked by these non-tariff barriers amount to some \$500 million.

The consequences for our pork and beef producers are devastating. I would like to quote some figures from the Library of Parliament. In 2003, U.K. beef exports to Canada totalled \$16.6 million. This figure rose to \$42 million in 2024 and reached \$28 million in the first half of 2025 alone. In contrast, Canadian beef exports to the United Kingdom totalled \$85,000 in 2023 and just \$25,000 in 2024. So far in 2025, Canada has not exported any beef to the U.K.

It is the same story with pork. U.K. pork exports to Canada totalled \$5.6 billion in 2023, \$9.1 billion in 2024, and \$3.6 million in the first half of 2025. In contrast, Canada did not export any pork to the U.K. in 2023. Our pork exports totalled \$75,000 in 2024 and dropped to a paltry level in 2025. This is not fair trade. It is one-way trade. The Liberal government is still allowing it to happen.

The Liberal government has had 10 years to redress that imbalance, 10 years to defend our farmers and secure a real British market for our premium beef and pork, but it has not done so. There is no progress, no forceful advocacy, no tangible victory for our producers.

Meanwhile, our farmers in regions like Beauce are struggling to remain competitive. Our beef and pork producers raise the finest-quality livestock that is renowned around the world. They are proud, and they deserve a government that is equally proud to fight for them.

● (1220)

These sectors are a vital part of Beauce's economy. They create good jobs, support our local businesses, keep our villages alive, and put food on the table for our families. Unjust market barriers are not just numbers on a chart. Unfortunately, there are farming families, rural communities and livelihoods at stake.

Speaking of agriculture, I would like to underscore another fundamental issue: the protection of supply management. Beauce has many dairy and agricultural farms. Hard-working men and women have built their businesses thanks to the Canadian supply management system and their own tireless efforts. The system safeguards the stability, quality and security of Canada's food supply. Conservatives will continue to defend it vigorously. Making trade fair and a two-way street also means defending our supply-managed sectors and not sacrificing them for political trade-offs on the global stage.

When Canada is negotiating a trade agreement, it must ensure that our dairy, poultry and egg farmers are fully protected. Let us take the example of a supply-managed product such as cheese. At the grocery store, Canadian customers will see a wide range of European cheeses on the shelves. I challenge my colleagues to go to the U.K. and look for Canadian cheeses on supermarket shelves there. They will not find any. Our farmers are not bargaining chips.

Now, after years of inaction, the Liberal government is asking the House to approve the accession of the United Kingdom to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or CPTPP, via Bill C-13. This is one of the largest multilateral trade agreements in the world. Conservatives are in favour of expanding markets for Canadian products. We recognize the value of a trade system based on clear rules. However, we cannot ignore the facts and allow the U.K. to join without getting something in return for Canadian producers. As I said, it has to be a two-way street.

This is not a negotiating strategy, it is weakness. In order for us to give our approval, the government will need to assure us that it will have the courage to stand up to the British government. If the U.K. wants to reap the benefits of Bill C-13, then Canada must demand fair access based on science for products such as our beef and pork. We must demand reciprocity.

Given the close ties between the Prime Minister of Canada and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, this should have been a perfect opportunity to stand up for our producers. However, once again, the Liberal government has failed. It had leverage, it had opportunity, but it decided to give the U.K. the advantage without getting anything in return.

Common-sense Conservatives believe in trade that works for Canadians. We believe in trade that opens doors, not trade that ties our hands. We are in favour of expanding markets for Canadian products, but we will not give the government a free pass. We are going to scrutinize this bill carefully and call out every failure to get a win for our country, our farmers and our families.

Trade agreements have to produce concrete results for the people who feed Canadians, not just for the bureaucrats in Ottawa or the diplomats in London.

In closing, farmers in Beauce and all over rural Canada get up early in the morning to feed our families and our children. They are not asking us for special treatment. They are simply asking for fairness, transparency and a government that stands up for them. Bill C-13 could have been an opportunity to do just that and make fair trade a reality, not a slogan.

Common-sense Conservatives will continue to support opening new markets for Canada. We will also continue to hold the government to account for its failures. Our farmers and producers deserve much better.

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• (1225)

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I salute my hon. colleague, a fellow member of the Standing Committee on International Trade. The member's part of the country is indeed beautiful. I must say that the Lower Laurentians are also a very beautiful part of the country.

During the debate on the original version of this agreement, the Conservatives voted unanimously in favour of it. Now we are bringing in the United Kingdom as our first new member. Does the member agree that adding a G7 partner will strengthen this trade agreement?

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, I agree that the Lower Laurentians is a very beautiful region. It is not quite as beautiful as Beauce, but it is great. My colleague and I serve on the same committee, and we want agreements to be signed with other countries.

I do think that is an excellent idea. However, when Canada signs an agreement, it has to be win-win. We are already working on a file with the United Kingdom, CETA, where non-tariff barriers are hurting our farmers. There are plenty of existing agreements that need to be improved before we start signing and approving agreements with other countries.

• (1230)

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there are pork producers in my riding too, and we are following their situation very closely. The riding of Shefford includes a number of supply-managed sectors. I also come from a rural area that needs additional protections. It is true that we voted on a bill in the House to ensure that supply management is fully protected.

Bill C-228, which was introduced by the Bloc Québécois, seeks to establish a framework for thoroughly reviewing international agreements to ensure that, in future negotiations, there are no concessions, particularly when it comes to supply management. Is it not essential for Parliament to be able to monitor the progress of these international agreements, while fully respecting the democratic process?

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my esteemed colleague from Shefford. Her riding is also located in a very beautiful region of Quebec.

Today, we are talking about accession with Bill C-13. It is common knowledge that the Conservative Party is a strong advocate for supply management, since it is very important.

I would like to reassure my colleague. At the Standing Committee on International Trade, we are closely monitoring the negotiation of trade agreements, and we will be there to negotiate the best possible agreement for Canada, for Quebec and for regions like her riding.

[*English*]

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems the Liberals want to pat themselves on the back. It has been four years since the trade continuity agreement with the United Kingdom came into force, and they did nothing with it. In fact, they walked away from those negotiations, but they seem to want the credit for the U.K. doing its work to get itself into the CPTPP.

Should we not at least get something from the United Kingdom for our support for its accession to this agreement? Does my colleague see anything in this agreement that the government has negotiated for?

[*Translation*]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my esteemed colleague for his very relevant question. When something is given, something has to be received in return. That is the basis of any agreement, regardless of the field. I have been here for seven months, and I see that the government is only giving.

Take, for example, the tariffs imposed by the Americans. Their tariffs are crushing us from all sides. What do we get in return? The answer is absolutely nothing. In this agreement with the United Kingdom, what do we get in return? The answer is nothing. We need only think of the pork or cheese that we want to export.

That is an excellent question. If Canada gives something, then Canadians have to be able to get something in return.

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester.

It is with great pleasure that I rise today to highlight the strategic importance of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, CPTPP, to illustrate why its expansion, with the United Kingdom's accession, offers a historic opportunity for Canada, for Quebec, and most importantly, for the very beautiful Lower Laurentians region which I have the honour to represent.

This agreement is not just a trade document. It is the symbol of a vision of a Canada that assumes its full responsibilities on the international stage, a Canada that diversifies its markets, a Canada that exports its skills and values, and a Canada that is building for future prosperity in collaboration with strategic partners in the Indo-Pacific region.

The economic centre of gravity is moving towards Asia. Indo-Pacific countries now account for more than half of global economic growth. More than two billion new consumers will join the region's middle class over the next decade.

That is why the CPTPP is not an option. It is a necessity. It gives Canada preferential access to these growing markets and an opportunity to bring down tariff barriers that are hindering our businesses and to take an active part in defining the rules of international trade in the 21st century.

I also want to acknowledge the leadership of our Prime Minister, who is currently in Malaysia. I had the opportunity to visit Malaysia myself during a parliamentary mission in 2018. I was already a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade back then. The fact that Canada is there on the ground demonstrates our serious commitment to this strategic partnership.

One of the greatest privileges of serving on the Standing Committee on International Trade is the pleasure of meeting our partners over the years, listening to their priorities and getting a firsthand look at the opportunities available to our workers and businesses.

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In 2018, I took part in a diplomatic economic mission to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. I visited CAE, the same company that the Prime Minister just visited. CAE is a company that Quebec and Canada can be proud of. As a world leader in flight simulation technology, it exports not only products, but also know-how, engineering and intellectual property. These are not just jobs for today, but jobs for the future. My son Simon is a commercial pilot. He trains other pilots on CAE simulators in Saint-Hubert. I am proud of him.

During that mission, I also visited Singapore and Bangkok, Thailand. Those are vibrant, young and ambitious economic hubs. Their growth is meteoric. One thing I have found in many of these Commonwealth countries is that we are not talking about ambassadors; we are talking about high commissioners. The difference is symbolic. In the Commonwealth, we are not mere partners; we are members of the same family of nations. When I was there, a number of those high commissioners were women. That is a testament to the growing presence of women's leadership in international diplomacy, a crucial element that our government actively supports.

Let us talk specifically about what this agreement means for my region and for Quebec. Quebec's aerospace sector accounts for more than 43,000 direct jobs and more than \$20 billion in exports. Companies like Bombardier, Airbus and CAE are world leaders. Thanks to this agreement, they now have preferential access to fast-growing markets, without tariffs and with clear and stable rules.

In the Lower Laurentians, our manufacturing SMEs, our engineers, our skilled workers and our technology companies are turning more and more to exports. The United Kingdom's entry into the CPTPP strengthens those value chains. The United Kingdom is a natural partner for Canada, connected by history, by the Commonwealth and now by this trans-Pacific economic alliance.

This agreement enables us to diversify our markets beyond the United States and open doors for our businesses in agri-food, clean technology, engineering, digital technology and intellectual property—all areas where Quebec excels.

When we export software, an aircraft or a flight simulator, we are not exporting a simple product. We are exporting our knowledge, innovation and creativity.

• (1235)

Every time a company signs a contract in the Indo-Pacific, quality jobs are created and retained here at home in our communities, including in the Lower Laurentians.

If I speak with such conviction, it is because the benefits of the CPTPP directly affect the people, businesses and workers of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, the riding I have the honour of representing. Rivière-des-Mille-Îles is an innovative and industrial riding that is expanding. It is home to high-tech companies, high-performance small and medium-sized manufacturers, and strategic suppliers in the aerospace, smart mobility, clean energy and advanced engineering sectors. These are businesses that create value, intellectual property and skilled jobs every day for families in the region.

The CPTPP eliminated 99% of tariffs, which makes it easier for these businesses to export to strategic markets like Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and now the United Kingdom. In practical

terms, this means that there are fewer barriers, more opportunities and stronger supply chains.

These are not just abstract figures. These are local, well-paying jobs in emerging industries. In Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, we export not only products but also know-how, engineering and patents. The CPTPP transforms that potential into real opportunities for our people.

The region benefits from spin-offs from the aerospace sector, which represents more than \$22 billion in annual sales and 43,000 direct jobs, including at facilities operated by Airbus, Bombardier and CAE, which work with suppliers located in the Lower Laurentians.

When Canada signs an international trade agreement like the CPTPP, companies located in Rosemère, Saint-Eustache, Deux-Montagnes and Boisbriand, in my riding, benefit down the line. Our workers get contracts. Our young people find career opportunities here at home, without having to leave their region.

This agreement positions Rivière-des-Mille-Îles not on the sidelines of the global economy, but at the centre of an international network of innovation and trade that is clearing a path toward new investment, sustainable growth and the creation of high-quality jobs for families in our community.

To fully understand the strategic importance of this agreement, it is essential to look at the numbers. Today, the CPTPP represents an economic bloc of 580 million consumers, which is bigger than the European Union. All the member countries combined generate nearly 15% of global GDP, which puts Canada at the table with some of the world's most dynamic economies. Since it came into force, 99% of tariffs are expected to be eliminated.

I will share some figures. We are talking about 15% of global GDP, 580 million consumers, 99% of tariffs eliminated, \$18 billion in Quebec aerospace exports and hundreds of thousands of jobs supported across the country.

These are more than just statistics. They represent jobs for the middle class, investments in our regions, contracts for our SMEs and tangible benefits for families in the Lower Laurentians region and for the entire Quebec economy.

To wrap up, the CPTPP is more than a trade agreement. It is a strategy for long-term prosperity. It is the response of a confident, innovative and outward-looking Canada to the economic and geopolitical challenges of the 21st century. With this agreement, we are finding new markets, strengthening our supply chains, creating high-quality jobs and exporting our most precious resources: our knowledge, our technology and our vision.

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I am proud that Canada is showing leadership. I am proud that Quebec is playing a leadership role. I am especially proud that the Lower Laurentians region will be able to benefit from this outward-looking approach.

Canada's economic future depends on the Indo-Pacific, on innovation and on collaboration with our Commonwealth partners. This agreement puts us exactly where we need to be: at the table where the future of global trade is being decided.

• (1240)

[English]

Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am curious to know my colleague's perspective on what Canada should expect to receive by letting the U.K. in on this trade deal.

[Translation]

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased that we can bring the U.K. into this agreement. We are going to have Europe, the Americas and the Indo-Pacific. We will have trade corridors that we will leverage for our local businesses, which are based in Quebec, but also across Canada.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Jonquière introduced in the House Bill C-228 to ensure that all treaties are systematically tabled before the House of Commons, so that they can be debated and amended. This bill also includes a provision requiring a 21-day waiting period after a treaty is tabled before any action can be taken toward its ratification.

In relation to what we are discussing right now, the government has not complied with the 21-day deadline. The Liberals said that we do not need legislation because their policy already covers that. If we do not need legislation, then why are the Liberals not complying with their policy?

• (1245)

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, during the last election campaign, the Bloc Québécois promised to promote the diversification of our economy. I have no doubt that my Bloc colleagues understand that we are in a tough spot right now with what is happening south of the border. It is essential that we expand our markets and provide other opportunities.

Without getting too specific, we have committed to doubling our exports to countries other than the United States. We need to give our businesses the tools they need to fully harness everything that is available in terms of free trade agreements. I feel that the Bloc Québécois could ensure, in the meantime, that we are moving forward, that we can move on to something else and that we can open up even bigger markets.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I would like to amplify given the importance of trade is that Canada's trade in the world environment makes up about 2.5% of overall trade, yet the population base in Canada is 0.5% of the world's. To me, that speaks volumes to the importance of the trade issue to Canadians. It means jobs. It means the Canadian

lifestyle. We have a Prime Minister who is out and about securing trade opportunities and enhancing them for Canada to grow.

I wonder if the member can reflect on the last election and the commitment made by the Prime Minister to do exactly what we are doing today and have been working on for the last number of months.

[Translation]

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to be working with my colleague. He raises a very important point. Our population is pretty small, but we have such a big country and so much to offer that we need to find new markets and diversify. Opening up the trans-Pacific partnership to Great Britain means opening up new markets. We also have a free trade agreement with Europe, and with the Mercosur nations. We need to identify the opportunities afforded by these agreements and export.

Looking at the country as a whole, yes, we have cattle we can export. If we are talking about the Maritimes, we export seafood to Japan. We export to Asia, but that is not all. We also have canola. We need to make sure that we find new markets for what we currently have. Aerospace is a huge industry in the Lower Laurentians. These are high-quality jobs that have a huge economic impact.

[English]

Alana Hirtle (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of an important and timely step forward in our country's trade agenda. We are debating the United Kingdom's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or the CPTPP. As members of this esteemed House, we must reflect on the broader implications of this agreement, not just for the nation as a whole, but for the diverse industries, businesses and communities that form the backbone of our regions. In particular, I will speak to the potential impact on my own province of Nova Scotia.

The CPTPP, as many here are well aware, is one of the most significant trade agreements in the modern era. It brings together countries from across the Asia-Pacific region, encompassing nearly 13.5% of the global economy and giving access to a market of more than 500 million customers. Those numbers are more than statistics. They represent real opportunities for Canadian workers, exporters and entrepreneurs.

For Nova Scotia, this trade deal represents a tremendous opportunity to expand its economic footprint and open doors to new markets for its industries. I use the term "industries" deliberately, because we are not just talking about one sector or group of products; we are talking about a whole ecosystem of economic activity that stands to benefit. This includes everything from our renowned seafood industry, which is respected around the world, to our high-quality agricultural products, which reflect both tradition and innovation.

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Nova Scotia has long been a hub of agricultural excellence, and one of its rising stars is the blueberry industry, a sector that combines rural pride with global potential. Our province, and indeed my riding, is home to some of the most fertile and productive blueberry-growing regions of the world. From the rolling fields of Oxford, often referred to as the wild blueberry capital of Canada, to smaller family-owned farms, our growers have invested years of hard work, research and environmental stewardship into producing some of the best blueberries on the market.

These are not just berries; they are the result of generations of expertise, of innovation in sustainable farming and of partnerships between farmers, scientists and exporters. Now, thanks to the CPTPP, these blueberries are reaching new and lucrative markets across the Pacific Rim, particularly in countries like Japan, Malaysia and Vietnam, where there is already a high and growing demand for our products.

To put this into context, let us take Japan. Japan is not only one of the world's most sophisticated consumer markets; it is also a country where Canadian agricultural products, especially those from Atlantic Canada, are highly valued for their quality and safety. The CPTPP ensures that tariffs on frozen blueberries, which were once a barrier, are either significantly reduced or eliminated altogether. That means our farmers can sell more at better prices and remain competitive on the international stage.

This is precisely the kind of success story envisioned in the Prime Minister's commitment to doubling Canada's non-U.S. exports over the next decade. That vision is about creating more opportunity for every region and ensuring that Canada competes and succeeds in a world where new markets and new consumers are shaping the future of trade. Agreements like the CPTPP are key to achieving that vision, because they help diversify our trade beyond the United States, giving Canadian industries even more opportunity to shine globally.

Let us talk about some of the other benefits of this agreement.

Nova Scotia's seafood sector, for instance, is another major winner. Lobster, crab, scallops and other high-value seafood products are in growing demand across Asia-Pacific markets. With the CPTPP, tariffs on these exports will continue to fall, allowing our fisheries to compete more effectively and to grow sustainably. For our coastal communities, where fishing is not just a job but a way of life, this is no small matter. It means more stable incomes, greater investment in processing facilities and more jobs in both rural and urban parts of the province.

Our manufacturing sector also stands to benefit. Nova Scotia's manufacturers, whether they produce wood products, aerospace components or advanced materials, gain preferential access through the CPTPP trade agreement to markets like Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. These are countries with strong demand for the types of high-quality, value-added products we specialize in. Nova Scotia's wood products in particular are increasingly sought after in the Asia-Pacific, where rapid urbanization and a growing middle class are fuelling construction and consumer spending.

• (1250)

This aligns directly with our government's bold trade agenda, which focuses on building new trade corridors and empowering Canadian exporters to look beyond traditional markets. When we talk about doubling non-U.S. exports over the next decade, we are talking about creating lasting prosperity that reaches every community, from the wharves of Lunenburg to the factories of Dartmouth, and from the blueberry fields of Oxford to the research labs of Halifax.

Let us not forget the clean technology and digital innovation sectors. As the world continues to transition to more sustainable energy sources and more connected technologies, the CPTPP helps ensure that our innovators are not left behind. Nova Scotia's growing tech sector, driven by a new generation of engineers, developers and researchers, can benefit from improved access to international markets and collaborative opportunities.

Why is the United Kingdom's accession to this agreement so important? The U.K. is an economic powerhouse with a long and respected history of trade and diplomacy. It is a market of over 67 million people and a gateway to Europe and beyond.

Canada already shares strong historical, cultural and economic ties with the United Kingdom. Adding the U.K. to the CPTPP not only deepens those connections, but extends their benefits to include parts of the growing Asia-Pacific region. This is particularly important for small and medium-sized businesses, which often face hurdles when trying to navigate complex trade agreements. By bringing the U.K. into the CPTPP, we are creating simplified, consistent and transparent trade rules that make it easier for Canadian companies to grow internationally without sacrificing their values or standards.

Equally critical is the U.K.'s alignment with Canadian values. The United Kingdom shares our commitments to environmental stewardship, labour rights and rules-based international trade. Its participation will only strengthen the CPTPP's standing as a progressive and inclusive agreement, one that puts people, fairness and sustainability at the forefront of economic growth.

The U.K. also brings a wealth of institutional knowledge and global reach to the table. With its long-standing trade networks and diplomatic relationships, the U.K.'s involvement enhances the credibility and global influence of the CPTPP. It signals to the world that this is not just a regional trade agreement; it is a platform for global leadership in fair and open commerce.

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This broader vision, championed by our Prime Minister, is about making Canada a global trading nation that stands confidently on the world stage. Our goal of doubling non-U.S. exports within the next decade is not just a statistic; it is a statement of purpose. It means helping our businesses diversify, our workers thrive and our communities prosper through stronger international partnerships like the one we are debating today.

When we look at this agreement through the lens of Nova Scotia, the benefits become tangible. It is a win for many of our farmers, who can access high-value markets without prohibitive costs. It is a win for our exporters, who enjoy clearer rules and fewer barriers. It is a win for our workers, who benefit from new jobs and more secure industries. It is a win for our future, as we position ourselves to be competitive, innovative and sustainable in a changing global economy.

Trade agreements are often viewed in abstract terms, but at their core, trade agreements are about people, the livelihoods of families, the ambitions of our entrepreneurs and the vitality of communities. Let us not lose sight of that as we debate this important step. The U.K.'s accession to the CPTPP is not just a strategic economic move; it is a reaffirmation of our commitment to a fair, open and inclusive global trading system, one that works for Nova Scotians and one that works for all Canadians.

I am proud to support this legislation. I urge all of my colleagues across all parties to join me in recognizing the profound and positive impact it will have on our communities, our economy and our shared future.

● (1255)

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague will know, part of what this agreement would do if it were to pass into domestic legislation is commit the Government of Canada to allowing U.K. businesses to bid on government procurement contracts, including at the provincial level. As my hon. colleague spoke about her own province, I am sure she will have checked with Nova Scotia to see if it agrees with allowing foreign businesses to bid on Nova Scotian contracts when we are trying to promote Canadian businesses. In fact, members across the way have been saying consistently that we need to buy more Canadian and support Canadian businesses.

Has she checked with her home province to see whether it agrees to provide access to its provincial government procurement?

Alana Hirtle: Mr. Speaker, competition is a good thing. Our government's mandate to build a stronger Canadian economy will bring about the opportunity to compete. That may make our companies more adaptable and agile in their dealings within our business environment.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is a question that has sadly gone unanswered all day by my Liberal colleagues.

Canada probably has one of the least democratic legislative assemblies when it comes to trade agreements and international treaties. The House does not have the means to make a sufficiently informed decision when it comes to ratifying these types of treaties,

a situation that Bill C-228 seeks to correct. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be any appetite for this on the government side.

I would like to ask my colleague if she is comfortable with the fact that the majority of trade agreements are negotiated behind closed doors, without the House of Commons being informed of what is happening. I would like to know what she thinks of this.

[*English*]

Alana Hirtle: Mr. Speaker, I have confidence in the Prime Minister and his relationships with governments and leaders around the world. These discussions will lead to the best trade agreements for Canada.

● (1300)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member's last comment. Look at the level of expertise our Prime Minister brings to the table. He was the governor of the Bank of Canada and the governor of the Bank of England. By the way, we are talking about trade with the U.K. He understands the economics. Having gone through the last election, he understands the importance of expanding our trade beyond the U.S.

Look at the amount of effort Liberal MPs and, particularly, the Prime Minister are putting in toward expanding trade opportunities. This is the way we will be able to generate jobs into the future.

I wonder if my colleague and friend could provide her thoughts on why all provinces ultimately benefit through trade, especially when we have a government that is focused on expanding it.

Alana Hirtle: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Winnipeg North for the good work he does there.

Over the last decade, I have spent time working with small business owners through my work with the community business development corporation. Many of the business people with whom I worked were anxious to expand their business capabilities to trade among the provinces, which we have already accomplished through the dropping of interprovincial trade barriers, and to have the opportunity to trade internationally.

The government was elected with a mandate to support small and medium-sized enterprises, and this trade agreement would help support that initiative.

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North mentioned the so-called expertise of the Prime Minister. I have to disagree with that. If he were such an expert, we would have negotiated a win with the U.K. and we would have gotten to a bilateral agreement, instead of having to settle for the TPP agreement, which would provide Canadian businesses less access.

It has been 18 months since we allowed parts of the TCA to expire. In that time, many Canadian businesses have had to pay duties on products going into the United Kingdom because of it. Will the government make those businesses whole for the duties they paid because of the expiration?

Alana Hirtle: Mr. Speaker, things take time and negotiations take time. It is our intention to work with all businesses to help them be as successful as they possibly can be.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague from York—Durham.

For most of Canada's history, the United Kingdom was Canada's largest trading partner. As late as 1941, the United Kingdom, not the United States, was Canada's largest export market. For those watching who wish to find this data, I found it in a Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce publication entitled "Canada's Trade Performance—1960-1977, Volume 1: General Developments". It was published in October 1978 and is available on the department's website.

I welcome this debate on Bill C-13 because it gives us an opportunity to debate how we can increase trade and investment between Canada and the world. While the U.K. is no longer our largest trading partner, it remains an important one. Measured in two-way trade, the United Kingdom is Canada's third-largest trading partner, with two-way trade valued at \$63 billion in 2024. Measured in terms of exports, the United Kingdom is Canada's second-largest export market. It is bigger than China and second only to the United States. According to Adam Murray at EDC, "As of 2025, the U.K. is Canada's second-largest destination for total exports of goods and services, valued at \$40.2 billion."

There is a lot of opportunity to build on increasing exports to our second-largest export market, the United Kingdom, with agreements like the one before this House. There is an opportunity to increase exports with a country that is a western, liberal democracy. It is a country that not only shares our values, but shares very similar institutions, like this very House of Commons. For that second reason, it is good to increase trade with the United Kingdom.

While the United Kingdom is Canada's second-largest export market this year, it is important to take a step back and look at the bigger picture of Canada's exports. The picture is not good. Canada's exports to the world, expressed as a percentage of our GDP, have massively declined over the last 25 years. Our global exports, expressed as a percentage of our GDP, went from 44% in 2000 to 32% in 2024, which is a massive drop.

I want to make three points about this big drop in exports. First, not all of this drop is attributable to a drop in exports to the United States. While global exports have dropped by about 12% of GDP over the last 25 years, not all of that is attributable to the United

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States. In fact, if we look at our global exports, excluding the United States, they, too, have dropped over the last 25 years by some 2%.

The second point to make about this massive drop in global exports is that most of it took place before the arrival of the Trump administration south of the border. That second point is a very important one to make.

There is a third point that I would like to make about this massive drop in these exports, most of which happened before the arrival of the Trump presidency and some of which happened to our exports outside of the United States. The big reason why this has happened, I would argue, is that Canada has become uncompetitive. No one would dispute the argument that we have become uncompetitive as a country. The fact is, as reflected by the decline in our exports over the last number of years, fewer and fewer people outside of Canada want to buy our products.

• (1305)

Fewer and fewer people abroad want to buy Canadian goods and services, and that is because government tax policies make it difficult to attract domestic and foreign investment, leading to a situation where Canadian companies invest in plant capital and equipment at a far lower rate than their foreign competitors. Jack Mintz argued in his paper entitled "A Proposal for a 'Big Bang' Corporate Tax Reform" that government tax policies have led to a situation where the marginal effective tax rate on the services sector in Canada is almost double that of other economic sectors in Canada, such as manufacturing, forestry and agriculture. The tertiary services sector, which is supposed to be the future of the Canadian economy, faces a marginal effective tax rate that is almost double that of many other sectors in the Canadian economy.

It is a result, I would argue, of regulatory policies that are stifling major investments, such as trade corridor infrastructure. Canada's trade corridor infrastructure is abysmal, and the current government has done little to address that fact. Let me highlight two examples of our abysmal trade corridor infrastructure.

To my knowledge, we are the only major OECD economy without a single national highway. In our case, we could have one running from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast. In the United Kingdom, people can get on the "M" series highway and drive uninterrupted from Bournemouth all the way up to Aberdeenshire in Scotland on a four-lane, divided, limited-access highway. In the United States, people can drive from New York to L.A. on multiple four-lane, divided, limited-access interstate highways that began construction in the 1950s under the Eisenhower administration. In France, people can get on autoroutes that will take them from one side of France to the other on a limited-access, four-lane, divided highway system.

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We do not have a single highway like that in Canada. In fact, what we call our Trans-Canada Highway is Highway 7, which leads out of Ottawa on the way to Toronto. The Trans-Canada Highway is a two-lane, paved road and much of it is interrupted by hundreds and hundreds of driveways, intersections and traffic lights. People cannot drive from Halifax to Vancouver in this country without encountering thousands of driveways, hundreds of intersections and dozens of traffic lights.

Another example of our abysmal trade corridor infrastructure is the port of Vancouver. The World Bank commissioned a study several years ago on the world's top 350 or so global ports, and the port of Vancouver ranked second to dead last in efficiency.

None of these issues are on the government's list of national interest projects. None of these issues are being addressed by the current government. That is, in part, why we have seen a drop in global exports to countries around the world, excluding the United States, over the last number of years. It is why global exports, expressed as a percentage of Canada's GDP, have gone from some 44% back in 2000 down to about 32% today.

I will finish with this final point. The government missed a huge opportunity when negotiating this deal with the United Kingdom to address the plight of some 120,000 Canadians living in this country and receiving U.K. pensions, which remain unindexed. It is an issue that has festered for a number of years. This was an opportunity for the government to address the plight of those pensioners. Pensioners who live in the United States, Spain, Germany and France receive indexed pensions, but pensioners living in Canada do not. The government missed a huge opportunity to address the needs of these 120,000 Canadians in negotiating this deal.

● (1310)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the leader of the Conservative Party's election platform, where he costs out having a four-lane, divided highway from coast to coast in Canada. Why not throw in the other coast while he is at it?

The member has littered all sorts of misinformation onto the record. He tries to give the false impression that people around the world do not want to invest in Canada. I remember standing in this very same spot in 2024, talking about how Canada was number one in the G7 and number three in the world in attracting foreign investment. People in companies around the world recognize the stability Canada has to offer and have been investing in Canada.

I do not know where the member is getting his statistics on exports from. Exports for Canada overall have been on the increase, not on the decrease. I question where the member—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills North.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I will reply to the hon. member's question by simply repeating the facts, which were obtained from Statistics Canada.

Canada's exports, expressed as a percentage of our GDP, were 44% of our GDP in the year 2000. They were 32% of our GDP in the year 2024. By any analysis, that is a precipitous drop.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am always happy to listen to my colleague, who has thoughtful and well documented comments to share. It is always a pleasure.

I understand what he meant when he spoke about the decrease in exports caused by Canada's lack of competitiveness. However, I do not think this lack of competitiveness is the result of taxes alone.

We need only look at our forestry sector, which is going through an unprecedented crisis. The forestry sector does not generate enough added value. We send products and goods to the United States, and that makes us dependent on the American market. In the past 20 years, the federal government has never once shown any desire to support the forestry sector and help the industry to evolve and create increasingly more added value. Whenever anyone in the forestry sector asks the federal government for support, they are referred to Global Affairs Canada and nothing ever gets done. When it comes to forestry, they are so afraid of the United States that any government action becomes paralyzed.

I would like to hear my colleague's comments on this subject.

● (1315)

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I agree that not all the problems are related to the tax system. Part of the problem has to do with our rules around ports and commercial infrastructure. We are facing a major challenge when it comes to increasing our exports to Europe and Asia because of the lack of port capacity in places like Montreal, Halifax and Vancouver.

Forestry products, for example, compete with other exports and goods. Currently, we do not have the necessary capacity to significantly increase our exports through these ports.

[*English*]

Rob Morrison (Columbia—Kootenay—Southern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member had a very thoughtful and well-researched speech.

I wonder if he could tell us why he supposes, for the 120,000 Canadians who were affected by the U.K. pension, the government did not deal with that when it had the opportunity? I have a lot of people in Columbia—Kootenay—Southern Rockies who are in the same boat.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, it is inexplicable that the government did not use the leverage it had in this situation to advocate for and get a deal for the some 120,000 Canadians who are receiving an unindexed U.K. pension.

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I want to thank my colleague for raising that question in the House. It is inexplicable. For much of the past 20 years, there was no opportunity to use leverage with the United Kingdom government to get this deal, but the U.K. was desperate to get into other trade deals, such as the CPTPP, as well as other bilateral and multi-lateral trade deals, precisely because of Brexit.

Because the United Kingdom had left the European Union, it was desperate to get into these other trade arrangements. This was a real opportunity for the Government of Canada to use this leverage to advocate for some 120,000 Canadians who are in desperate need of having these pensions indexed.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in the House to speak, especially on an important topic close to my heart, that being trade negotiations and free trade in Canada.

I just want to start by reminding members of the House what exactly we are doing here today. There has been some discussion that we are talking about accession, or letting the U.K. into the TPP. I am going to call it the TPP. I think we can drop the charade from the previous prime minister, who forced an unwieldy name on us. By letting the U.K. into the TPP, what we are doing here today, as Parliament, is deciding whether to change Canadian law to allow the United Kingdom preferential access to the Canadian market. This is something Parliament must do. The government can negotiate and agree to things in international law, but it is Parliament that ultimately has the authority and the ability to make the decision whether or not to change Canadian domestic law.

On this point, I share my concerns with my colleagues from the Bloc. With the government, there has been a lack of transparency in these negotiations, a lack of transparency in, in fact, all of the negotiations related to trade that the government is currently engaging in. I think more would be better. Normally, I would be getting up in the House to congratulate any government that wants to increase trade around the world. I am certainly a believer in that, but there is really not much to thank Canada for. Instead, we should be thanking the United Kingdom because it really is the United Kingdom and its hard work in negotiating an entrance into the Trans-Pacific Partnership that got us here.

Unfortunately, very little can be said about Canada's involvement in the U.K.'s ascension in joining this regional trading agreement. In my view, the U.K. is joining this in spite of Canada, rather than because of anything Canada has done. Indeed, as I will discuss a little more shortly, it has been obvious to most trade observers that Canada has been entirely uninterested in securing a new deal with the United Kingdom. In my view, this is part of a developing broader pattern with the government of an entirely unimaginative trade strategy.

As my hon. colleague the member for Wellington—Halton Hills North just mentioned, rather than seeking an ambitious new deal with the United Kingdom, which is an important and critical trading partner for Canada, Canada walked away from negotiations with the United Kingdom. Under the trade continuity agreement, we had extended the United Kingdom similar access to what it had when it was a member of the European Union. Of course, it was not a surprise to anyone that it left. Brexit was not a surprise. It left,

and we negotiated what was called the TCA. We had that for some time, and we still have it now. We will have to decide what to do with that.

The TCA was in place to give the government time to move on to negotiate toward a more complete bilateral agreement with the United Kingdom, but the government walked away from that. This was an opportunity, truly a once in a generation opportunity, to re-define our trade with the United Kingdom. It is not every day that one of the largest economies in the world sets out to actively and positively rearrange its trading relationships, but the U.K. was doing that. Canada knew this. Everyone knew this. In fact, the United Kingdom has been on a tear, negotiating new trade agreements around the world, but we missed that opportunity, and now, we are paying the price.

The counterfactual here is that we would have had a more dynamic trading relationship with the United Kingdom. This would be great today. We could have had a brand new bilateral deal with the United Kingdom for years. In this current environment, where we need more friends and more trade, that would have been a benefit to Canada.

My colleagues across the way, the Liberals, have described this as some sort of expanded agreement. This is not an expanded agreement. This is actually a worse agreement than we had, or will have, under CETA, or the European union agreement, where we previously had trade with the United Kingdom. This is worse than if we had just come to an agreement to maintain that access.

CETA is more liberalizing than the TPP. CETA is deeper in terms of tariff elimination, deeper in terms of services and investment liberalization, and deeper when it comes to regulatory co-operation. CETA has better and faster tariff elimination. CETA has more quota for many of our agricultural products. CETA has dedicated provisions to respect veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary issues. CETA has broader coverage for subnational government procurement. CETA has stronger pharmaceutical IP protections. CETA has stronger and more enforceable labour protections. By most, if not all, important measures, CETA is a better deal for Canada than the TPP.

Even if we had held on to the terms of the European trade agreement, we would have been better off. However, unfortunately, the government walked away from that better deal, and now, we are left with this. As I said, this is part of a broader pattern of an unimaginative trade policy from the government.

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● (1320)

The Prime Minister, just yesterday, attempted to rhyme off his so-called accomplishments with respect to trade, but it was quite a pitiful list, if I may say. There is a potential AI agreement with the U.A.E., a potential for an agreement or co-operation with Germany on some minerals and some sort of what the Liberals describe as an “action plan” with Mexico. I read through the action plan in search of some action, but I could not find anything. Instead, I found a lot of flowery language about co-operation, relationships, shared commitments, but no action. There are no binding commitments, no dispute resolution and no enforcement. All of these agreements, which are not much of an agreement, are piecemeal understandings that, for the most part, are completely unenforceable.

When I used to work in treaty drafting in my legal career, we would include this type of language when we did not want to commit to anything. We called it “hortatory language”. For example, we would say, “We shall endeavour to do something sometime, maybe in the future, if we get around to it.” That is how we would write it, and that is what the government is agreeing to. This is a Liberal trade strategy full of hortatory language. There is a lot of language and a lot of talk, but no action and no enforcement. That inaction has been harmful in securing a deal with the United Kingdom and has caused harm to Canadian businesses. I will give members one example.

As part of the trade continuity agreement with the United Kingdom, we had agreed to extend country of origin quotas to certain goods. Typically under free trade agreements, goods must originate within the meeting of that agreement, and there are various kinds of rules of origin that are applied to goods, including what are called “product specific rules”. Sometimes those rules are very hard to meet, and there are practical impediments to satisfying them. Therefore, sometimes countries provide quotas to each other to allow certain quantities of these goods to enter each other's markets duty free, even though they do not otherwise qualify. Canada and the U.K. did this through the trade continuity agreement. We provided, and the U.K. provided to Canada, country of origin quotas for certain products, including sugar products, chocolates, fish, fish food, seafood, textiles, apparel and some vehicles.

In the case of the U.K., these quotas were not meant to last forever. They were meant as a transition period until such time as Canada and the U.K. could reach a new agreement. Of course, as I said before, Canada walked away from that agreement. What happened to these country of origin quotas? Well, they expired, and they expired over 18 months ago. Since then, Canadian companies have been exporting goods under these quotas. They had been accessing the U.K. market for free, and now they are paying duties on those goods. I will give members one concrete example.

A marquee Canadian company, Canada Goose, is one of the few companies in Canada that still has an integrated manufacturing base in the apparel sector in Canada. Last year, Canada Goose generated \$75 million in revenue in the U.K., but due to the expiry of the country of origin quotas because the government walked away from a deal, Canada Goose paid \$10 million in duties to the U.K. government. That is projected to be \$15 million this year. That is a significant burden to growth for a marquee Canadian company in a foreign market. Canada Goose employs 3,000 Canadians.

In my view, these losses are a direct result of the government's failure to secure a deal in a reasonable amount of time. However, it need not have been this way. The continuity agreement specifically provided that, after the expiry of the quotas, “the Parties shall discuss and decide whether the period should be extended. If they agree, the application of the annual quotas set out in this Annex may be extended by decision of the Canada-UK Joint Committee.” This means that the Liberals could have negotiated a win. They could have negotiated more access for Canadian companies, but they did not, because they walked away.

In conclusion, I want to point out some things that the government can do. One huge issue that we have raised in the House is with respect to the ban by the United Kingdom on beef treated with certain types of hormones, which is safe to eat in Canada and other parts of the world, including in North America, but banned by the United Kingdom. Of course, a WTO panel, many years ago, found that this was inconsistent with the U.K.'s obligations, and that lasted until the conclusion of the CETA. Under the Liberals, we had additional quota access for hormone-treated beef. Of course, we walked away from that when the Liberals walked away from the agreement. To my knowledge, as of this afternoon, the government has made no indication of what it will do about that ban on Canadian beef and pork going into the United Kingdom.

This is, again, another example of the government's unimaginative trade strategy. It is merely along for the ride here. Canada needs to get off the ride, stand up for our industries, stand up for our farmers, stand up for the Canadian economy and negotiate a win.

● (1325)

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to many of our colleagues opposite speak today, and the frustration of many of the Conservative members is palpable.

After 10 years of their sitting in opposition, there are numerous issues in which they are more or less in alignment with the government, yet for their own purposes they will get up and attempt to find differences or to criticize the government, when ultimately we are both in agreement with the best way to move forward for Canada and Canadians, whether on the question of free trade, which has been a core Conservative principle for decades, and this government is consistent with that vision; resource extraction and economic growth, which is the Prime Minister's overwhelming focus and which the Conservatives insist to us they also support; or investing in infrastructure, such as roads, rails, highways and ports.

Government Orders

Will the Conservatives just acknowledge that they support the government's agenda to grow the economy strong?

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the flow of ideas in the House is actually from the opposition side to the government side, not the other way around. To the extent that the Liberals want to borrow from our institutional knowledge, wisdom and ideas, they can have at it. We will support those.

What I really want to see is a good deal, not a bad deal, and a win, not a loss. I want to see Canada play its strong hand instead of the weakness we have seen from the other side.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to come back to my colleague's comment that every party here agrees with the government and that we are just opposing for the sake of opposing.

There is something that my colleague has not considered. Parliament is very poorly consulted on trade agreements. We have no mechanism that would give us a say during the negotiation period or the ratification period of trade agreements. Bill C-228 would change that.

I would like my colleague to speak to the House's lack of transparency when it comes to trade agreements.

• (1330)

[*English*]

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, my colleague in the Bloc raised a very valid point: the lack of transparency the government has brought to the House with respect to trade negotiations. The Liberals' lack of transparency in the TPP is not the only example. We have very little insight into any of the negotiations the government is undertaking. It is getting to the point where we have to ask ourselves what the strategy is, because all we have seen is more tariffs, more barriers to trade and more issues for Canadians trying to do business around the world.

I agree that we need more transparency, and I ask the government to give it to the House.

Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think that some of the Liberals are confused today when they are giving their speeches. They are acting as if the deal were a new one. It is an old deal. There was CETA and, post-Brexit, there was the temporary agreement. There are over 10 years' worth of outstanding issues.

The Canada-U.K. deal would have been a chance to fix issues around beef and other issues. This may be a worse deal, but the member for Cumberland—Colchester talked about how it is the greatest thing. I bet if she were to take a closer look, she would find that the people in her riding are going to have less with TPP than they would have with CETA.

I wondered if the member could talk about that.

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, in my view, the hon. member is absolutely correct. We are settling for something, when we could have had a generational opportunity to redefine our trade with one of the most dynamic and largest economies in the world. Instead, the Liberals walked away from that and said that they are not going to

negotiate anymore. They let parts of the TCA, the trade continuity agreement, expire, to the detriment of Canadian businesses, and they were entirely uninterested in negotiating a new, bilateral win for Canada.

Now the Liberals want us to pat them on the back for doing this? I do not think so.

Tom Osborne (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the new Prime Minister has taken an approach of reaching out globally. Even before agreements are reached, trade with Europe and Africa is up, exports with Central America and South America are up, and trade with Asia and the Middle East is up. Trade is down with the U.S.; there is no doubt, but that is a condition that is hard to control.

Are the Conservatives the only people in Canada not seeing the news?

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, trade is hard to control, but what is not hard to control is how the government approaches it.

What I have seen with respect to the United Kingdom is the government's walking away from the negotiations, walking away from trying to negotiate a generational opportunity with a huge trading partner and ally instead of taking that opportunity for Canada.

We had a strong hand to play, but instead there has been weakness.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always interesting when we have debates relating to trade. The last time we had a significant debate on international trade, it was the debate on Ukraine and the need for a trade agreement. New members, like the member who just spoke, may not be aware of this, but during a time of war, the President of Ukraine actually came to Canada, addressed Parliament and talked about a prior signed agreement between Ukraine and Canada.

I thought it was going in a direction that would have received universal support from all members of the House. I was shocked, as were many of the 1.34 million Canadians of Ukrainian heritage, not to mention Canadians in general, that Conservative after Conservative stood in their place to vote against the trade agreement with Ukraine. In fact even the New Democrats and the Green Party member stood in favour of the Ukraine-Canada trade agreement.

To me, that speaks volumes about the general attitude coming from the Conservative Party members today with regard to trade. They just finished saying that the government did not do this and that; they were asking, "What about this?" and so forth, trying to give the impression that they could have actually done a better job.

Ted Falk: We could have.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, no, they could not have.

Government Orders

When we stop to think about the first trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine, we should remember that Canada was holding firm, and the Conservatives were complaining and capitulating, saying, “Just sign the agreement.” They were concerned we would not be able to get an agreement. Minister after minister stood to say that we were not going to sign just any old agreement.

Just because the Conservatives were prepared to capitulate does not mean the government was prepared to capitulate. We received a great agreement that delivered for Canadians. We did not take the Conservatives' advice and capitulate, because at times, work and effort need to be put in, and we have to stand in the interest of Canadians to get the right deal for Canadians. This is what the current Prime Minister has been talking a great deal about.

We are concerned about President Trump, trade and tariffs, the three Ts: the Trump, tariff and trade issues with respect to the United States. The Conservatives are jumping all over themselves saying that we promised this and that in regard to the trade agreement. They want the government and the Prime Minister to capitulate, just like they advocated before.

I would articulate today, with reference to that particular agreement, that the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada should stand firm on achieving the best deal for Canadians. If that means we have to hold off, then we should hold off. Yes, I would have loved to have seen an agreement a lot earlier, but I am not going to sell out Canadian interests in order to achieve that agreement. I believe that the position of the Prime Minister, the government and Liberal members of Parliament is that we will continue to strive for the best deal we can get for Canadians, first and foremost. We are not going to jump to the tunes of the Conservative Party.

Just as we are witnessing today, the moment there is an agreement signed, the Conservatives are going to ask about *x*, *y* or *z* thing, or whatever. That is fine, but they should not try to give Canadians the impression that they could do a better job. Well, number one, I would give a lot of credit to the efforts civil servants have been putting in over the years. We have first-class, world-class civil servants who negotiate trade agreements on behalf of all Canadians.

● (1335)

We have a Prime Minister who is genuinely and truly committed to what he said during the last election, which was to look at expanding opportunities that go beyond the United States. That is what today is all about.

Meanwhile, Conservative after Conservative stands up, trying to give a false impression. Does the House remember the member for Simcoe North? I think he was their second lead-off speaker. He was talking about what a bad government we are because we are selling off the gold reserves. That is not true.

The gold reserves were sold off over a decade ago, in essence when the current leader of the Conservative Party sat around the Conservative caucus table. In fact, he was a minister and a parliamentary secretary to the then prime minister, who ensured that we continued to sell off the gold reserves. The member tried to give the impression that it was the current Prime Minister and government that were selling off the gold reserves. Why is that? It is because he

was talking about the number one import for the U.K. coming from Canada. What does Canada export more to the U.K. than anything else?

Marilyn Gladu: Beef.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong. It is gold. It does not surprise me that she is wrong.

Where does that gold come from? Here is a news flash for the Conservatives: It is not from the Canadian gold reserves. Harper took care of that by selling off a lot of it. By the time we got to 2016, it was all gone. However, if we look at it, gold is number one. That is what we export more of to the U.K. than any other commodity. Where does that gold come from? It comes from virtually every region of the country.

An hon. member: The ground.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Very swift. It comes from the ground. The member is right.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, virtually all provinces are delivering the gold that is being exported. It creates hundreds of well-paying jobs. That is the gold that is being exported.

What does a trade agreement actually do? It is one of the ways we can secure our markets for small and large companies alike. It enhances a relationship between nations. It provides the security that often is required in order for us to have the types of exports we have. That is why it is critically important that we do the things we have been doing over the last number of months.

Let us have a flashback to the last election. During the election, Canadians were generally concerned about Trump, tariffs and trade with the United States. There is no doubt about that. The Prime Minister took an elbows-up approach at dealing with international trade, including trade between Canada and the United States, but that does not mean we put our elbows down in order to accommodate Conservatives and negotiate an agreement just so we can say we have an agreement; it means we stand up for Canadian interests. If that means we wait, then we wait. We get the best deal we can for Canadians.

What did we do after the election? I will remind members that we passed legislation that enabled more trade within Canadian borders. It is no surprise that the leader of the Conservative Party was not an MP at that time. That helped out a great deal, no doubt. We passed substantial legislation that enabled the Government of Canada to work with the different provinces to say that we need to build one Canadian economy from which all Canadians would benefit.

That was then followed by major projects. A Conservative member questioned ports. Montreal, which is part of Canada, has one of the major projects, and it deals with the port. At the end of the day, that means jobs and opportunities, not only for Montreal but for the entire nation.

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● (1340)

We have a Prime Minister who meets with the provinces and passes legislation, and he is now out and about, working, getting agreements and talking with international leaders. That is a positive thing. We should be encouraging that.

I look at it in this sense: When I think of world trade around the globe, Canada contributes about 2.5% of the trade that takes place, yet as a country we make up 0.5% of the population of the world. To me, that speaks volumes. That talks about Canadian values. It talks about Canadian workers. It talks about the resources that Canada has, and if we are able to manage those resources in a sustainable way, every Canadian in every region and every community in Canada would benefit.

I would suggest that what we should be striving to achieve is to maintain that percentage. In a global economy, with more and more industrialization taking place and the advancement of economies throughout the world, it is going to be tough to maintain that sort of a world trade record. However, I would suggest that Canada is in a better position than any other country in the world to do so. That is because today we have a Prime Minister who has an incredible background.

I contrast the background of the current Prime Minister with that of the leader of the Conservative Party. Canadians did. I remember that the major issue in the last election was trade and tariffs. That was a big concern that Canadians had. I look at the contrast. We have the current Prime Minister, who was a Stephen Harper appointment as then governor of the Bank of Canada. The Prime Minister is a former governor of the Bank of England. We have an economist who has been in the private sector, someone who is well established and recognized in communities that go far beyond the continent of America. He is well established. We all saw how well received he was when he made trips to Europe, to some of the key trading partners that are essential to Canada's continual growth.

I contrast that with the leader of the Conservative Party, the individual who called our RCMP institution "despicable". He is an individual who constantly talks down Canada's economy, a leader who believes that things like our national school food program, which supports food for children, are garbage. He has not worked in the private sector; he has been a career politician. I do not have anything against career politicians. I have been in politics for a good number of years myself, but we are contrasting the current Prime Minister with the leader of the official opposition.

I believe that if we look at the credentials, it is easy to understand why, with our Prime Minister, we have been very successful at talking to world leaders in hopes of expanding trade opportunities.

I will use last week as an example. Last week the Prime Minister was in Asia. He had a discussion with President Marcos of the Philippines, and out of that discussion we learned that we want to pursue a formal trade agreement with the Philippines. That is an important statement made by the Prime Minister with respect to two great nations.

● (1345)

Over one million people of Filipino heritage call Canada home. We talk about diversity; it is our diversity that complements our ability to enhance trade opportunities.

I am going to give an example of that. I have had the good fortune and support of enhancing trade relations between Canada and the Philippines, visiting the Philippines three times over the last 18 months. We have opened up agri-food trade offices. We have had all sorts of discussions and meetings to go over a few of those, so that people could understand. Unlike the impression the Bloc likes to give, there is a lot of work that goes into trade agreements. It is very important that we give our best shot at getting them across the line.

I want to pick up on the example of the Philippines. In the Philippines, when I was there just last August, there was a huge food fair by the Mall of Asia. Thousands of people participated. Prominently featured were Alberta beef and Manitoba pork, two products that have so much potential in the Philippines. The Minister of Agriculture was a special guest of a restaurant chain that is actually using Alberta beef. We sat and talked to Canadian stakeholders about opportunities for pork in the Philippines. One of the more touching moments was seeing how Prince Edward Island seed potatoes were actually being used by potato farmers in the Philippines in order to increase production.

We are building a very strong and healthy relationship. I had the opportunity to meet with nuclear industry representatives. They were talking about a potential relationship between the Philippines and Canada, in terms of Ontario and what it has to offer in regard to nuclear energy, as well as the experience that Ontario and potentially Manitoba have to offer on that. We have Canada and the Philippines dealing with the issue of defence. We hope to see the Minister of National Defence continue to have more and more dialogue on that.

Taking it all cumulatively, we now have the Prime Minister involved with a number of world leaders. He had a discussion with President Marcos. From that discussion, we are setting a target so that we can work and hopefully try to achieve an agreement with the Philippines in 2026.

We have the Minister of Foreign Affairs in India, looking at ways to enhance trade opportunities with India. We can talk to the people of Saskatchewan about how Saskatchewan benefits from agricultural exports to India and the potential that is there. Whether it is the Prime Minister or other ministers, such as the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Minister of International Trade, they are out there because we made a commitment to Canadians. We indicated to Canadians back in April that as a government, we are going to be aggressive and progressive in looking outside Canada's borders for trade opportunities that go beyond the United States.

Government Orders

Trade with the United States will continue. We will continue to look at ways in which we can enhance it. We will continue to strive to get a good deal with the United States that is in the best interests of Canadians. However, at the end of the day, we made a commitment to expand in trade beyond the United States. That is exactly what the Prime Minister, the government and every Liberal member of our caucus is committed to doing: looking for opportunities for small businesses and large businesses alike, in terms of trading opportunities, because we understand and know that trade means jobs for Canadians.

We believe that a strong, healthy middle class is the best way to build a strong Canada. Colleagues will find that on this side of the House, every member will vote in favour of Bill C-13. We know it is the right thing to do for all Canadians.

• (1350)

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems that the only opportunity that our hon. colleague across the way is looking for is to gaslight this side of the House and gaslight Conservatives. He again brings up comments that were made by our leader when, in fact, he himself is on record as calling our national police force racist. Our current Minister of Public Safety commented, “We’ve seen a continuous issue of racism that’s permeated within the RCMP”.

They can call the RCMP racist, but when somebody calls into question the leadership, this guy, our hon. colleague, takes offence to it. Those questions are not being asked by only frontline officers and the frontline personnel in the RCMP. Why is it, with the Liberals, that it is always “rules for thee and not for me”?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, true to form, the member tries to give misinformation. I have never called the RCMP racist. There was systemic racism that had taken place, which the RCMP itself has acknowledged, right from the very top to the bottom. That is maybe where the member is misquoting me. I have never said that. I love the RCMP and—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member knows full well that he cannot use props in the House of Commons.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Jonquière.

• (1355)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is a bit rich. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons told us that no one could have done better than the Prime Minister in the negotiations with the United States. At the moment, there is absolutely nothing on the table.

During the election campaign, the Prime Minister said that he was better than sliced bread and that he would solve all these problems once he took office. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is still talking about elbows up, which means nothing in French. To a franco-phone, elbows up means drinking to forget.

To me, the forestry sector tariffs are a message from the government telling us to drink up and forget because it cannot do a darn thing.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, with respect to Bill C-13, the agreement we are talking about today, we can ask the question, what is the number one export from Canada to the U.K.? We see that it is gold. The two provinces that would get the greatest benefits from that gold export are the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. That makes up probably about 70%, which is literally billions and billions of dollars every year.

I believe that this is a good, sound agreement in principle. I am anticipating that, contrary to what the Conservatives are saying, they will likely still vote for it. I know the Bloc members are going to vote for it. I see that as a good thing. In terms of the U.S., we are working on it, and we will get the best deal for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since day one, our new government has been laser-focused on defending and diversifying Canadian trade. We have signed new agreements with countries like Ecuador and Indonesia. We have an ongoing dialogue with many of our international partners.

I would like to ask my colleague why this work is important for strengthening the Canadian economy. I would like him to tell me how this will benefit Canadian businesses, including those in my riding of Madawaska—Restigouche and those in Winnipeg North, the riding he represents.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that excellent question. We all need to recognize the true value of enhancing Canada's trading opportunities. It ultimately means more jobs, and more good jobs, for Canadians in all regions of our country.

That means a great deal to the Liberal caucus. It means a great deal to the Prime Minister. That is the reason we have such a proactive Prime Minister, who is going around the world in order to secure more opportunities for trade. Whether for small businesses or big businesses, trade will ultimately provide more opportunities for Canadians in all regions of our country, and that is a good thing.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know I have been here for only a short time, but I have already discovered that the member opposite has a very fragile disposition. Perhaps that is why he suggested that when the government signs an agreement, we should not criticize it or ask any questions about it. He suggested that the only options were that we accept it or, if we did not accept it, that we were somehow capitulating to the other side.

I will suggest a third option, which is to negotiate a better deal. The Liberals could have done that had they not walked away from negotiations with the United Kingdom. Why did you walk away?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order.

The member knows to address his comments through the Chair.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, being in the fragile state that I am, I can tell the member opposite that one had to be here to really appreciate how the Conservatives jumped ship and capitulated on the first round of negotiations with Donald Trump.

Back then, we indicated that we were going to strive to get the best deal. I can assure the member opposite that we have a prime minister today who is committed to getting the best deal for Canadians when it comes to the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade agreement. That is our first priority. If it takes a bit of time to get that deal, we are going to put in the time, effort and resources, because we understand how important that deal is for all Canadians. We will work on the Liberal agenda of getting it done because the Conservatives demonstrated, in the last period of time, that they just do not have it within them. They would capitulate. They have shown that in the past.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

HANS SMITS

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this weekend, we lost an extraordinary Edmontonian, a beautiful human being who devoted his life to serving his community, his country and this planet.

Hans Smits was an educator and a former associate dean at the University of Calgary. His passion for learning and his lifelong dedication to the teaching profession inspired thousands across Canada and around the world. Hans was deeply committed to democracy. He was a tireless volunteer for Public Interest Alberta and a proud New Democrat who was honoured with a lifetime membership by the Alberta NDP. This year, he received the King Charles III's Coronation Medal in recognition of his remarkable contributions to his community.

To Donna, his family and the many friends, colleagues and students who mourn him today, I offer my heartfelt condolences. Hans leaves behind a legacy of compassion, integrity and hope, one that will continue to guide all of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

* * *

HALIFAX ARTS SCENE

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Halifax is a hub for vibrant and talented artists. We are home to a renowned art and design school, more than 65 galleries, dynamic performing artists and an industry that supports thousands of jobs. Earlier this month, much of my community came together for Nocturne, a city-wide event celebrating Halifax's art scene.

Each October, Nocturne presents its Art-at-Night Festival, a free all-night celebration of visual and performing arts showcasing lo-

Statements by Members

cal, national and international talent. This incredible event is funded in part by Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts, ensuring that artists are fairly compensated while keeping the experience open and accessible for everyone.

I congratulate the Nocturne team for another successful and much-anticipated event. I cannot wait for next year.

* * *

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night, I had the privilege of co-hosting the annual MS Canada reception. Some 90,000 Canadians struggle with multiple sclerosis. Thanks to medical innovation, they are increasingly able to live normal, fulfilling lives. They come from all backgrounds and professions, from hairdressers to researchers, teachers, Hill staffers and former MPs. Nearly three-quarters of them are women. MS Canada is researching better treatments and building a community where each can find practical support and encouragement.

My wife has MS, and her own journey with living with the disease is proof that the research into how we can diagnose, treat, prevent and, one day, repair the effects of MS is working. Investment in MS research is an investment in the lives of Canadians, letting them live long and rewarding lives. Better funding for MS research is more than justified by the work hours and life experience currently being lost to our society.

I will continue to stand with MS Canada so that, little by little, these brave Canadians can stand strong and, one day, live free of this disease.

* * *

PRIME MINISTER'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House to congratulate my constituent Ms. Amel Misbah on receiving the 2025 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in STEM. This award, Canada's highest honour for elementary and secondary school teachers, recognizes STEM educators who go above and beyond in fostering engaging learning environments and preparing students for a digital and innovation-based economy.

Statements by Members

Ms. Misbah teaches chemistry to grade 11 and grade 12 students at York House, an all-girls school in my riding. Described by her students as passionate and a life-changer, she teaches through engaging, discussion-based learning, challenging students to think critically and to focus on why things happen, rather than relying only on memorization. She adapts her lessons to suit her students' needs and feedback, helping them build confidence and develop a real understanding of chemistry.

Again, I want to congratulate Ms. Amel Misbah on her extraordinary dedication to learning. I thank her for inspiring the next generation of scientists, innovators and leaders.

* * *

FOOD BANKS

Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a new normal in Canada. Food banks are the lifeline for many Canadian families. The Liberals like to boast that they are helping families, but here is the reality: Food Banks Canada reports 2.2 million monthly visits this year, twice what it was six years ago. This is what their report says: “Behind every food bank visit is a story. A parent skipping meals so their kids can eat. A senior choosing between medication and groceries. A worker juggling multiple jobs and still coming up short.... These are not outliers.” According to the report, “This is Canada’s new normal.”

This bears out in my community as well, with 25 new families per month at the Langley Food Bank, 500 families served per month and over 1,400 individuals this year.

I want to thank the dedicated volunteers and donors who make the Langley Food Bank a great success story in a difficult environment made worse by the government's mismanagement of our economy. I thank the donors. I thank the volunteers.

* * *

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

RICHARD CAUCHON

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to highlight the exceptional contribution of the 2025 edition of Bromont Ultra. Since its inception, this philanthropic sporting event has raised over \$5 million for causes that bring us together. That is a remarkable achievement, a reflection of the solidarity and resolve that define our region.

It was with great sadness that we learned of the tragic passing of Richard Cauchon, a long-time volunteer and former executive director of the organization. Richard was the epitome of generosity, dedication and kindness. His smile and devotion will leave a lasting impression on the hearts of all who knew him.

On behalf of the people of Bromont and Brome—Missisquoi, I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Sylvie Adam, his family, his loved ones and the entire Bromont Ultra family. May his example continue to inspire our actions and commitments.

May Richard rest in peace.

[*English*]

WOODROW JAMES PHILPOTT

Clifford Small (Central Newfoundland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Captain Woodrow James Philpott of Cottlesville, Newfoundland and Labrador, who passed away peacefully on October 12, just 10 days shy of his 92nd birthday.

Captain Philpott was a pillar of his community and a man of deep faith, integrity and compassion. He also took an active interest in local and provincial politics, always striving to make his community a better place. Over his remarkable life, he worked in logging and the fishery and became a ship's captain. He owned and operated several vessels, such as the *Lady Philpott* and the *Free Trade*. He told me the story of sailing the latter from England to Newfoundland at the time of our free trade agreement with the United States in 1988 and how that was the inspiration in renaming that vessel.

On behalf of the House, I extend sincere condolences to his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all who were blessed to know him.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LUCY GILBERT

Annie Koutrakis (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight Women's History Month, a time when we celebrate the achievements and contributions of women.

[*English*]

Every October, we honour the women who inspire us and whose courage, creativity and leadership strengthen our communities and enrich us all.

Today, I want to pay tribute to Dr. Lucy Gilbert, a leading medical researcher and physician whose world-leading work with the DOvEEgene project uses genomics to detect ovarian and endometrial cancers early, which greatly increases the chances of a positive outcome for women. Her innovation has the potential to save countless thousands of women's lives around the world and is a powerful example of Canadian excellence in science and medicine.

[*Translation*]

This Women's History Month, let us celebrate their legacy, amplify their voices, and uphold our commitment to a Canada where every woman and girl can reach her full potential.

Statements by Members

[English]

NAVY AND COAST GUARD APPRECIATION DAY

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, ready, aye, ready. Proud, proven and professional, for 115 years, the Royal Canadian Navy has defended Canada's sovereignty at sea.

Today is Navy and Coast Guard Appreciation Day on Parliament Hill. This morning, I was honoured to attend a ceremony in the Senate recognizing 15 sailors for their excellence in service. The men and women of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Naval Reserve and the Canadian Coast Guard keep our sea lines open, assert sovereignty on all three coasts and project Canadian strength and goodwill around the world.

From the Battle of the Atlantic to the Korean War, the Persian Gulf, East Timor and Libya, our sailors have answered the call at home and abroad. As a navy veteran, I know that Conservatives will always stand with and support the sailors of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Coast Guard, ensuring they have the ships, personnel and equipment they need to defend our freedom.

On behalf of all members of the House of Commons, to every sailor, past and present, and to the families who stand watch with them, Bravo Zulu.

* * *

• (1410)

[Translation]

CENTRE D'AIDE AUX ENTREPRISES HAUTE-YAMASKA ET RÉGION

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Haute-Yamaska regional business support centre, known as the CAE, recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. This festive and unifying event successfully highlighted four decades of contributing to the region's economic development.

Since 1985, the CAE has been a crucial partner in promoting the local economy by vigorously supporting, financing and helping businesses in the region.

The Haute-Yamaska region is a major economic driver of Quebec in large part because of the dynamic team at the CAE.

I would like to give a special mention to the executive director, Isabelle Brochu, who has helped the CAE grow over the years. I had the pleasure of talking with her about an interest we share, namely women entrepreneurship.

We can be proud of the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the region.

I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to the Haute-Yamaska regional business support centre for its 40 years of dedication to our entrepreneurs.

They are a pillar of prosperity in Haute-Yamaska. I hope they can keep this momentum going for years to come because, ultimately, our success depends on our people.

[English]

WOMEN PIONEERS IN THE WORKFORCE

Karim Bardeesy (Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1940, Priscilla Wright was born, and 15 years later she had a hit record. She later sang with Elvis and now chairs a family foundation inspired by her parents and grandfather Arthur Meighen, the ninth prime minister of Canada.

In 2001, Abi Ajibolade arrived in Canada as a new immigrant from Nigeria. Fifteen years later, she became executive director of The Redwood, which provides safety and support for women and children fleeing violence in Toronto.

Under Abi's leadership and with Priscilla's support, The Redwood created its women in trades and technology program. It helps women rebuild their lives and gives them tuition and other assistance to get jobs in traditionally male-dominated fields.

This weekend, the seventh cohort of this program graduated, and 40 women were recognized, including one as the Priscilla Wright HVAC technician program valedictorian. She shared that she never thought she would work in HVAC or work with combustible gas. She said she was forged in the flame, got control of it and came out stronger. She is now a licensed G2 gas technician.

I want to pay tribute today to women pioneers in the arts, social services, tech and the trades. They are breaking barriers, defying expectations and building Canada.

* * *

BAIL REFORM

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, small business owners used to say that their biggest worry was making payroll. Now it is keeping their doors from being kicked in.

In Vancouver, a restaurant owner, Foz, has been hit so many times by break-ins that the latest one looked like something out of a bad comic book. The thief came dressed as Spider-Man with a knife in this hand, but there was nothing funny about it. His staff are scared to come to work. He has lost over \$100,000, and he has stopped calling the police, because every time he does, the same people are back on the street before the paperwork is even done.

This has happened because the Liberals brought in soft-on-crime bail laws that turn revolving doors into escape hatches. Criminals walk free while honest Canadians pay the price in fear, in lost income and in shattered confidence.

Statements by Members

Canadians deserve better. We need to keep repeat violent offenders off our streets and give people the confidence to open their doors again. It is time to restore safety, restore fairness and bring back common sense to our justice system.

* * *

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN OF CANADA

Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year marks 100 years of service and compassion for the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, the Winnipeg section.

Since 1925, the council has embodied the Jewish principle of *tikkun olam*, or repairing the world, through education, service and social action. It helped Holocaust survivors rebuild their lives, welcomed refugees and newcomers, supported women and families and even created Canada's first senior drop-in centre.

In my community of Winnipeg South Centre, its work continues to inspire hope and strengthen the bonds that hold us together. In times of rising anti-Semitism and global conflict, its example reminds us of the power of compassion, justice and commitment to human dignity.

To all who have carried this mission forward in Winnipeg and beyond, *mazel tov* on 100 years.

* * *

TAXATION

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's company Brookfield has been exposed as Canada's biggest tax dodger. According to expert analysis, Brookfield managed to avoid paying a staggering \$6.5 billion in Canadian taxes through the use of offshore tax havens in just five years. As chair of Brookfield, the Prime Minister registered three multi-billion dollar investment funds in Bermuda and the Cayman Islands, all to avoid paying taxes in Canada, funds that the Prime Minister stands to profit from in the way of future bonus pay.

Canadians deserve answers about the Prime Minister's use of offshore tax havens, and today, the House will be voting on getting those answers. The question is, will Liberal MPs stand with taxpayers, or will they cover for their tax-dodging Prime Minister? We will soon find out.

* * *

● (1415)

[*Translation*]

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, Réfam, a network of women entrepreneurs, managers and professionals in the Madawaska region, presented the prestigious 2025 women entrepreneur award to an inspiring mother-daughter duo: Nicole Deschênes and Josée Levesque, co-owners of Buffet Nicole et Josée.

They founded their company in 2004 in Saint-Joseph-de-Madawaska, and it quickly grew into a well-known catering service in the region. Their adaptability and constant focus on innovation set them apart in a highly competitive

sector. Today, more than 20 years after first starting out, they continue to run a thriving business that is based on trust, quality and teamwork.

This Women's History Month, let us celebrate all those who, like Nicole and Josée, contribute every day to the vitality of our communities, the growth of our economy and the prosperity of our country.

* * *

[*English*]

FOOD AFFORDABILITY

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are facing a hunger crisis. According to Food Banks Canada, monthly visits to food banks have doubled, up over 99% since 2019, and 39% of the population experienced food insecurity in the last year alone. Of those turning to food banks, one in five is employed, one in three is a child and one in four is in a two-parent household. This is the legacy of 10 years of the Liberal government's runaway spending, inflationary deficits and hidden taxes on farmers, fuel, fertilizer and packaging, which drive up the cost of our food.

The Prime Minister said that Canadians should judge him by their grocery bills. Well, Food Banks Canada gave him a D on poverty and food insecurity.

While the Liberals keep taxing Canadians into poverty, the Conservatives will keep fighting to keep life affordable by scrapping the hidden taxes on food and ending the Liberal cost of living crisis.

* * *

FEMALE CADETS

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on July 30, 1975, an amendment to the National Defence Act extended full membership in the royal Canadian sea, army and air cadets to girls, changing “boys” to “persons”.

This year marks 50 years of female inclusion in the Canadian cadet program. Today, more than 60,000 cadets across 1,100 communities benefit from this program, which builds citizenship, leadership and fitness. Female cadets have been trailblazers and leaders in the cadet program, the armed forces and beyond.

It would be an honour for the House to recognize the remarkable women of the cadet program, some of whom have joined us today, and recommit to ensuring that every young Canadian, regardless of gender, has a chance to serve, lead and grow.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of inflationary deficit budgets driving up grocery prices, Canadians are literally hungry. According to Food Banks Canada's 2025 HungerCount report, the Liberals have doubled food bank lineups. Now, people with two jobs cannot even afford to buy food.

Will the government table, for the first time, an affordable budget for affordable food and affordable living?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, we will table a budget for affordable living and affordable food, and I hope that the Leader of the Opposition will support it.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will not support a budget that drives up the price of groceries like the last nine Liberal inflationary budgets have done. According to Food Banks Canada, there has been a 100% increase in the number of people using food banks. One of those people is Jaclyn Stone, a Manitoba mom who works two jobs but cannot afford food. She works at a grocery store, but she cannot buy groceries. How cruelly ironic.

Will the government finally introduce an affordable budget?

• (1420)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is promising this woman a Christmastime election. I hope she is not planning to prepare a Christmas dinner, because she will have to go to the polls thanks to an opposition leader who intends to stand up and vote for another election six months after the last one. I am not sure the people behind him are okay with that.

The government is going to table a budget next week. The Leader of the Opposition can support that budget, just like Food Banks Canada, which supports all of our affordability initiatives and condemns the Conservatives' decision to vote against them.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine Liberal tax-and-spend inflationary and costly deficits, Canadians are hungry for an affordable budget and hungry according to a report by Food Banks Canada called the "Hunger-Count", which shows that there has been a 100% increase in the number of people relying on food banks since the Liberals brought in numerous taxes on food.

Will the Prime Minister finally, for the first time, introduce an affordable budget for affordable food and affordable living?

Oral questions

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, someone recently said, "Early signs of progress—including easing housing pressures and new social supports—offer hope." In fact, this person went on to say, "ambitious poverty-reduction strategies, affordable housing pilots...the Canadian Dental Care Plan and the National School Food Program...are showing early promise". Guess who said that. It was the CEO of Food Banks Canada.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if any of that were true, there would not be a 100% increase in the number of people relying on food banks. The numbers speak for themselves. This is after a decade of Liberal inflationary taxes and deficits that have driven 2.2 million people to food banks. One of them is Jaclyn Stone. She works two jobs. She works at a grocery store. She cannot afford to shop at the grocery store where she works.

In her name and in the name of the 2.2 million people lined up at food banks, will we finally get an affordable budget for affordable food and affordable living?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just heard the Leader of the Opposition say that the CEO of Food Banks Canada does not know what she is talking about, when she wrote the report the Conservatives are quoting from. It is really hard to follow, is it not?

It is clear the member opposite is driving for a Christmas election. I really hope that is not true, because Canadians are counting on us to pass this budget, to make the school food program permanent and to increase benefits that Canadians are working so hard for, including the announcement yesterday for personal support workers.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if they want their budget passed, they have to make it an affordable budget so that there is affordable food and an affordable quality of life for the Canadian people, including people like Jaclyn Stone. As I said, she works at a grocery store and cannot afford groceries. We already know about carpenters who build homes but cannot afford a home after 10 years of the Liberals. This is the story that she tells. She says:

You find yourself going through the grocery store, grabbing what you need and when you are ready to check out, you pretty much have to do an audit of your cart to see if you can afford everything. Sometimes you have to put things back. It's embarrassing and disheartening.

Oral questions

People like her have been working too hard for too long. Will they get an affordable budget?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives cannot have it both ways. They say Canadians are facing challenges, yet they dismiss the ways of helping them to get through these challenges. The same Food Banks Canada report they cite mentions the Canada disability benefit, the Canadian dental care plan, the national school food program and the national housing strategy as steps taken to address the underlying conditions that contribute to poverty.

When it came time to step up, what did the Conservatives oppose do? They voted against these supports. They will have another opportunity to change their tune and support the budget.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if any of those promises were actually coming true, we would not have had a 100% increase in the number of people lined up at food banks, a number that has increased again this year after the Prime Minister took office after promising that he would be judged by the prices at the grocery store. A record 700,000 kids are lined up at food banks while the Liberals make phony promises that they never keep on that side of the aisle. Every dollar the government spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians who cannot pay any more. The more Liberals spend, the more things cost.

Will they finally bring forward an affordable budget for affordable food, so Canadians can have an affordable life?

• (1425)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, either the member opposite, the leader of the Conservative Party, wants a Christmas election, or he wants to deny what is in that actual report, which says to take action to make the programs that are making Canadians' lives more affordable stronger, permanent and more generous, and that is what we have done. That is what we are doing, and we are going to continue to do it. In fact, what the CEO has said is that we are on the right track. We have to continue to move forward, and we really hope the Conservatives do not vote against these things again.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Canada, and thus Quebec, is in the midst of one of the worst trade crises we have ever experienced, and rather than improving, the situation is only getting worse. The Prime Minister gave everything away and got nothing in return. Now he is in a full-fledged quarrel with the President of the United States.

What I want to know, and what people need to know, is what the government is going to do to re-establish a decent relationship with the United States of America.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleague knows full well that

our government is always ready to sit down and work with the American government, with the secretaries in Mr. Trump's administration, to negotiate an agreement that serves the interests of Canadian industries and Canadian workers. We are always available. The Prime Minister has repeated this.

In the meantime, we are not going to wait around for that moment to come before we protect Canadian industries and build a strong economy here in Canada. We are investing in all the industries necessary to meet Canada's supply needs.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, despite the Prime Minister's promises and occasionally boastful claims during the election campaign, things have not improved, they have grown worse: 25% tariffs on trucks and cars, 45% tariffs and countervailing duties on lumber and forestry products, and 50% tariffs on steel and aluminum.

What has the government got to say to workers, to vulnerable consumers and to investors being told that nothing is expected to change until well into 2026?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what are we going to say to investors who see Canada's economy in a positive light? What are we going to say to Canadian workers who are obviously worried about the tariffs?

We are going to tell them that the government is here to support them, that we have a series of measures for investing in major projects in Canada. We are going to tell them that we support the industries being impacted by the tariffs.

At the same time, we are prepared to negotiate an agreement with the United States that will put us in a better economic position.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government is waiting for the U.S. to be in a better mood. It has not done anything yet. It is setting us up for inflation, a recession and business closures. It is doing nothing to bring people together so that Canada and Quebec can speak with one voice. It can say whatever it wants, but it is not doing anything to help businesses, nor is it doing anything to help people who lose their buying power.

When will the government admit that it has failed and start collaborating so we might have some hope of achieving something?

Oral questions

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Bloc Québécois knows full well that our government always collaborates with our provincial and territorial counterparts, with business leaders and with workers' representatives.

The good news is that I will be in Montreal on Thursday morning to meet with Minister Fréchet. We will talk specifically about what more we can do together to support Quebec industries and workers in Quebec and across Canada.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the signature promise on which the Prime Minister was elected was to "negotiate a win" with the Americans, and he promised to get a deal by July 21.

Today, there is still no deal, still no win. U.S. tariffs have doubled since the Prime Minister promised to eliminate them. He is blaming an Ontario government ad for the fact that he cannot get a deal.

Did the Prime Minister or anyone on his team see the ad before it went out, yes or no?

• (1430)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that the government will not accept just any deal. We have been clear that we will negotiate an agreement with the U.S. government that is in the interests of Canadian workers and the Canadian economy.

Canadians know very well that the Leader of the Opposition would have accepted any old deal. That is not Canada's position. We are going to support both Canadian industries and Canadian workers.

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the signature promise on which the Prime Minister was elected was to negotiate a win with the Americans, to get a deal by July 21. Here we are in late October with still no deal, still no win, still no elbows and still no jobs, and the American tariffs have doubled since the Prime Minister promised he would get rid of them.

Yesterday, his latest excuse was that an Ontario government ad prevented him from keeping his promise. Yes or no, did the Prime Minister or his staff see the ad before it went out?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the answer I just gave to the Leader of the Opposition in French because he asked the same question in English.

Our government was elected to negotiate an agreement with the United States that is in the interests of Canadian workers and Canadian industries. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, we are not go-

ing to sign whatever agreement the Americans might suggest. We are going to sign an agreement that benefits Canadian workers and the Canadian economy.

At the same time, we are going to build in Canada, we are going to invest in Canada and we are going to support workers and Canadian businesses.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised that he would have a good deal by July 21. That date has come and gone. His latest excuse is an ad from the Government of Ontario. He claims that is why he could not keep his promise to get a deal.

Yes or no, did the Prime Minister see the ad before it went out?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said a moment ago, our government is committed to working with all partners in our federation, to working with premiers in every part of the country, to working with union leaders and business leaders to support the Canadian economy and Canadian workers, and to negotiating with the Americans for a deal that is in the interests of Canada. That has been the government's position from the beginning. I am proud of the work that we have done with all the premiers, the businesses and the union leaders across the country.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the Prime Minister who said that the ad prevented him from keeping his promise and getting a deal. He claims he was on the verge of getting that deal, so surely, if he saw an ad that would interrupt the deal, he would have said no and hit the brakes.

The question is, yes or no, did the Prime Minister or anyone on his staff see the ad before it went out?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to doing the serious work necessary to get a deal with the United States and to build a strong, resilient Canadian economy. This was the commitment we made to Canadians in the election. This was an election the Leader of the Opposition lost because people did not believe he would be serious in either supporting Canadian workers and Canadian businesses or standing up to the Americans for a deal that is in the interest of all Canadians.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, being serious means being honest. Did the Prime Minister—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Oral questions

• (1435)

The Speaker: The member can continue and will get a few extra seconds to make up for the interruption.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, being honest is a joke to these Liberals.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: There cannot be too many interruptions because I cannot afford that much time. The member can continue.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, did the Prime Minister or his staff see the ad before it went out, yes or no?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can imagine the frustration the Leader of the Opposition feels when he sees a Prime Minister elected to take this serious economic and sovereignty challenge with all of the seriousness it deserves. This is why Canadians thought the Leader of the Opposition was not up to that task. This is why Canadians chose a Prime Minister who takes serious issues seriously, who will defend Canadian workers and Canadian businesses, and stand up for the right deal for Canada.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says the reason he does not have a deal is an ad.

Did he or his staff see the ad before it went out, yes or no?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I can understand the Leader of the Opposition may be frustrated for a whole series of reasons. He has a caucus meeting coming up this week. He may be very concerned about that as well. What I can tell the Leader of the Opposition, and all colleagues in the House, is that the Prime Minister is committed to doing the difficult, serious work necessary to build the strongest economy in the G7. This starts by supporting Canadian workers, building big in Canada again and doing everything necessary to get the deal with the Americans that will be in the interest of Canadian workers and Canadian businesses.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are 100,000 more Canadian workers out of a job since the Prime Minister promised to protect their jobs. He says they are going to get the best economy in the G7, but it is the fastest shrinking economy in the G7. I met with auto workers in Windsor over the weekend who are terrified the Prime Minister's failures are going to cost them their jobs. He looked those workers in the eyes and said he would have a good deal by July 21. He broke his promise.

Now, he is blaming an ad. He has a duty to say whether or not he saw the ad he says blew up the so-called deal he had. Will he do the honest thing and answer the question? Did he see the ad, or is it actually his incompetence—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just because the Leader of the Opposition keeps asserting the same fake premise, it does not make it real. What is real is that the Government of Canada can control certain things. We can control the investments we make in partnership with Canadian businesses and Canadian workers to build a strong economy here. We can work with provinces and territories, as we are proud to do, to defend the Canadian economy and to work with the United States to get an agreement that will be in the interests of Canada. This is something the Leader of the Opposition will never get a chance to do.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the cat is out of the bag. Yesterday, the government House leader openly threatened a Christmas election if the House does not support his budget as it stands. The Liberals did not hold any pre-budget consultations, did not hear from any witnesses in committee and did not include any of the opposition's demands in the budget. Now, they are already resorting to blackmail instead of trying to come to an agreement.

Quebeckers elected a minority government. That means an agreement has to be reached with the other parties. Why will the Liberals not get to work instead of threatening an election?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since the member opposite has done me the honour of quoting me, I will clarify the math for him.

The math is that, although we are a minority, we believe that we received a mandate six months ago to present Canadians with a budget, present them with an economic plan and enter into trade agreements with the United States. Canadians gave us this mandate.

The only question is this: Which opposition party will choose to send Canadians to the polls at Christmas this year?

• (1440)

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister and the mathematician across the way said that they were reaching out to the opposition, we thought it was so that we could work together not so that we could get slapped around. That promise is broken with threats of an election.

Some will say that this is not the only broken promise. The Prime Minister also promised to protect us from Donald Trump. However, unlike the negotiations with Donald Trump, the Prime Minister has complete control over his budget negotiations.

We are experiencing crises in health care, quality of life for seniors, housing, home ownership, infrastructure, and so on. Why not solve these crises together in the budget instead of making threats?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to reassure my honourable and kind colleague. No one on this side of the House is slapping anyone around.

The Prime Minister, the House leader and the Minister of Finance all met with the leader of the Bloc Québécois. I also met with him to hear about what the Bloc Québécois wants to see in the budget.

There are measures on housing and affordability in the budget. The Bloc Québécois will have plenty of time to help us help Canadians.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Moisson Québec has informed us that its network supports more than 84,000 people every month. That is a 30% increase since 2022. Since then, an economic study by Avoise for Food Banks of Quebec has revealed that food insecurity is becoming the new normal and that the need for assistance will continue.

In the meantime, the Prime Minister is asking Quebeckers to make sacrifices, knowing that he will not have to make any himself. Since coming to power, he has done absolutely nothing to lower the cost of living.

When will the Liberals finally realize that their inflationary deficits are driving Quebeckers to food banks?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when a member opposite asks a question like that, I have to wonder whether they have even read the Food Banks Canada report. Let me quote four of the recommendations I have here from that same report.

What does the report propose to help with affordability? It proposes "finalizing the Canada Disability Benefit [or CDB]". The Conservative Party and the member voted against that. The report proposes "rolling out the Canadian Dental Care Plan [or CDCP]". The Conservative Party and the member voted against that. The report calls for "launching a national school food program". One of the member's colleagues referred to that as "garbage". Finally, the report proposes "updating the National Housing Strategy". The Conservatives have already told us that they are going to vote against that.

There is a lot of hypocrisy on the other side of the House.

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from this government, especially not from a minister who, incidentally, was supposed to resign if the carbon tax was abolished.

On this side of the House, we know that inflationary measures are causing the problems that people are experiencing. Inflation is

Oral questions

going up because of this government's uncontrolled spending over the past 10 years.

Does the Prime Minister understand that he needs to stop his inflationary spending in order to help people?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of all the claims the Conservatives keep making, the one that puzzles me the most is the one about inflationary spending.

What is inflationary spending? Is it pensions? Is it health care? Is it support for young people and youth employment? Is it major projects? What kind of spending is inflationary spending? Finally, once and for all, the member opposite can clear up any doubt by explaining what he means when he talks about inflationary spending.

[English]

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Jaclyn Stone is a mom from Landmark, Manitoba. She is working two jobs, one as a bus driver and one at the grocery store, yet she cannot afford to feed her own family and lost her home because of rising interest rates. She said, "You find yourself going to the grocery store, grabbing what you need [and doing] an audit of your cart to see [what] you can afford.... Sometimes you have to put things back. It's embarrassing", she said.

The only people who should be embarrassed are the Liberals because after 10 years in power, this is how expensive it has become to live in Canada. Their reckless deficit spending has created Canada's inflation problem.

When will it end so that Canadians like Jaclyn can afford to live?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives opposite should listen to Canadians who are on the front lines and who are working in favour of making the school food program permanent. The Coalition for Healthy School Food called the program "a generationally important decision that...will...change the future of Canadian society and the health and well-being of children".

Children First Canada said, "This isn't just about food—it's about dignity, learning, and equity."

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association said it will "strengthen student well-being and success".

These Canadian organizations are on the front lines, fighting food insecurity in our communities.

I would encourage us all to support the budget, which will make the national school food program permanent.

Oral questions

• (1445)

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not think Liberals understand the state of Canada after 10 years of their government. Ms. Stone lost her home because mortgage rates skyrocketed as a result of rising interest rates caused by their massive Liberal deficits. She works at a grocery store, yet cannot afford the food at the grocery store. In fact, of the over two million Canadians who used food banks in a single month this year, one in five is employed and one-third are children.

Is this what the Liberals envisioned after 10 years in power, that millions of Canadians would be struggling to afford food? They owe Canadians an explanation. How is this possible in Canada in 2025?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hypocrisy of Conservatives is staggering. It is unbelievable to hear this kind of outrage from Conservatives, who voted against and fought against all of the affordability programs, first and foremost, housing affordability, which they have shown no support for, for decades.

We are focused on delivering, and we are seeing results: Average rents are coming down, home prices are coming down, and mortgage rates are coming down. That is affordability.

Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians want dignity and to be able to feed their families without relying on food banks. Under the Liberal government, they cannot. Food Banks Canada reports 2.2 million visits in a single month. The food bank in Moose Jaw is helping out twice as many people as it was two years ago.

Families do not want handouts. They want their paycheques to go further, so they can buy their own groceries.

When will the Prime Minister stop forcing working families into food lines and start reining in the government's out-of-control spending so that parents can actually afford to feed their families?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives voted no to dental care, no to the national school food program, no to the Canada child benefit and no to a tax cut that helped 22 million Canadians. Our government brought in these measures to make life more affordable for Canadians, help families, support workers and build a stronger Canada.

However, there is good news. On November 4, the Conservative Party will have another chance, a chance to say yes to Canadians and yes to measures that make a real difference in people's lives.

Will they stand with Canadians, or will they continue to stand in the way?

* * *

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in another display of arrogance and ignorance, the Conservative leader claimed that the national school food program is just “bureaucracy”. Another Conservative said that feeding hungry kids was “garbage”.

In my riding, this program is already making a real difference, and educators say it is one of the best ways to help kids succeed.

How will the Secretary of State for Children and Youth respond to this deplorable Conservative misinformation?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative MPs really ought to listen to the folks on the ground fighting food insecurity, such as the Breakfast Club of Canada, the Coalition for Healthy School Food and the Canadian Teachers' Federation, which have all called for the making of the national school food program to be permanent because of the positive impact it has on children. With federal funding, 9.8 million more meals will be served to children across Ontario alone, representing \$800 in savings on groceries for families.

We will protect and strengthen the supports that help ensure children have the best start in life right across this country.

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FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised he would negotiate a win with the United States. For British Columbia, that means negotiating a softwood lumber agreement. In response to the collapse of trade negotiations on Friday, the Prime Minister failed even to mention softwood. Since he took office, softwood tariffs have tripled, going from 14% to 45%.

Just yesterday, Sinclar Group Forest Products reduced its production by 40% at three of its mills in northern B.C. There are 350 mill workers affected by the cuts. When will the Prime Minister finally stand up for forestry workers?

• (1450)

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as someone who grew up in a forestry town in northern Vancouver Island, I understand the issue. Softwood lumber is the lifeblood of the small forestry communities in this country.

We are talking with the premiers. We are working together. We have been very clear that the U.S. tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber are absolutely unjustified, and we are working very hard to resolve this.

Oral questions

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the B.C. forestry workers I know do not want handouts; they want their well-paying jobs back. The BC Council of Forest Industries president and CEO, Kim Haakstad, said last week, “The recent increase in U.S. tariffs and duties is a serious blow to an industry already strained by years of uncertainty, mill closures, and job losses. The federal government must make resolving the softwood lumber dispute a national priority.”

When will the Prime Minister finally stand up for B.C. forest workers?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is why we have put together a \$700-million liquidity package. That is why we put together a \$500-million retooling fund. That is why we are meeting with the premiers to work on this every single day. This industry has been unfairly and unjustly treated by the Americans. We will work hard to fix that.

Eric Melillo (Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised he would negotiate a win with the United States, but he has broken that promise when it comes to softwood lumber. Softwood tariffs were at 14% when he took office; they then jumped to 35%, and they are now at 45%. The Prime Minister has sold out our workers, and softwood tariffs have tripled.

Now the Ear Falls sawmill is facing an indefinite shutdown, affecting hundreds of workers and devastating the entire community, yet the Liberals have not lifted a finger to provide any support. Will the Prime Minister stop selling out Canadian workers?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, \$50 million in EI support is not nothing; \$700 million in liquidity support is not nothing, and \$500 million in retooling support is not nothing. We are working hard to resolve this problem for the Canadian workers.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised he would negotiate a win with the United States by July 21. He has broken that promise, leaving softwood lumber workers out of work and out in the cold. When he took office, softwood tariffs were at 14%, and now they are at 45%. The Prime Minister did not even mention our mill workers in Washington.

Workers in Grand Forks are worried about their mortgages, their neighbours and how they are going to afford their next meal. When will the Prime Minister stop selling out our lumber workers and finally get the deal that he promised them?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said, we have been clear: The U.S. tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber are absolutely unjustified. We are working at every level to resolve this. With \$50 million in EI support, \$700 million in liquidity support and \$500 million in retooling, we are working very hard to resolve this issue.

Mike Dawson (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised Canadians he would negotiate a win with the United States. When the Prime Minister took office, softwood lumber tariffs were at 14%; they then climbed to 35%, and now they are at 45%. Because of his failures, mills have closed their doors, and forestry towns are paying the price.

In Miramichi, we have seen mill closures at Arbec Forest Products because the Prime Minister cannot close the deal. When will the Prime Minister put his big-boy pants on and finally stand up for Canada's forest industry?

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people of Miramichi, Bathurst, Chipman, Minto and Madawaska, all through northwest and north-eastern New Brunswick, know that the softwood lumber industry is a key part of our economic future, but the tariffs are putting our workers and businesses in jeopardy.

That is why we put real solutions on the table: \$700 million in support through the Business Development Bank, \$500 million for retooling and \$50 million for workers' supports. That is alongside the strategic response fund, which helps our business owners pivot and adapt. This is the kind of support we need in New Brunswick and across Canada.

● (1455)

[*Translation*]

Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister took office, U.S. tariffs on lumber were 14%. Then they rose to 35%. Now they are 45%, not to mention the possible additional 10% that is coming.

Back home in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, that represents \$910 million in wages for our workers. Not only did the Prime Minister fail to negotiate an agreement, but tariffs have tripled since he took office.

Why is the Prime Minister abandoning forestry workers and their families?

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that our country is built on lumber, whether it is construction materials or furniture, whether it comes from Quebec, Saguenay or New Brunswick.

We also know that the U.S. tariffs put our workers and businesses at risk. That is why we have solutions, namely \$500 million for businesses, \$700 million for the Business Development Bank of Canada and \$50 million to support employment insurance.

Oral questions

These measures are in addition to the strategic response fund and help our businesses adapt and innovate. We are there for Quebec and New Brunswick.

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the forestry sector is under attack with U.S. tariffs of 45%. The Liberal government's failed negotiations with the Americans are putting thousands of Canadian forestry jobs at risk.

In Chaudière-Appalaches, more than 8,000 workers are directly threatened. Have trucks full of lumber ever come out of downtown Montreal? No, lumber comes from rural areas.

My question is simple: Will the Liberal government finally stop favouring big cities and start looking after the regions?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just last Friday, I was with my colleague from Les Pays-d'en-Haut to meet with representatives from one of these companies to discuss the measures that the federal government has put in place: \$700 million in liquidity supports through the Business Development Bank of Canada and \$500 million to modernize these businesses.

We are supporting the sector. We will be there for the softwood lumber sector from coast to coast to coast. I am from La Tuque. I know exactly what is at stake. We will be there for workers, and we will be there for communities.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I drafted a Conservative private member's bill, Bill C-225. This is known as Bailey's law and is the most dramatic bill to address intimate partner violence in Canadian history. Bailey's family, Trish and Debbie, are present in Ottawa, and they are watching.

They want to know, and victims want to know, will the Liberals back Bill C-225, yes or no?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member raises a very important concern that Canadians have and that our government shares.

We have always stood up against gender-based violence. We currently have a bill in the House, Bill C-9, which addresses femicide and makes it a conditional first-degree crime. In that bill, we are also making bail harder to obtain for those accused of sexual offences, including those involving choking, suffocation and strangulation.

We are also going to be bringing in a gender-based violence bill later on this year. We are working on all fronts.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals tell us all they are doing in Bill C-14. They could be doing more by passing Bill C-225.

I spoke with Flo Bellman and Paul Henderson. Their daughter Darian was killed by her intimate partner. They support this bill. Trish and Debbie support this bill. An NDP premier, David Eby, supports this bill.

I see that the minister is wearing a button. Why does she not swap that button for a purple ribbon and get behind this bill? Can she let the family know? Will she ditch the button, get the ribbon and support this bill, yes or no?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not about buttons or ribbons. Of course, my button is about supporting the RCMP. I support law enforcement across this country, which often has to address a lot of these situations.

What is important is that we take important measures and steps to fight gender-based violence in our country, and we are doing exactly that. We have a bill in the House right now. We are bringing in a very comprehensive bill in the coming weeks on gender-based violence. I would love to work with the member opposite to address this very serious issue in the best way possible.

* * *

● (1500)

[Translation]

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I was in high school in northern Ontario, the breakfast program at school was often a great help to me. This is not easy to talk about, but this program helped me do really well at school. These are life-changing programs. They are not garbage, as the opposition calls them.

Can the secretary of state tell us how many children have already benefited from Canada's national school food program?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in Quebec, we provide \$65 million in funding to support the province's school food program, reaching more than 500,000 students and 2,200 schools.

In addition, our support helps families save \$800 a year in groceries. This program is not garbage. We are delivering this program for the well-being of children across the country.

*Oral questions**[English]***INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Chinese tariffs on Canadian canola are punishing farmers and driving up food costs for Canadians. Almost six million tonnes of canola are being blocked from China, yet the Prime Minister and the agriculture minister have not met with their Chinese counterparts. In fact, at committee, the agriculture minister admitted that he has not even discussed the tariffs with his Beijing counterpart. While farmers are being punished by these tariffs, the Liberals are standing on the sidelines.

Will the Prime Minister, when he meets with his Chinese counterpart this week, fight for farmers and get tariff reductions, or will he come back empty-handed yet again?

[Translation]

Sophie Chatel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one thing we can be proud of is our canola producers, because they produce the best canola in the world. China is imposing completely unjustified tariffs on our producers.

Yes, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food are in Asia right now. They are there to explore new markets for our producers. They will also try to resolve this trade dispute.

That is not all. In the meantime, we are here to support our producers by developing a Canadian biofuel market. We are also supporting them by—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Foothills.

[English]

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they should be supporting Canadian producers by getting those markets back. When the tariffs were put on Canadian canola, the Prime Minister promised that he would have high-level engagement. It has been eight months with no engagement, and the tariffs from China have actually increased.

It is not just canola. Peas, pork and seafood are all facing Chinese tariffs. Canadian beef has been blocked from China since 2021. Farm families are literally paying for Liberal inaction. Farmers deserve to be a priority.

When the Prime Minister meets with the Chinese president, will he get reductions on these tariffs, or will he come home empty-handed yet again?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is completely false to claim that the government is not advancing the interests of Canadian farmers and Canadian agriculture. When I was in the Indo-Pacific just 10 days ago, I raised the issues related to agriculture with my Chinese and Indian counterparts.

Let me assure the House that, at all times, we are advancing the interests of our farmers. Let me assure the House that the minister responsible is in the region at this time and doing just that.

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is not even meeting with his counterparts on his trip, and he is proving to be as ineffective as his predecessor. Harvest on the Prairies is coming to an end, and Canadian farmers are still enduring tariffs imposed by China on canola and pulse products. Exports of these crops to China have halted. They need relief, but the government is slow to act. Ahead of a meeting with the president of China, the Prime Minister says that things will take time. Meanwhile, farmers' bins are full and there are no new markets for them to go to.

With food prices skyrocketing and farm profitability dropping, Canadians want to know this: Is the Prime Minister getting a deal done, or will he come home empty-handed yet again?

● (1505)

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate.

When I was in the Indo-Pacific, I reiterated the interests of Canadian farmers and the agricultural sector writ large on canola and agricultural products, as well as on seafood and other items.

Let me also reiterate that we will seek to diversify supply chains for Canadian industry across the board with countries outside and inside the region so as to grow this economy and make it the strongest in the G7.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Aslam Rana (Hamilton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, skilled trade workers are essential for building the homes, infrastructure and economy that Canadians rely on every day. Unions play a critical role in training the next generation of tradespeople and helping to address persistent labour shortages.

Can the Secretary of State for Labour tell the House how budget 2025 is supporting union-based apprenticeship training and helping more Canadians build rewarding, high-paying careers in the skilled trades?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the BC Building Trades are in town, and their message is clear: It is time to build.

We agree with them. We are investing in major infrastructure projects across the country. We are building more homes, but none of that happens without the people who are going to do the building. That is why, through budget 2025, we are doubling the union training innovation program, strengthening the Red Seal trades and creating more opportunities for apprentices.

This is about investing in people and investing in our workers, because when we invest in our union workers, we invest in Canada's future. I hope the other parties join us in voting for the budget on November 4.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

JUSTICE

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Quebec has already seen its 15th femicide since the beginning of the year. This morning, we learned that the number of women who are victims of domestic violence has increased by 39% across Canada since 2015. Bailey McCourt died because the system failed to protect her. Gabie Renaud died because the system protects criminals more than it does victims.

Their families are calling for greater protection and fewer slaps on the wrist. As everyone knows, the Conservatives are listening and coming up with real solutions, such as Bill C-225. Will the Liberal government finally listen to the Conservatives and keep dangerous people behind bars instead of at home?

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time I have risen in the House, because the issue of femicide victims affects us all in Canada. I am well aware of that. The important thing is to have a broad and integrated approach.

We have already introduced bills that will allow us to take action. We think it is better to support the overall structure. That is how we are going to support the Canadian system, which will prevent violence against women.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, housing cost is the biggest contributing factor to the affordability crisis. Notwithstanding the promise of Build Canada Homes, new homes will not materialize until years from now, and there would be no federal subsidies to ensure affordability.

Renters are in a crisis now. Corporate landlords are hiking rent far beyond inflation, and ordinary Canadians are being forced out of their homes. Housing profiteers are jacking up rent by 30%, 40% or even 50%.

National vacancy control legislation would stop this gouging cold. Will the Prime Minister bring back a national vacancy control, like the one we used to have before the war, to protect renters?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is very focused on affordable housing, in particular, non-market rental housing. We are starting with \$1 billion that, with the support of the House on the budget, we can dedicate to transitional supportive housing for people who are homeless or people who are in shelters. If we get them into transitional homes and supports, they can move into permanent housing.

We are focused on the tens of thousands of units of affordable rental housing that we want to build across this country. We count on the member's support in the House to do that.

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, Iqaluit residents are protesting high grocery prices. In Cambridge Bay, even with the subsidy of \$7.39, 12 bruised oranges cost \$26.76. No one can afford these prices. The North West Company is profiting from our tax dollars while Inuit families are going hungry.

Will the minister accelerate the nutrition north review so that Inuit families can finally afford food?

● (1510)

Hon. Rebecca Alty (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has promised to overhaul nutrition north, and work is moving ahead. We are expanding beyond retail subsidies by codeveloping support for local harvesters and community food programs. Over 5,500 harvesters have received fuel, gear and safety support, and dozens of community freezers and sharing programs are running across the north. In the Northwest Territories, a managed reindeer herd supplies hospitals and community feasts, keeping country food moving year-round.

That is how we are delivering food security and affordability, led by the north and built to last. We will continue to work with our partners.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

The House resumed from October 27 consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

The Speaker: It being 3:11 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment of the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes to the motion to concur in the third report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

Call in the members.

And the bells having rung:

[English]

The Speaker: The amendment is as follows. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

● (1525)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 42*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Baber	Bailey
Baldinelli	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	Berthold
Bexte	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bonin	Bonk
Borrelli	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cobena
Cody	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
DeBellefeuille	Delteff
d'Entremont	DeRidder
Deschênes	Diotte
Doherty	Dowdall
Duncan	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Falk (Provencher)
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Brampton West)	Gill (Calgary McKnight)
Gill (Windsor West)	Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Groleau
Guglielmin	Gunn
Hallan	Hardy
Ho	Hoback
Holman	Idlout
Jackson	Jansen
Jeneroux	Jivani
Johns	Kelly
Khanna	Kibble
Kirkland	Kmiec
Konanz	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kronis
Kuruc	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lawton
Lefebvre	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lloyd
Lobb	Ma
Mahal	Majumdar
Malette (Kapusasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)	Mantle
Martel	Mazier
McCauley	McKenzie
McLean (Calgary Centre)	McPherson

Routine Proceedings

Melillo	Menegakis
Moore	Morin
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ross
Rowe	Ruff
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Simard	Small
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stevenson	Strahl
Strauss	Stubbs
Thériault	Thomas
Tochot	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vien	Viensen
Vis	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Williamson	Zimmer— 170

NAYS

Members

Acan	Al Soud
Ali	Alty
Anand	Anandasangaree
Auguste	Bains
Baker	Bardeesy
Battiste	Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)	Bendayan
Bittle	Blair
Brière	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Champagne	Chang
Chartrand	Chatel
Chen	Chenette
Chi	Church
Clark	Connors
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dandurand
Danko	Deschênes-Thériault
Desrochers	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Duclos	Duguid
Dzerowicz	Earle
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Eyolfson
Fancy	Fanjoy
Fergus	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gaheer
Gainey	Gasparro
Gerretsen	Gould
Grant	Greaves
Guay	Guilbeault
Gull-Masty	Hajdu
Hanley	Harrison
Hepfner	Hirtle
Hodgson	Hogan
Housefather	Hussen
Iacono	Jaczek
Joly	Joseph
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Klassen

Routine Proceedings

Koutrakis	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)	Lapointe (Sudbury)
Lattanzio	Lauzon
Lavack	Lavoie
LeBlanc	Leitão
Lightbound	Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacDonald (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Maloney	May
McKelvie	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McKnight	McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Ménard	Mendès
Michel	Miedema
Miller	Mingarelli
Morrissey	Myles
Naqvi	Nathan
Nguyen	Noormohamed
Ntumba	Oliphant
Olszewski	O'Rourke
Osborne	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Provost
Ramsay	Rana
Robertson	Rochefort
Romanado	Royer
Sahota	Saimi
Sarai	Sari
Sawatzky	Schieffe
Sgro	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sodhi
Solomon	Sousa
St-Pierre	Sudds
Tesser Derksen	Thompson
Turnbull	Valdez
van Koeverden	Vandenbeld
Villeneuve	Watchorn
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zerucelli	Zuberi — 164

PAIRED

Members

Barlow	Bezan
MacDonald (Malpeque)	McGuinty
Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East) — 6

The Speaker: I declare the amendment carried.

[*English*]

The next question is on the main motion, as amended.

The question is as follows. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

The Speaker: 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.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting no.

Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives agree to apply the vote, with the Conservatives voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats agree to apply the results of the last vote to the current vote, with the New Democrats voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party also agrees to apply the vote and will be voting yes.

● (1530)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 43*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultatif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Baber	Bailey
Baldinelli	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	Berthold
Bexte	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bonin	Bonk
Borrelli	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cobena
Cody	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	DeRidder
Deschênes	Diotte
Doherty	Dowdall
Duncan	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Falk (Provencher)
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Brampton West)	Gill (Calgary McKnight)
Gill (Windsor West)	Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Groleau
Guglielmin	Gunn
Hallan	Hardy
Ho	Hoback
Holman	Idlout
Jackson	Jansen
Jeneroux	Jivani
Johns	Kelly
Khanna	Kibble
Kirkland	Kmic

Routine Proceedings

Konanz
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kuruc
 Kwan
 Lantsman
 Lawrence
 Lefebvre
 Leslie
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lobb
 Mahal
 Malette (Kapusking—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
 Martel
 Mazier
 McKenzie
 McPherson
 Menegakis
 Morin
 Motz
 Nater
 Patzer
 Perron
 Poilievre
 Reid
 Reynolds
 Roberts
 Ross
 Ruff
 Scheer
 Seeback
 Small
 Ste-Marie
 Strahl
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 Kronis
 Kusie
 Lake
 Larouche
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 Lemire
 Lewis (Essex)
 Lloyd
 Ma
 Majumdar
 Mantle
 May
 McCauley
 McLean (Calgary Centre)
 Melillo
 Moore
 Morrison
 Muys
 Normandin
 Paul-Hus
 Plamondon
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Richards
 Rood
 Rowe
 Savard-Tremblay
 Schmale
 Simard
 Steinley
 Stevenson
 Strauss
 Thériault
 Tochor
 Uppal
 Vien
 Vis
 Warkentin
 Williamson

Fragiskatos
 Freeland
 Fuhr
 Gainey
 Gerretsen
 Grant
 Guay
 Gull-Masty
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Hodgson
 Housefather
 Iacono
 Joly
 Kayabaga
 Khalid
 Koutrakis
 Lambropoulos
 Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
 Lattanzio
 Lavack
 LeBlanc
 Lightbound
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
 Mendès
 Miedema
 Mingarelli
 Myles
 Nathan
 Noormohamed
 Oliphant
 O'Rourke
 Petitpas Taylor
 Provost
 Rana
 Rochefort
 Royer
 Saini
 Sari
 Schiefke
 Sheehan
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Fraser
 Fry
 Gaheer
 Gasparro
 Gould
 Greaves
 Guilbeault
 Hajdu
 Harrison
 Hirtle
 Hogan
 Husson
 Jaczek
 Joseph
 Kelloway
 Klassen
 Lalonde
 Lamoureux
 Lapointe (Sudbury)
 Lauzon
 Lavoie
 Leitão
 Long
 MacDonald (Cardigan)
 Malette (Bay of Quinte)
 McKelvie
 McKnight
 Ménard
 Michel
 Miller
 Morrissey
 Naqvi
 Nguyen
 Ntumba
 Olszewski
 Osborne
 Powlowski
 Ramsay
 Robertson
 Romanado
 Sahota
 Sarai
 Sawatzky
 Sgro
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Solomon
 St-Pierre
 Tesser Derksen
 Turnbull
 van Koeverden
 Villeneuve
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zerucelli

NAYS

Members

Acan
 Ali
 Anand
 Auguste
 Baker
 Battiste
 Belanger (Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill Riv-er)
 Bittle
 Brière
 Casey
 Champagne
 Chartrand
 Chen
 Chi
 Clark
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Danko
 Desrochers
 Dhillion
 Duclos
 Dzerowicz
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fancy
 Fergus
 Fonseca

Al Soud
 Alty
 Anandasangaree
 Bains
 Bardeesy
 Beech
 Bendayan
 Blair
 Carr
 Chagger
 Chang
 Chatel
 Chenette
 Church
 Connors
 Coteau
 Dandurand
 Deschênes-Thériault
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Duguid
 Earle
 El-Khoury
 Eyolfson
 Fanjoy
 Fisher
 Fortier

PAIRED

Members

Barlow
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 Shipley
 Bezan
 McGuinty
 Sidhu (Brampton East)— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

Accordingly, the third report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics is referred back to the standing committee.

[*Translation*]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 18 minutes.

*Government Orders***PRIVILEGE**

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS COMMISSIONER

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to the question of privilege raised last Friday by the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes concerning the posting of new forms on the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's website.

If what the member alleges is true, then that is a clear violation of the rules established by the House, which could lead to a finding of contempt of Parliament as a result of a serious infringement of the House of Commons' rights and powers. That is all the more concerning because it would mean a violation of an explicit requirement in the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons that stems from a deliberate choice by the House.

Section 30 of the code states that the commissioner must submit any proposed guidelines relating to this code to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which, after study, tables a report in the House. Subsection 30(2) states the following:

(2) Any guidelines and forms approved by the committee shall be reported to the House and shall come into effect when the report is concurred in by the House.

This confirms the practice of requiring forms to be submitted to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for approval and, ultimately, to the House itself. The fact that forms were published on the commissioner's website without review and approval also appears to violate subsection 30(3), which requires the forms to remain confidential until they are reported to the House.

However, I will say that I went on the commissioner's website and could not find the forms referred to by the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes on Friday. Therefore I was unable to see the violation raised by the member first-hand, but in any event it is important to remember that this requirement in section 30 of the code is not a simple administrative detail. It is meant to ensure that the tools and mechanisms used for its interpretation and application are validated by democratically elected bodies. Although the commissioner performs his duties independently, he is not above the rules established by the House.

As a member of Parliament and a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, I believe it is important that the committee look into this matter in order to prevent a precedent from being set and to ensure that instruments for interpreting the code cannot be amended or introduced without parliamentary oversight.

Mr. Speaker, I am therefore asking you to find that there is a *prima facie* case of breach of parliamentary privilege, and I believe that it must be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The Speaker: The member's notice is duly noted.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CITIZENSHIP ACT

The House resumed from October 27 consideration of Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025), as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak in support of Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act, and to reaffirm the importance of the requirement for a substantial three-year connection. This measure is central to our vision of a strong, vibrant, and equitable Canadian citizenship.

Every time we talk about citizenship, we talk about what it means to be Canadian. Not only is it a legal status, but it is an identity based on participation, respect, and responsibility.

The question that arises from this bill is, why three years? Since second reading, the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration has conducted a thorough study of Bill C-3. The witnesses were very clear: Being physically present for three consecutive years is the fairest and most realistic way to demonstrating a genuine connection to Canada.

This standard is based on an already well-established principle. To apply for citizenship, a permanent resident must have spent 1,095 days in Canada in the last five years. It takes three years to get to know and respect our institutions, to understand our values and to integrate into Canadian life.

For Canadians born abroad, this same requirement strikes a balance. It keeps citizenship open to the world without removing it from its national roots. We want citizenship to remain a meaningful commitment, not merely an administrative legacy. Three years is proof of a real connection, a connection with lived experiences and an emotional connection in particular. It is a flexible and modern model, recognizing that the international context is always changing.

Canadians travel, study and work abroad. They are researchers at other universities, diplomats, entrepreneurs, artists and teachers. Bill C-3 recognizes this reality and takes it into consideration. It allows Canadians living abroad to maintain genuine ties to Canada while ensuring that every generation has also spent a meaningful part of their life here in Canada.

The bill calls for the parent born abroad to have spent at least a total of three years in Canada before the birth or adoption of their child. These years may be non-consecutive. They may be the result of education, employment, a family commitment or community involvement. It is a modern, flexible and, above all, inclusive approach that respects life journeys while preserving the integrity of citizenship.

I will now address the issue of intergenerational ties, which must remain strong. Canadian citizenship is a living legacy. This bill ensures that, from generation to generation, the connection to the country remains practical and meaningful. By making citizenship by descent possible beyond the first generation, but requiring this substantial three-year connection, we are creating a balance between openness and responsibility. We are not closing the door. We are firmly anchoring it in Canadian soil. We are telling every family that its citizenship is a right, but also a commitment to the community, to our democracy and to our shared values.

This is a fair and lasting response to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. This reform is in response to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, which ruled in 2023 that the first-generation limit on citizenship by descent is unconstitutional. Bill C-3 expands access, but in a balanced way. It ensures that the children born abroad to Canadian parents inherit not only a status, but also a real Canadian experience.

Three years is how long it takes to integrate, work, study, establish friendships and contribute to Canadian society. It is how long it takes to love one's country, Canada, not from afar, but from within.

• (1535)

That is why we say that it is not about living in Canada. It is about experiencing Canada, with its culture, its art and its values, while respecting its institutions, of course. It is a citizenship that is lived, not just inherited. This three-year substantial connection is not a barrier; it is evidence of attachment.

Canadian citizenship is not a passport that someone just happens to get. It is a commitment to a country that is known for its openness, diversity and justice. This bill reminds us that citizenship is passed down not just through blood or paper, but also through experience, contribution and solidarity.

There also needs to be a balance between fairness and consistency. The three-year threshold applies consistently to all Canadians born or adopted abroad. It aligns citizenship by descent with the naturalization criteria, which ensures complete consistency and fairness. This will reinforce a simple idea: Citizenship in Canada is based on meaningful participation in the life of the nation. It is a shared responsibility, a shared bond and a pride to be nurtured.

In conclusion, this citizenship is worthy of our country, our values and humanity most of all. Bill C-3 is not a simple administrative update. It is a statement of principle on what it means to be Canadian in 2025.

We live in a world of mobility, diversity and complexity. This bill does not restrict; it brings people together. It does not close doors; it ensures that the human thread connecting every citizen in Canada remains alive and sincere. Indeed, being Canadian is more than just a status. It is a sense of belonging, a bond of the heart and the memory. It is the pride of a country that is built by the people who live in it, contribute to it and choose it.

Three years is not much time to learn to love a country, but it is enough time to never want to leave it again, as was the case in my experience. After three years of immigration, I loved this country. I

Government Orders

found it really hard to distance myself from this beautiful country of Canada.

I invite my esteemed colleagues to support this bill, which is fair, balanced and deeply human, so that Canadian citizenship remains a living promise, the promise of a united, open Canada that is proud of its citizens around the world.

• (1540)

[*English*]

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would be curious whether the hon. member across the way supports a basic background check before automatic citizenship is granted to a Canadian born abroad who gains citizenship by descent, because as the Liberal bill was drafted, it would provide automatic citizenship without any kind of security check. Conservatives brought forward an amendment at committee to fix that. What is the member's position on the Conservative amendment?

[*Translation*]

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, my colleague raises a good question. All I can say is that this bill will take national security, stability and verifications into account.

I nevertheless invite my colleague to introduce the amendment. Our way of working, as a government, is to collaborate, coordinate and find some way to co-operate on all aspects, particularly on public safety.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the question that was just asked.

It is interesting; there was a committee report that came out when the Conservatives were in government. The CIMM committee report done at the time of the Harper government made this recommendation: "Background checks are only appropriate for candidates seeking a grant of citizenship as opposed to those for whom citizenship is a birthright." The current debate is on birthright citizenship, so the Conservative Party has forgotten about that part, even though the leader of the Conservative Party was around at that time, and it has taken the reverse position.

I wonder if the member would agree that the Conservative Party needs to be more consistent with public policy.

[*Translation*]

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, I have to agree when it comes to consistency.

I also find it unacceptable that this descent issue, which was rejected by the Conservatives at the time, is now being reintroduced.

However, we also have to be careful. If immigration is always associated with security issues, there is a risk of creating stigma. Security issues do not only involve immigrants; they affect the entire population, including people who were born here, who grew up here and who are unfortunately sometimes referred to as "old stock".

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Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we debated a committee report here in the House. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons stood up and told us the debate had no place here in the House. He said that the committees would handle this, that they were capable of doing their job and that, when the committee in question completes its work, the government would take note of its recommendations here, in the House. In summary, he told us we were wasting our time debating this topic in the House.

Today we are debating Bill C-3, which has come back to us at report stage with amendments. The committee did its job: It heard witnesses, it reached a consensus and amendments were adopted. The Parliamentary Budget Officer appeared before the committee, as did the minister, who did not even know the statistics. Now today, just a day later, we are being told that the House is the place to revisit amendments adopted in committee and simply dismiss the work that has been done.

Which Liberals are we to believe? Are we to believe the ones from yesterday or the ones from today?

● (1545)

Abdelhaq Sari: Mr. Speaker, I will begin by answering the question asked by my hon. colleague. Who should we trust? We need to trust all Liberals who were selected by Canadians across the country.

I want to make another point. Proposing amendments is one thing, but distorting a bill is quite another. When amendments alter the spirit of a bill, things get problematic. This is no longer committee work. This is an attempt to destroy or distort something that was designed for the good of people we want to welcome to this country, whether they are adopted, naturalized or immigrants.

[*English*]

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act, brought forward by the Liberal government.

The bill would eliminate the first-generation limit for the granting of citizenship by descent and would drastically expand the granting of citizenship to persons born abroad who have little to no connection to Canada. In short, the bill is radical and reckless, and it would significantly undermine confidence in our immigration system.

Then again, it should come as no surprise that we have this awful piece of legislation brought forward by the Liberals across the way, because after all, they subscribe to a radical, globalist, postnationalist ideology. Justin Trudeau famously said that Canada is a post-national state with “no core identity”. It follows that if Canada has no core identity, then Canadian identity means nothing and Canadian citizenship means nothing. That is the vision of the Liberal Party for this country: Canada's being a postnational state.

With respect to background, the bill technically arose following a decision of an Ontario Superior Court judge to strike down the first-generation limit passed by the Harper government. I emphasize that it was technically arising from that court decision.

What is the first-generation limit? All it provides for is that only the first generation of children born abroad can acquire citizenship by descent. It was implemented for good reason: to end what amounted to abuses of citizenship by so-called Canadians of convenience, persons who have little or no connection to Canada, who have not been born in Canada, who have never set foot in Canada in some cases, who have not paid taxes in Canada and who have made no significant or any contributions to Canadian society, but who hold a Canadian passport. Invariably, when there would be a crisis in their respective country, they would demand that the Canadian government come to their rescue and bring them to Canada.

We saw this in 2006, during the crisis in Lebanon, when the Government of Canada was effectively forced to rescue 15,000 people with next to no connection to Canada, almost all of whom returned to Lebanon when the crisis ended, at a cost to taxpayers of \$100 million. The people of course would then claim the right to health care, housing and other benefits afforded to Canadian citizens. That is what the first-generation limit sought to prevent.

The Liberals will tell us not to blame them, because they had no choice, due to the decision of the Ontario Superior Court. They did have a choice. They could have appealed the decision. That is what would be done in the normal course. After all, it was a lower-court decision rendered by one judge's striking down a law duly passed by Parliament. Of course the Liberals did not appeal the decision, because they are motivated by their postnationalist ideology.

Instead what the Liberals did was use the lower-court decision as a pretext to bringing forward the radical bill now before the House. It is a bill that has been accurately characterized as a chain migration bill, a bill that would open the floodgates to the ability to acquire Canadian citizenship by people who are generations removed from any meaningful connection to Canada.

● (1550)

It is important to note that, while the lower court judge struck down the first-generation limit, the judge provided that it would be reasonable for Parliament to impose a substantial connection test. In other words, the judge said it is permissible for Parliament to require that someone born abroad who is applying for citizenship by descent to establish that they have some meaningful connection to Canada. What did the Liberals do in the face of that pronouncement? They ignored the judge.

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They hide behind the decision, but they introduced a bill with absolutely no substantial connection test. Instead, what this bill provides for is that someone born abroad would be able to acquire Canadian citizenship if only one of their parents had spent a grand total 1,095 days in Canada, and that need not be over a specific period or over a consecutive period of time. It could be a few weeks here and a few months there over the span of decades, so long as one parent had spent 1,095 days in Canada before that child was born, and then that child could extend automatic Canadian citizenship to their child if they also spent a grand total of 1,095 days over their lifetime.

On and on it could go, generation after generation. Make no mistake about it that the bill would facilitate intergenerational chain migration. It would provide automatic citizenship to persons with virtually no substantial connection to Canada, and without so much as a background check. That is right. Persons with criminal records, who might pose a threat to national security, if they were to meet the very wide parameters provided for in the bill, would be granted automatic Canadian citizenship. It is just crazy.

There is a small glimmer of light coming out of committee, and that is because Conservatives brought forward a number of amendments to fix the most problematic aspects of the bill. The Bloc Québécois worked with us, and those amendments were adopted at committee. Among the most significant of amendments adopted at committee was that to establish an actual substantial connection test, as provided for in the judgment of the Ontario Superior Court, which the Liberals ignored, and it would provide for a proper background check. Again, that is common sense.

However, the Liberals, subscribing to a postnationalist ideology, have signalled that they intend to strip the bill of these common-sense Conservative amendments, and as a consequence, we would be left with the same bill the Liberals initially put before the House, a bill that would weaken what it means to be a Canadian.

Citizenship ought to be more than a legal status. It ought to be more than having a passport. It is about our shared values interwoven through the history of this great country, including a commitment to freedom, democracy, pluralism and human rights, as well as our shared responsibilities, because citizenship is more than a right. With citizenship comes responsibilities.

The bill, unamended, would significantly weaken what it means to be a Canadian citizen, and it is not supportable.

• (1555)

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague had an excellent speech. He talked about the consequences of the bill. One of the consequences of the bill would be that people who get Canadian citizenship because their parents were here at one time, and who do not live in Canada, would then be able to vote in Canadian elections. Elections Canada allows people to choose which riding they want their vote to count in, and I can see how that might be very problematic from an interference point of view.

Does the member have any comment on a solution that should be applied to fix that problem?

Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, the solution would be to keep the Conservative amendments, which were adopted at committee, in the bill. That would harmonize the requirements for applicants for citizenship by way of descent with those of applicants who are applying for citizenship through the process of harmonization.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were supposed to be debating this yesterday, but for political reasons, that did not occur to the extent that it should have.

With respect to Bill C-3, there is, as the member referenced, a superior court decision. There is a timeline of November 20. I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts. Does he sense any obligation of the House to meet that timeline?

Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, in my response to the member for Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, I said “process of harmonization”. I meant the process of naturalization.

With respect to the question posed by the parliamentary secretary, this is what the Liberals do all the time. They get a lower court decision that they happen to like for ideological reasons. They do not fulfill their responsibility, which is to defend laws passed by Parliament, and appeal the decision. Then they say, “We are in a bind. We have no choice. We have to move ahead with legislation.”

It is part of a consistent pattern, and the bottom line is that the government should have appealed the decision. It did not. It brought in a radical badly drafted bill. We have worked to fix it. Let us keep the amendments in the bill, and we can move forward on that basis.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in his previous speech, the member for Bourassa was once again a bit theatrical when he said that the amendments adopted in committee would distort the bill. This shows that he is both incompetent and disingenuous.

Why do I say “incompetent”? The member knows full well that the amendments were accepted by the Chair. This means that they do not change the nature of the bill.

The member is being disingenuous, because he knows full well that the judge's ruling left it up to Parliament to decide what constituted a substantial connection to Canada that would allow certain children born abroad to qualify for Canadian citizenship.

These amendments are exactly and precisely what the courts have asked for. They are also entirely consistent with the nature and purpose of the bill.

I would like to know whether my colleague shares my interpretation of events and whether he thinks that what the Liberals did earlier today in this debate is simply disinformation to mislead Canadians for partisan purposes.

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Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, what the Liberals did not do was respect the ruling because, as the member pointed out, the judge provided for a substantial connection test. That is absent from the bill.

What the Liberals did do was create a two-tier system for applying for citizenship. One tier is for those who are applying through naturalization, whereby they have to get a language test, go for a background check and spend a certain period of time in Canada within five years. The Liberals, on the other hand, for those who meet the wide criteria that they have set out, would give automatic citizenship to persons who have no meaningful connection to Canada.

These amendments would harmonize the process to end a two-tier immigration process and respect the ruling of the Ontario Superior Court judge, a ruling that the Liberal government should have appealed in the first place.

• (1600)

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to once again be on my feet to talk about some of the government's latest legislation. As a refresher from high school civics, the bill is now at third reading. This means it has been introduced in the House, debated, sent to a committee, amended and is now being debated a final time before we vote on whether to pass it. At every stage of this process, Conservatives have stood up to make the legislation better, to fix many of the glaring flaws in the bill and to be the voices of the people who sent us here. At every stage, it has also been made stunningly clear just how much the Liberal government has broken our immigration system after only 10 years in power.

Let us look at the facts. We know that immigration levels were too high for too many years in this country. We know that senior public servants in Ottawa knew that, too. We know they told the then immigration minister, who has also been the housing minister and is now the Attorney General. We know the Liberal government continued with the unsustainable, out-of-control immigration numbers anyway. It let in over a million people in just one year.

There are many reasons the Liberals and their bureaucrats would want to continue with high levels of immigration. Maybe it is to cover up for a declining GDP per capita, for cheap temporary labour or for other reasons, but the Liberal government did not pay the price for its bad decision-making. That has been paid by people in communities such as Cambridge.

In the last few years, Cambridge has been growing so quickly that it now feels like a metropolis instead of the small town we still see ourselves as. The demand for housing increased so quickly, and the prices went up so fast, that many people cannot afford a home in the neighbourhoods where they grew up. Our schools are bursting at the seams, and good luck trying to find a family doctor or getting into the ER if needed. Crime in the community is also rising. We know repeat violent offenders are often the culprits, but multinational gangs and criminals are also to blame.

The Liberal government literally allowed somebody who appeared in an ISIS video to come to this country. The new immigration minister herself still cannot say if the current process is suffi-

cient or describe any of the steps in the process whatsoever. Those violent terrorists are in addition to the gangsters and gunrunners who have been taking advantage of our lax laws and security for years. These are people like Arjun Sahnun, who came here at just 19 years old, committed drive-by shootings and extortion and got arrested, but he hopped on a plane and fled to India for two years until he felt brave enough to come back to Canada last month when, luckily, he was arrested.

It was so infuriating to see the Liberals propose Bill C-3 in its original form because it was simply a rehashing of the same failed Liberal policies that got us here in the first place. It would allow unlimited chain migration to Canada in amounts that the government could not even properly estimate. It would have let people in with no security screening and without having to demonstrate proper language skills. Almost no substantial connection to Canada would have been required. This is the wrong way to go about fixing our immigration system. It is like leaving the front door of our house wide open and trusting that anybody who walks in is only going to sit down in the living room to watch TV. It just does not work like that, and Canadians know better.

However, the bill in its new form could go much further, and that is thanks to the advocacy and hard work of Conservative MPs here in Ottawa. There are amendments on the table to now include residency requirements, meaning those who want to be a citizen should demonstrate a substantial connection to Canada. That is common sense. There are also amendments to include language requirements, meaning people should be able to fluently speak English or French to become a citizen here. There is also a citizenship test, because everybody who becomes a Canadian should know about our country and its history.

The amendments also include a mandated security screening, so we can make sure that everybody who gets citizenship is somebody we can trust. Finally, there are requirements mandating that the minister reports to Parliament each year about the number of people who get Canadian citizenship. These are the kinds of things that people expect from our immigration system. It should meet our needs, keep us safe and preserve the value and honour of citizenship.

• (1605)

That is the main point of distinction. The Liberal government, frankly, has degraded the value of Canadian citizenship. It has made it easier for people who have committed crimes to stay here in Canada instead of deporting them. It abandoned all sense of restraint or reasonable immigration level targets. It even wanted to let people take their oath of citizenship, a solemn and dignified honour, online. It literally wanted to allow people to get their citizenship with a click of a button.

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The Conservatives, on the other hand, want to protect the honour in citizenship and make our system stronger. That is why we put forward these amendments. It is why we worked with advocates and stakeholders to make the bill stronger.

I am noticing a trend in this place. Last week, I got up to speak to a similar bill, Bill C-12, and on that piece of legislation too, it was Conservatives who stood up to make a bad law better. That is exactly what we have done here with Bill C-3, and it is what we are going to do day in and day out with other proposals too.

I am really proud when I can go back to Cambridge every weekend and point to accomplishments like this as proof that our Conservative team is united, strong and working hard for the people we serve. If it was not for us working with other parties and stakeholders, a bad bill would not have just been proposed; it also would have become law by now.

I call on all members of this House to support these amendments. If it is not common sense to perform security screenings, if it is not common sense to have a citizenship test and if it is not common sense to make sure the people we welcome here have a substantial connection to Canada, then I really do not know what it would be.

The Liberals have not even fixed the mess they made of the immigration system over the last 10 years, and they already want to expand it. The Liberals' own ministers have said they cannot account for all the people they have lost in Canada who should not be here. With this many people currently undocumented and lost in Canada, it puts everyone in danger, especially those vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking and exploitation.

This is a widespread modern-day slavery crisis happening right here in Canada. It is well known that just last year, the UN put out a report that referred to Canada's temporary foreign worker program as a "breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery". The report came out last year and is entitled "Visit to Canada". It is only 22 pages long, and I highly recommend that all Canadians, but especially my colleagues across the aisle, read it to properly understand the Liberals' failures, which must be addressed before opening up Canada to even more exploitation.

The cheap, inhumane labour that the Liberals refuse to address is also further pricing young Canadians out of their future here in Canada. With the dream of home ownership already taken away by the Liberal housing crisis and so many of our youth struggling to put food on the table and living paycheque to paycheque, they are now having their jobs taken away by the Liberals. With the labour market becoming oversaturated, youth unemployment reached 15% in September according to Statistics Canada.

What future is the government leaving for the next generation when they cannot find jobs, afford food or look for a place to live? If the Liberals cannot even offer a future to current Canadians, what is left to offer new Canadians? Instead of trying to address the problems the Liberal government has made, it is already moving on to find new ways to expand the problem with bills like Bill C-3.

I will close by saying this. Canada is a proud country and we are all proud to be Canadians. This place was built by people who came here from places all around the world to contribute their talents and achieve their dreams. If we did not have immigration, we

would not have a country, plain and simple. It is up to us now to make sure that this system and the immigration structure work for everyone. That is what we want to do here in Ottawa, and that is what we will always keep fighting for on Parliament Hill.

• (1610)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Don Chapman sent me an email, and he is fairly well recognized as someone who understands and has an appreciation for lost Canadians. In it, he stated that a 1997 Supreme Court decision, *Benner v. Canada (Secretary of State)*, declared background checks for lost Canadians to be unconstitutional. A report also came out in December 2007, when Stephen Harper was the prime minister and the Conservatives were in power, that reinforced this Supreme Court statement.

The Conservatives have changed their position on individuals being entitled to citizenship as a birthright. I am wondering if the member can explain why they have changed their position.

Connie Cody: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal across the way is reflecting on the Liberal soft-on-crime approach. This is consistent with the Liberals.

If the Liberal government wanted to actually clean up the mess it made of the immigration system, it would focus on legislation to do that, not force through Bill C-3, which would expand loopholes and the exploitation it could face.

The Liberals are mocking Canadians by lowering citizenship requirements to something that could be obtained at a drive-through window.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, basically, if we were to accept the Liberal and NDP amendments to the amendments proposed in committee, let us just say that someone could have lived in Canada for three years out of 65, and their children, who never lived in Canada, could automatically apply for Canadian citizenship by descent without a security check, language test or citizenship test.

Why does my colleague think the Liberals want to offer citizenship by descent unconditionally, without any checks?

[*English*]

Connie Cody: Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that there does not seem to be any common sense here. I am trying to understand the logic, or lack thereof.

That is a tough question to answer. I do not see any logical reason for wanting to push through a bill open to errors, failures and exploitation without addressing any of the problems the Liberals' past attempts have created.

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With the Liberals' track record of immigration failures, which I highlighted in my speech, plus the different issues pointed out in all the speeches of my colleagues, I wish the Liberals would try to fix their current mess instead of trying to make it even bigger.

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Cambridge for a very well-thought-out speech today.

We have seen repeatedly over the years that the Liberals have debased and destroyed the Canadian consensus on the success of immigration and its value to this country. I would like to ask my colleague to opine on whether she believes devaluing citizenship, as the Liberals are doing in Bill C-3, would help restore Canadians' faith in the government and in our immigration process.

Connie Cody: Mr. Speaker, that is definitely a huge concern.

First of all, citizenship and the Canadian identity are the heart and soul of what makes this country so good. I am very honoured to be a proud Canadian citizen. It is a privilege that every family must earn, whether through their ancestors building this country, fighting to defend it or just following the rules and requirements set out for new Canadians to share in this honour. Citizenship should not become as easy to get as a late-night impulse purchase on Amazon.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, your office just grouped all the NDP and Liberal amendments into one vote. In other words, a single vote in the House will decide whether all the work that was done on this bill in committee will be wiped out.

How much respect does the government have for the work of this committee?

[*English*]

Connie Cody: Mr. Speaker, there does not seem to be any respect at all. As I said, there are a lot of inconsistencies in this bill. If the Liberal government wanted to actually clean up the mess it made with the immigration system, it would focus on legislation to do that.

This is an overreaching bill that is open to so much exploitation, and the government has failed to address what is happening in our immigration system due to all the Liberal failures.

• (1615)

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the proud Canadians in the welcoming riding of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

If anyone is curious about the history of immigration in Canada, they need only drive up the Ottawa Valley. Leaving behind our indigenous-named capital city and the suburbs with English and French names, we begin to see the Scottish influence in places like McNab. Then come the Irish names, such as Shamrock and Mount St. Patrick, followed by the Kashubian names in Wilno. If people continue to drive, they can join Oktoberfest in Pembroke with German schnitzel. Then they can stop in Petawawa for authentic Lebanese cuisine or can celebrate Diwali in Deep River.

This journey is more than scenic; it is a living testament to the resilience of those who chose Canada as their home. Each community tells a story of migration, settlement and contribution. Successive waves of people came to Canada, built communities and enriched our nation. They brought with them traditions, languages and values that have become a part of our national fabric.

Canadians were proud of our welcoming immigration system. It was a system built on fairness, compassion and a shared commitment to building a better future. Then the Liberal Party broke it.

Some have accused the Liberals of breaking immigration for electoral reasons, but given the recent election results, with elbows-up nativists flocking to the Liberal banner and new Canadians, tired of having their cars stolen and businesses burned down, rushing to our party, that theory does not hold up well. The real reason the Liberals broke our immigration system is that they broke our economy.

After strangling our resource economy with red tape and regulation, the GDP began to decline, so the Liberals made the decision to goose the stats by importing growth. It was a textbook Trudeau policy: It looked progressive on the surface, but underneath it was a system of exploitation designed to inflate GDP numbers and home prices. This approach ignored long-term consequences; placed pressure on housing, infrastructure and social services; created divisions in communities; and undermined public confidence.

Now the Liberals want to continue this decade-long effort to undermine our system by granting citizenship to the great-grandchildren of those who left this country decades ago. They claim it is about fairness and inclusion, but fairness must be balanced with responsibility. Citizenship is not a souvenir. It is a commitment to Canada and a pledge to uphold our laws, respect our institutions and contribute to our society.

The Liberals' version of Bill C-3 would allow citizenship to be passed on with minimal connection to Canada. That is not fairness; it is recklessness. It devalues the meaning of citizenship. It sends the message that Canadian identity can be inherited without engagement.

As Conservatives, we cannot sit by and watch the Liberals vandalize the integrity of Canadian citizenship. Canadians, in their wisdom, decided not to grant a majority mandate to an inexperienced, rookie Prime Minister who just happens to be a citizen of three separate countries. The government must work through the legislative process, and it must respect that democratic process. The Liberals cannot claim to defend Canadian citizenship while ignoring our parliamentary democracy. The government must adopt the bill as amended.

Under our proposed changes, in order to gain citizenship, a parent must have a real connection to Canada by living here for at least three years within a five-year period. The Liberals want it to be three years across a lifetime. That is a loophole, not a standard.

We have also proposed that to gain citizenship, applicants must have some proficiency in either English or French, be able to pass a citizenship test and complete security screening. These are reasonable measures supported by a majority of committee members. They reflect the expectations of Canadians and would ensure that new citizens are prepared to participate fully in our society.

Our amendments introduce a substantial connection test: A parent must have lived in Canada for 1,095 days before a child's birth or adoption. This would ensure that citizenship is passed on by those who have truly lived here. It is not enough to have visited Canada decades ago. Citizenship must reflect a real and recent connection. We also require language proficiency. It is not a barrier; it is a bridge to integration. It helps newcomers succeed in school, work and civic life.

● (1620)

We require a citizenship test; this ensures that citizens understand our values and our institutions. It fosters a sense of belonging and shared purpose. We require a security screening; this protects Canadians from people who may pose a threat. It is a basic safeguard in any responsible immigration system.

These are not radical ideas; they are common sense. They are supported by a majority of committee members. They are supported by Canadians across this country.

Unfortunately it looks like the socialist coalition is back. After Canadians rightly punished the NDP for propping up a long-despised government, it lost party status. Now the socialists are cooking up a backroom deal to keep the investment banker in power. They want to roll back our common-sense amendments. They want to pass a bill that would open the door to instant citizenship. They want to ignore the lessons of history. They want to ignore the will of Canadians.

We will not let that happen. We will stand up for the integrity of our citizenship laws. We will stand up for the values that unite us. What would this mean in practice?

Let us consider Elon Musk. His mother was born in Canada. He was born in South Africa. Based on available reports, he spent just under three years in Canada between 1989 and 1992 before transferring to a university in the United States. Since then, he has fathered 14 children that we know of. Eight of those children were born to Canadian mothers. They are already Canadian citizens, regardless of what happens in the legislation.

It is the other six children who would be impacted by the bill. If our common-sense amendments are rejected by the Liberal-NDP coalition, Elon could secure citizenship for his children by vacationing in Canada for a few months. If he has already accumulated three years of residency in the last 40 years, all six children would be instant citizens the day the bill comes into effect.

It should warm the hearts of Canadians to know that the NDP is fighting for the rights of billionaire nepo babies. According to the

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Parliamentary Budget Officer, the Musk kids would be joined by 150,000 other instant Canadians. This would not be a hypothetical scenario; it would be a real and immediate consequence. It is a policy failure waiting to happen.

The Ontario Superior Court ruled in 2023 that the first-generation limit was unconstitutional. The Liberals refused to appeal the decision. Instead, Bill C-3 is their response. The bill would remove the first-generation limit on citizenship by descent. It would also restore citizenship to lost Canadians who were excluded due to outdated laws or administrative errors. We support restoring fairness to those who were wrongfully excluded, but we must not create new problems in the process.

The government's approach is to expand access without ensuring accountability. This Liberal approach has real-world consequences. When Liberals undermine faith in our immigration system and Canadian citizenship is eroded, it erodes our sense of solidarity. It undermines trust, not just trust in the system but also trust in one another. Societies high in trust are low in crime and chaos. We used to be that society. We used to be a haven in a dangerous world. We can be that beacon of hope once again. All it takes is for the Liberal Party to listen to what Canadians are saying and work with us to fix the system.

We believe in a system that rewards genuine connection and commitment. We believe in a system that reflects the values of Canadians. We believe in a system that respects our democracy. Citizenship is not a gift to be handed out lightly; it is a bond between the individual and the nation. It must be earned, it must be respected and it must be protected. That is what our amendments would do. That is what Canadians expect. That is what we will deliver.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting listening to members opposite when they reference the issue of why there are amendments and how they were at committee. The hon. member referred specifically to a so-called coalition that does not exist. The only coalition I have seen with respect to the legislation is the unholy coalition of the Bloc and the Conservatives, and yes, they were able to use their coalition to make some amendments.

Now the issue is, would the member not agree, that if a majority of members of the House of Commons, which would include those from other political entities, do not support the amendments, they have the right to defeat them?

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• (1625)

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the point of this debate is that people who are applying for Canadian citizenship must have an established connection to Canada. That is the basis on which we are debating, and we are aiming to improve the bill by amending it with those conditions. Without further ado, we should get the bill passed with amendments, not without.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what is happening today in the House is quite bizarre. The government has decided to completely disregard all of the committee's work. However, they claim to be transparent and to be working democratically by respecting the opposition parties.

This is not how that works. Members used House resources, which are paid for with public money, to carry out their work, but since it did not line up with the government's ideological vision, it got tossed aside.

Obviously, there is one party that needs to be named: the New Democratic Party. They are trying to form alliances with the government, which they want to support once again for possibly strategic and ideological reasons.

I would like my colleague to share her thoughts about the fact that the government is repeating what it has done in recent years with the support of the NDP, which is to say, disrespecting the will of the committee and the House.

[*English*]

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely right.

We will vote with the Bloc on a case-by-case basis, or with the government if we feel that the legislation warrants it. However, what the Liberals have re-established is the NDP-Liberal coalition so they can pass anything they want, regardless of what the rest of the House deems proper.

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, through the years, the Liberals have debased our immigration system and our citizenship, whether by flooding the country with foreign students or by being lax on criminals' being allowed in the country.

I wonder what the member thinks of the Liberals' stance on Bill C-3 and whether it would devalue the overall value of being a Canadian.

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, I believe that is what my speech was all about: having a value to citizenship. It is not something a person can buy from some consultant who has no scruples; it is something a person works for and earns.

My grandparents and my mother came from Holland. It took studying and learning the language, and they were quite proud to finally be accepted as Canadians. The rest of the people who want to be Canadians should be too.

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member correctly noted in her speech that high-trust societies are typically more safe and more prosperous. It is indeed the type of society that works the best, and one which Canada and all members of the chamber should aspire to be.

I wonder if the member would comment on whether or not she thinks it contributes to producing a high-trust society in Canada to support groups of people who blockade the national capital and call for the overthrow of the federal government. Does lying and calling for the incarceration of former prime ministers increase trust in our society? Does calling law enforcement and the leadership of the RCMP "despicable" increase trust in Canadian society?

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, here we have somebody who, along with the former prime minister, asked to defund the police.

What we are promoting in our amendments is that there be a security check, a background check, to make sure that people who have committed crimes in other countries do not come into Canada and automatically become Canadians.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Employment; the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Northern Affairs.

[*English*]

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and to speak to Bill C-3. As is my habit, I will talk about what I like in the bill, and then I will talk about what I do not like in the bill.

Let us start with what I like. According to the first part of the bill, there would be a restoration of citizenship to people who lost it due to non-application. People born between February 15, 1977 and April 16, 1981, when they turned 28, were supposed to reapply for their citizenship. If they did not apply, they lost it. They do not think that is right.

Senator Yonah Martin brought Bill S-245 to address this specific issue. Unfortunately, it did not get through the House before another election was called, so I am glad to see that provision come back here. The people in question are in their golden years at this point. It is better late than never, but that is a part of the bill that I appreciate.

The second part of the bill that I appreciate is the provision for adopted children. Currently they have to go through a permanent residency process, which can take three years. Under the provision in Bill C-3, they would be treated as Canadian-born citizens for the purpose of passing on citizenship. I think that is a good thing for families. There is no reason, when children who are going to be part of our Canadian context are adopted, that they would not get their citizenship, so I think that is a good provision.

Government Orders

One of the things about the bill is that there would not be the connection test that the courts prescribed. I have heard the Liberals, through this debate, talk about how they have a deadline from the courts, so that they have to do something. They chose not to appeal the lower-court decision. Getting the legislation on time without the connection test that the court demanded would not fix it either.

I think it is important that people who get Canadian citizenship fall into categories; They are born here, or they are descendants of a Canadian citizen, or they are permanent residents who apply for and receive citizenship, or they are people who have a connection and go through the process. There should not be a two-tiered process; the rules to become a citizen should be the same.

If someone is going to be a Canadian citizen, I think it has to mean something. We think about the value of citizenship, and it is really about participating in our democracy, experiencing our wonderful country, helping build our communities, paying taxes and using our services so we understand what the state of our nation is. All these things are part of being a Canadian citizen and having that value.

I worry that if people are away from the country for a long period of time, they are going to lose that connectedness. If they have never lived here, they really do not have that connectedness at all. That is a concern to me, especially when we think about one of the unintended consequences of the bill. The bill would grant citizenship to people whose parents spent 1,095 days in Canada over, as it now stands, an unspecified amount of time. They may never have lived here.

Such people would be able to vote in our country. The way that voters are normally registered is that they have to have a Canadian address so we can figure out what riding they are in. That is how Elections Canada does it. We would now have 150,000 people who could choose where they want their vote to count. I really find that to be an undermining of our democracy in terms of an interference factor with which it would be possible to game the system, for example. That needs to be addressed, and it is not addressed in Bill C-3 at all.

Bill C-3 went to committee, where there were some thoughtful amendments that were brought into place, really, to align the citizenship process in Bill C-3 with what other people who are becoming Canadian citizens normally go through. The amendments would apply both to descendants and to people who come by adoption. They would need to be able to speak one of the official languages at least. That makes sense to me, especially if they are going to receive services here and interact with the government, which publishes its notifications in both official languages.

• (1635)

They would also have to have a security check, the same security check that others are supposed to go through. We can see that, in an increasingly violent world, it is more important than ever to make sure we are not allowing criminals and terrorists into the country. The only way to do that is to make sure there is a security check and it is thorough. Again, this makes sense.

There is a provision that was amended at committee to say it should not be just 1,095 days that parents lived here over any num-

ber of decades. It should be a concentrated period of time so they have a commitment to Canada. The suggestion was that it be five years. I think that is a reasonable limit. It reflects some of the previous legislation we have seen. To me, that is a good-sense amendment as well.

Then there is the citizenship test. This comes close to the connectedness the court was looking for. People who are coming here to be Canadian citizens would have to learn something about the history of Canada and the cultural norms in Canada, and take and pass a test. That is also a reasonable amendment.

After doing all this great work at committee, the NDP has now introduced amendments that would essentially reverse all that good work, and the Liberals are going to support them to basically wipe it out. For the last 10 years, I have heard the Liberals stand up and talk about how they value the work done at committee and respect the independence of the committee process, but here they are totally turning things around.

Let us keep in mind that 98% of the Canadian people did not elect the NDP to provide our rules and legislation. It got 2% representation, so it should not be able to overturn the rest of the House. First of all, that is not representative of what the Canadian people want, but also, the NDP is trying to take out all the amendments. We would have a two-tier system where some people coming here to get citizenship have many requirements, and others just automatically get it.

The other problematic thing for me is knowing that this could happen in perpetuity. If the children who get citizenship show up during their lifetime for 1,095 days, they can pass citizenship on to their children. We do not know how many people are involved in this or how much in resources it is going to take to do it. We already know that the immigration system is backed up, and it is taking three years or more to process people's applications. Putting an extra burden on the immigration department is not a good idea, and I really think it disrespects and undervalues Canadian citizenship.

The coalition we saw between the NDP and the Liberals to force their will on all Canadians in the last Parliament is popping up again, and they are going to team up together to put in a bad bill instead of doing the right thing and aligning the process to be fair to all.

Certainly, I love to see immigrants come to the country. They have helped build the country. The member who spoke before me talked about her heritage. My heritage is English, French, Irish and Scottish. I am a little tall, so there may be Viking in there somewhere. These different cultures have all come together, and we see more and more of that. This was always about the multiculturalism of Canada. The freedom we had here and the way everybody could get along is what made Canada great. A two-tiered system would undercut that and divide us, which is what the Liberals have been doing for the last 10 years.

With that, I will just summarize and say that there are some good elements in the bill, but I recommend the government send it back to committee, or keep the amendments the committee passed if it really respects the work of committees.

Government Orders

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only coalition I see with respect to this legislation is the unholy coalition of the Bloc and the Conservative Party. Let us be perfectly clear on that. This is the reason variations have been made with respect to Bill C-3.

I made reference to the Supreme Court decision dealing with the issue of background checks not being required for lost Canadians before they would be given their citizenship. Does the member distinguish any difference between someone having birthright access to citizenship and someone who is naturalized in order to get citizenship?

• (1640)

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify that there is co-operation happening between the Bloc and the Conservatives, and the Liberals have been calling for co-operation since the parliamentary session began. I would have thought the member would be happy to see co-operation happening. It has resulted in this great bill.

To his question on the lost citizens who would be restored in one of the measures in this bill, he should keep in mind they had citizenship. I understand why they do not need another background check, but for everyone who else is coming here in whatever way they are coming, we need to do background checks to make sure they are not criminals or terrorists so we can ensure the safety of the people of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind my colleague from Winnipeg North of something. Perhaps he does not spend enough time in the House to realize that it was his government that, with the support of the Conservative Party, imposed a gag order on the House last June regarding Bill C-5, a bill on projects of national interest. After several months, we still do not know what the projects of national interest are.

I think it would be good to refresh my colleague's memory. Quebec's motto is *Je me souviens*. Perhaps my colleague still does not understand what it means, even after many years in the House, but I make it my duty to remind him.

I would like my Conservative colleague to share what she thinks of what the government is doing right now. Once again, it is dismissing the committee's work with the support of the NDP through the back door. The NDP is just trying to survive politically and is virtually invisible in the current political sphere.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have always said that they respected the work of committees. Right now, they are not respecting it at all because they have scrapped all the amendments we made in committee.

The government is in a coalition with the NDP to reverse all the good work we have done. That is not fair.

[*English*]

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

Before I begin my question, I want to recognize that 20 years ago my wife decided to date me and how blessed and fortunate I have been for those 20 years. I thank my wife for that. I did not forget.

I wonder if my colleague is aware that at the Vancouver airport, for instance, up to 20% of people who are screening new immigrants or people coming into Canada are students with three weeks of training. That is it. Is this what we expect from the CBSA when it comes to screening in people who might have criminal or terrorist backgrounds? Does she have any thoughts on that?

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, first of all, happy anniversary to the member and his lovely wife Odette. I hope he bought flowers.

I am very concerned about the immigration system, because there have been numerous occasions when the Liberals have forfeited security checks. I can remember when visas from Mexico were preventing some of the cartels from moving in, and the Liberals removed them against our advice. Then the cartels did move in, and the Liberals put those requirements back in place.

We have had people coming in from war-torn areas, and they are claiming they do not have any paperwork because they are from war-torn areas, and then there is no security clearance. These areas are rife with crime, corruption and terrorism. Not only am I concerned that the process does not exist, but if there are people who do not have any experience and do not even know the process, it will only get worse.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House today with respect to Bill C-3 to highlight some of the real problems with the government's approach to immigration.

We have seen, over the last 10 years, the profound failures of the government's approach to immigration. Rather than confront those failures, the government is proposing legislation that would further weaken our immigration system. We have grave concerns about the approach the Liberals are taking and how they have tried to deceptively bundle weakening provisions with a few things that we proposed in the past. They have bundled some of those good propositions with the significant problems they have integrated into this bill that will weaken Canadian citizenship. I will lay that out in a few minutes. I want to start by highlighting the context of where we are with immigration and how it relates to some of the work I have been doing as the Conservative shadow minister for jobs.

Government Orders

Members know or should know that we have a serious metastasizing youth unemployment crisis facing this country. The nature of that crisis is simply that youth unemployment is now at 14.7%. The numbers have continued to grow, approaching a 15% youth unemployment rate. Over 460,000 young Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 are presently unemployed, so, yes, it is a youth unemployment crisis. Not only have the Liberals been asleep at the switch, but their policies have been making the problem worse. They do not have a plan to address it. They do not have a plan to reverse the damage their policies have done.

We have put forward a Conservative youth jobs plan. There are four elements to that youth jobs plan: unleash the Canadian economy, fix immigration, fix training and build homes where the jobs are.

Let us focus particularly on the subject of today's debate, which is immigration. The Liberals have broken our immigration system. They have failed to align our immigration system with the needs of our labour market. There are many ways in which this is evident. We had economists testify before the human resources committee about how Liberal immigration policies have exacerbated competition for entry-level positions while failing to identify the skills we need and bringing people in to fill those skills.

One area where this is quite evident is the Liberal failures on credential recognition. When we fail to have an effective credential recognition system for newcomers, it hurts our job market in two ways. When someone comes with a skill they could be using to fill an essential skill gap but is instead forced to work an entry-level job, that person is not filling the area where a skill is needed. Meanwhile, they are competing with a young person for an entry-level position. It is a loss for those trying to enter the workforce, who are facing more competition, and a loss for employers looking for people they can identify at higher skill levels.

Effective credential recognition is critical. Identifying people with the right credentials and qualifying people to work when they come to Canada are critical for aligning our immigration system with the needs of our labour market, yet we have seen over the last 10 years a persistent failure to do this.

We have all heard the stories of people with incredible qualifications who come to Canada and work entry-level jobs just to get by and provide for their families. I want to salute the sacrifice and virtue of the individuals who are willing to do that. At the same time, it is a broken system that forces people to be in that situation when they have credentials they could be using to benefit our country and are not.

I found it quite interesting that recently, the Liberal minister responsible for this area announced the intention to create a new fund to try to solve this problem without appreciating or acknowledging that an existing federal fund is supposed to be doing this. Maybe the minister should acknowledge it. Rather than creating a separate fund on top of the existing fund, we should hear what the minister thinks of the performance of the existing fund.

• (1645)

Clearly, there has been a failure to address this issue of credentials recognition, which is exacerbating the challenges we see in

youth unemployment. Conservatives have been highlighting this issue of credentials recognition as an important way to resolve challenges we see across our economy. We have proposed a number of different programs and methods that would force results, instead of pouring more money into the problem without a clear direction or vision of how it will be solved.

If we have one fund that is supposed to be doing this, why are they creating an additional fund that is supposed to be doing the same thing as the first? I would love to know what results the minister thinks that replication of an existing structure is going to achieve. Canadians are not interested in more Liberal announcements. They are interested in a real plan that will deliver results.

We have profound failures in immigration that need to be fixed. I would love to see the government put forward legislation to address some of these problems in the immigration system.

By the way, when the immigration issue was brought up at the human resources committee, the Liberals objected, saying it is not related to the committee's mandate. The human resources committee is supposed to be studying the impacts of various policies on youth unemployment. The Liberals do not want to talk about one of the primary causes of youth unemployment, which, according to economists, is an immigration system that is poorly aligned with our labour market.

Needless to say, prior to the government being in power, there was a consensus in support of an immigration system that was fair, generous, worked well and aligned well with the needs of our country. We can help the most vulnerable and defend and advance our economic interests. It takes focus, discipline and precision, which the government has not had. Thus, in the last 10 years, the government wrecked the consensus we had around support for what was at the time a well-managed, effective and generous immigration system.

Here we are today. We need to fix immigration, and we especially need to align our immigration system with the economic needs of our country. Instead of putting forward a plan to fix immigration to align it with the needs of our economy, we have this legislation. The Liberals want to put in place a framework that would allow a family to live outside Canada, generation after generation, with no limit, and continue to pass on Canadian citizenship infinitely, provided that people visit Canada during that period of time.

The Liberals' priority is not to clean up the mess they created in immigration or make the system more effective, efficient or aligned with our interests, but to provide a further expansion of the ability of people who might not have any substantial connection to Canada yet have some Canadian ancestry to gain citizenship.

Government Orders

The legislation is particularly poorly aligned with what Canada is supposed to be about. Canada is supposed to be about the fact that citizenship is not based on ancestry but on a commitment individuals make to this place and to each other. That is what our citizenship is supposed to be about. As Cartier said, we are one political nation. We are not defined by common ancestry; rather, we are defined by being one common community that includes people of different linguistic, religious and ethnocultural backgrounds.

• (1650)

The bill says that if I move out of Canada, it would be possible for my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren after them to continue to be Canadian citizens, provided that in each generation, people make a few extended visits to this country. That does not align with the best of our tradition. It is a further diminishment of what common citizenship is supposed to be about, which is being a community of people from diverse backgrounds who are committed to advancing and defending the common good together.

We need to go back to a stronger sense of Canadian citizenship based on shared attachment and a commitment to the common good.

• (1655)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely looking forward to November 12. Maybe we will talk about immigration then too.

The member spent a great deal of time talking about immigration. The Conservative leader's approach to the issue today is very different from ours. The Prime Minister talks about stabilizing our numbers and working toward having the strongest economy in the G7. The Conservatives' answer to the immigration issue is that if a person's temporary visa is going to expire, they need to leave the country. Getting rid of them is the Conservative Party leader's approach.

Would the member not agree that the universal principle being applied by the Conservatives is not healthy for all regions of the country? I am thinking about rural communities in Canada and the entire province of Manitoba. The provincial government in Manitoba wants to be able to retain and see—

The Deputy Speaker: I need to give the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan the chance to respond.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of gross misstatement of our position that members have come to expect from the member for Winnipeg North. We are going to be debating against each other in Winnipeg on November 12. The member has committed to booking the hall and picking me up at the airport, so I am looking forward to that. We will continue this conversation.

I will pick up on one thing the member said and highlight the absurdity of it. He said the Prime Minister is committed to “stabilizing our numbers”. The Liberals have been here for 10 years, and they want to say now that they are committed to stabilizing the numbers, without any acknowledgement of how they became unstable in the first place. It was not some act of nature that destabilized the immigration numbers and now the Prime Minister is going to come in and fix them. No. It was their 10 years of failure that led

to the mess we have, and now the best they can say is they are going to try to fix it.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what is concerning is that, in committee, we asked how many people might be impacted by this measure, and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship was unable to answer the question. She did not know.

One of the effects of the amendments proposed by the Liberals and the New Democrats is to remove the requirement to produce reports that indicate how many people will actually be affected by this measure.

Does my colleague have an idea of how many people could be affected by this measure? What does he think of this amendment, which simply removes the government's obligation to be accountable?

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I agree that this is an important and legitimate question. Do I know the answer? No, because it is obviously the government's job to answer that question.

They decided to introduce this bill. They should therefore be able to answer reasonable questions. How many people will be affected by these changes? What impact will this have on employment or on the health care system? There are other examples.

It is clear that the government has not taken these impacts into consideration.

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering about the Liberals' tone and attitude in this debate.

First, they are trying to turn the debate on Bill C-3 into a debate on immigration, when it is a debate on the conditions that lead to citizenship.

A few seconds ago, the member for Winnipeg North stood up and said that the opposition was out of touch. However, the minister was invited to appear before the committee and was asked about the impact of the bill as it stood before the amendments. All she was asked was how many people would be affected by this measure. We are accused of being out of touch, but the minister showed up at committee and had no idea how many people would be affected. She told us that this figure was impossible to determine. However, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that this measure could affect about 115,000 people and that this figure could even be as high as 300,000.

I would like my colleague to tell me who is out of touch here.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question.

I think that ministers have to be able to answer reasonable questions about the effects of their bill. This is not an opposition bill we are talking about; it is a choice made by the government. It chose this path even though it had a number of other options in the field of immigration and citizenship.

However, the government is unable to answer basic questions about implementing its own proposal.

• (1700)

[*English*]

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in this House, but I must say I rise today in utter sorrow to speak about Bill C-3 and what could have been. I had the honour of speaking about this bill at second reading, and I poured my heart into that speech.

[*Translation*]

I spoke in French for the first time in the House during my last speech to highlight that Canada is not a postnational state. On the contrary, it is a blend of two peoples, one French and one English. It is unique in the world. Our unique heritage must be respected to maintain the value of our citizenship. Canada is strong because Canadians work hard to make it strong. That is why we object to a two-tier citizenship system. If the children of people who left want to come back, let them come after they pay our taxes, obey our laws and learn our languages. It is not complicated.

[*English*]

Would anyone believe that the first thing that happened after my speech was the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government leader in the House standing and saying, “voters want more co-operation on the floor of the House of Commons”? I agreed. He said we should vote for Bill C-3, allow it to go to committee and pass amendments to make it a better law. I am new here, and it is perhaps for this reason that I took him at his word. I voted for Bill C-3, and at committee, Conservatives brought forward excellent amendments to make a better law.

Shortly after that speech, I did an interview with the local CBC syndicate radio station in Kitchener-Waterloo. The host, Craig Norris, asked me what I was working on and whether there were opportunities to co-operate with the Liberals in the House. I immediately spoke about Bill C-3 and my honest belief that the Liberals would allow us to remediate this law through amendments at committee. That is why I stand in sorrow today. It seems the rug has been pulled out from under us.

Those following at home will recall that Bill C-3, before amendments, would have allowed the grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren of Canadian citizens who had left the country to claim Canadian citizenship, even if they had barely lived here, had criminal records, did not speak either of our official languages or had never paid our taxes or contributed to our civil society by working or living here. Even if they had no intention of ever coming here, except to use our health care system in a pinch, they could become Canadian citizens.

In short, the bill would make Canadian citizenship out to be some sort of free goodie bag to be passed around, rather than a treasured family heirloom, but that goodie bag is not free. It is only the hard work of the Canadian citizens, permanent residents and refugees who build their lives here and build the country to make the country strong that is filling up these goodie bags the Liberals want to recklessly pass out.

Government Orders

It is estimated that in excess of 100,000 such free goodie bags, containing free citizenship for people who do not live here, would be handed out if the unamended law passes. We say it is estimated to be more than 100,000, but as the hon. member who asked a question just pointed out, the immigration minister says she has no idea how many more beyond 100,000 it could be.

Obviously, this would be terribly unfair to the permanent residents who are here paying taxes, respecting our laws, learning our languages and working so hard to become Canadian citizens. It is so unfair for them to have to watch 100,000 people who are not doing those things skip the line as a matter of unearned privilege. That is what we mean when we talk about a citizenship system of two tiers. Our amendments seek to level the playing field and prevent a two-tiered system from being imposed. It is with an eye to this that we structured our amendments. We used the exact same language for the same criteria that permanent residents have to fulfill.

They are eminently sensible amendments. For a person to get citizenship as the grandchild of a Canadian citizen, one of their parents must have lived in Canada for five years, they must pass a citizenship test and a security background check and they must speak one or both of our official languages to prove their substantial connection to our country. I believe the voters who want to see co-operation in this House, as referenced by the member for Winnipeg North, would want to see co-operation on each of these points.

I cannot understand how anyone except the most radical postnational ideologues, who, like Justin Trudeau, believe that Canada has no core identity, could oppose these amendments.

• (1705)

The new Prime Minister promised change, and voters gave him a tentative mandate as a minority Parliament on the promise of change, yet here he is, enacting Justin Trudeau's insane postnationalist ideology.

I went through the Liberal Party's 2025 election platform. Nowhere in that document could I find any proposition to give away 100,000-plus citizenships to people who have never lived here, who do not speak our languages or who might have criminal records, without passing the citizenship test. This is an absolute bait and switch. It is not what the Liberals ran on.

Government Orders

The new Prime Minister promised change, but here he is, reheating Justin Trudeau's radical ideological agenda to make Canada a postnational state with no core identity. This bill, in fact, existed in Justin Trudeau's last Parliament, but he could not get it through, because the House was seized with the matter of his corrupt green slush fund. This is not a one-off; this is a pattern. Bill C-8 is also a re-warmed piece of extreme government overreach that Justin Trudeau also tried to pass through this House. Once again, meet the new boss, same as the old boss. The new Prime Minister promised change, but he is feeding us microwaved Justin Trudeau leftovers.

It has been six months since the last election, in which the Prime Minister promised change. He leveraged all his credibility as a life-long bureaucrat who had been waiting in the wings to get Canadians to believe that promise. However, here we are, still debating Justin Trudeau legislation six months later. I suppose the Liberals are taking these six months to frantically prepare a budget that is also six months late.

Speaking of the election, I knocked on every door in Kitchener South—Hespeler during the spring election. I know for a fact that all the Conservative voters who voted for me would find these amendments eminently sensible and necessary.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Matt Strauss: Mr. Speaker, I am having trouble hearing myself speak over the very co-operative member.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

For the umpteenth time, I think the member for Winnipeg North could quiet down and let my colleague finish his speech.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the member for that reminder.

Members who wish to say something have to wait another three minutes for questions and comments.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Kitchener South—Hespeler can continue.

Matt Strauss: I think he is just trying to co-operate very hard, as promised.

Mr. Speaker, I also know that Liberal voters, the ones who did not vote for me, the ones who were enamoured by the new Prime Minister's promise of change, would find these to be eminently sensible amendments that are necessary. Therefore, I am shocked. I cannot understand why the Liberal House leadership has signalled that the Liberals will vote against these amendments. In so doing, they would cheapen the value of Canadian citizenship, betray the permanent residents and refugees who are working so hard to meet similar requirements, betray the generations of Canadians who work to build Canada strong and betray their own voters, who expected change from Justin Trudeau's woke radical agenda.

I have more time, but I do not think I even need it. I would rather hear from the Liberals. I am dying to hear from the Liberal members in the House today which of these amendments they could possibly be planning to vote against. Will they stand up in this

House and say which ones, and why? I am as eager to explain this to their voters as the Liberals are eager to hide it.

If the Liberals pass the unamended Bill C-3, I will have a very, very hard time explaining to their voters why on earth they took our amendments away. I will have a very hard time explaining to Craig Norris of the Kitchener-Waterloo CBC radio program why it is that, after this promise of co-operation, it was withheld and the rug was so abruptly pulled out from under us.

If, conversely, it is the case that the Liberals are not willing to say which of these amendments they plan on voting against, then I implore them that there is still time. They can do the right thing. They can side with us, the Conservatives, to protect the value of Canadian citizenship, instead of siding with the radical left to denigrate it.

I thank the members for the co-operation I see coming up.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member does not appreciate the fact that they have a Conservative-Bloc coalition on this legislation going through the committee. Just because the Bloc-Conservative coalition makes a determination, that does not mean it should be able to override a potential Supreme Court issue. Just because the Bloc and the Conservatives decide that they want an election, by voting against the budget that is coming up, that does not mean there has to be an election, if there are other members in the chamber who support the budget. Because there is that unholy coalition at times, I would suggest to the member, if what I said is true, that they look at consensus and work with committees, not try to see how they can corner or change the—

• (1710)

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt to give the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler a chance to respond.

Matt Strauss: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for continuing to engage so co-operatively. However, I did not catch a question, so I will take it as a comment.

There are Liberals, Bloc members and Conservatives on the committee. The member suggested that we take the bill to committee and all work together. Two parties did, but one did not, and one party seeks to undo the work of the committee now. I am not sure what else the member would have had us do when he suggested we take it to committee and work on it together.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on immigration, there needs to be consistency between the various legislative measures.

Government Orders

Those hoping to become naturalized have to fulfill certain requirements. They are required to have lived in the country for 1,095 days over a period of five years. A security assessment is done, a language test is administered, and a citizenship test is completed. Those are the rules.

That is exactly why we want the same criteria to be applied when normalizing the citizenship of people who may never have set foot on Canadian soil.

I would like my colleague to explain to me how the government can come to the conclusion that these standards are valid for a naturalized person, but that in the situation before us, suddenly, they no longer make sense, and citizenship could be granted to almost anyone.

[*English*]

Matt Strauss: Mr. Speaker, I too am perplexed, like the hon. member who made the comment. Probably the best thing for me to do is to sit down, because I am still dying to hear from Liberal members. I have not yet heard which of these amendments they are planning to vote against and why. Is it the case that they are planning to vote against? All I heard in the questions so far from the Liberal member was denigration of the members of the committee based on party stripe, which is exactly the opposite of what he thought voters were looking to see when we read this at second reading.

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one issue we have with Bill C-3 is that the government has no idea how many people would actually be affected by it. How many people would receive citizenship immediately or would be affected down the road and thus be a cost to Canadians, both in our health care and in other benefits?

I wonder if my colleague could tell me what he thinks of the seriousness of the government, which is trying to plow through Bill C-3 without taking these implications into the process.

Matt Strauss: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. It allows me to reprise the core theme of my first speech on the bill, which is that Canadian citizenship has value insofar as Canadian citizens contribute value. We put money into the pot, and then when we need our health care system, it is there for us.

However, to say that 100,000 individuals who have never been to Canada, but whose grandparents were Canadian citizens and left, can come here for free health care or evacuation help from our embassy if a conflict arises, fundamentally misunderstands how citizenship works and how value is built. I find that particularly ironic given that the Prime Minister, who is ramming this through, wrote a book on values. He is an economist, yet he does not seem to understand the economy of value. We have value in citizenship only when we work hard together to build it.

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the issue of citizenship is one I have heard about on more than one occasion from constituents concerned with how our laws impact their status. It is one about which we as parliamentarians are called upon to make decisions and establish rules that will, by their nature, exclude some people.

Canada, like all countries, has regulations surrounding who is automatically granted citizenship. At present, while citizenship is granted to children born outside Canada to Canadian citizens, those children do not have the right to pass on their citizenship to their children if those children are born outside Canada.

This amendment to the Citizenship Act would address that issue. Specifically, this bill would amend the Citizenship Act to do the following:

- (a) ensure that citizenship by descent is conferred on all persons who were born outside Canada before the coming into force of this enactment to a parent who was a citizen;
- (b) confer citizenship by descent on persons born outside Canada after the first generation, on or after the coming into force of this enactment, to a parent who is a citizen and who had a substantial connection to Canada before the person's birth;
- (c) allow citizenship to be granted under section 5.1 of that Act to all persons born outside Canada who were adopted before the coming into force of this enactment by a parent who was a citizen;
- (d) allow citizenship to be granted under section 5.1 of that Act to persons born outside Canada who are adopted on or after the coming into force of this enactment by a parent who is a citizen and who had a substantial connection to Canada before the person's adoption;
- (e) restore citizenship to persons who lost their citizenship because they did not make an application to retain it under the former section 8 of that Act or because they made an application under that section that was not approved; and
- (f) allow certain persons who become citizens as a result of the coming into force of this enactment to access a simplified process to renounce their citizenship.

Like many members of this House, I have been present at ceremonies when new citizens have pledged their allegiance to Canada. It is always an exciting occasion, one filled with smiles and joy. I am always reminded of the time, decades ago, when I was taking the oath.

I am a proud Canadian. I chose to come here. I chose to become a Canadian citizen and embrace Canadian values. I have no regrets. It is a privilege to be a citizen of the greatest country in the world. It is a privilege to have been asked by the people of Edmonton Manning to represent them in this House.

For most of those not born here, Canadian citizenship is not a right, nor should it be. When it comes to citizenship, each country makes its own rules. Canada grants citizenship automatically to anyone born in this country. That is not the case in a number of countries, which expect children born in their territory to be citizens of whatever country their parents are from.

Whether one system is better than another is a matter of preference, but the fact remains that countries have to make choices and establish laws surrounding who is and who is not a citizen. Do we want to grant citizenship generation after generation to those who have no real connection to this country and for whom a Canadian passport is a matter of convenience? This legislation would allow that. We would have Canadian citizens who have never set foot in Canada. Is that what we want?

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In 2009, Canada established a first-generation limit on citizenship. Those born abroad to Canadian citizens would automatically be granted citizenship. The next generation, though, if also born outside Canada, would not automatically be citizens. That system worked well, balancing the granting of citizenship with a true connection to the country. I do not see a need to change that. Perhaps we in this House need a history lesson to help us understand why we have the citizenship rules we have today.

• (1715)

In the mid-2000s, the crisis in Lebanon caused many Lebanese Canadians to pass citizenship on to their children for the purpose of relocating to Canada, even though these individuals have little to no connection to Canada. Then, in 2006, the Canadian government spent \$94 million on the evacuation of 15,000 Lebanese Canadians. These people who benefited from Canadian citizenship with minimal connection to Canada became known as “Canadians of convenience”. We know that \$94 million is a lot of money.

In 2009, the government, led by former prime minister Stephen Harper, addressed concerns about Canadians of convenience, those who hold Canadian citizenship but live abroad and do not participate in Canadian society. This led to the enactment of Bill C-37, which amended the Citizenship Act to restrict the transmission of Canadian citizenship to only one generation born outside Canada. Since then, a Canadian citizen born outside of Canada could pass citizenship on to their children who were born abroad, but the grandchildren, if also born abroad, would not automatically inherit Canadian citizenship unless their parents were abroad in service to the Crown. To me, that makes sense.

I value my citizenship. Being a Canadian should be more than holding just a passport. It should be taking part in the life of the community. I believe that, with rights, we should also have responsibilities. Bill C-3 does not acknowledge that. It would allow parents to pass citizenship on to their children, for generation after generation, as long as one parent spent 1,095 non-consecutive days in Canada prior to the birth of the child. There are no criminal checks, which is required for immigrants. This is a multi-generational flow-through citizenship for people who did not live nor are required to live in Canada. No real ties to Canada would be required for citizenship if this legislation were to pass. The vague substantial connection test allows multi-generational foreign residents to claim citizenship with minimal presence in Canada. Is that what we want?

We all are anxiously awaiting the federal budget next month. We already know that the Liberals have changed the bookkeeping procedures in an effort to confuse Canadians and hide what is sure to be a record deficit.

In 2024, the then minister of finance resigned rather than present a fiscally irresponsible statement to the House featuring an astronomical deficit. Given the Liberals' spending since then, this year's deficit may make last year's numbers fiscally prudent, which may explain why they have shown no interest in figuring out how much this bill would cost Canadians. The government has not done a cost analysis as its own officials told MPs during the technical briefing. The government has not told Canadians how many new citizens

this bill would create or the cost to taxpayers, especially in health care and in pensions.

We are facing a fiscal crisis and the Liberal response is to pretend it is not happening and to spend more money. Bill C-3 is a reminder of that.

Conservatives believe in strong, fair and meaningful Canadian citizenship. We will continue to oppose giveaways and stand up for integrity, security and a responsible immigration policy for Canada.

• (1720)

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are once again witnessing disingenuous engagement and fearmongering on the part of the Conservatives, who know very well that this bill is meant to deal with a court case that makes the current system unconstitutional.

I will tell the House who this bill is meant to deal with. My son was born 17 years ago in the United States because I was there studying. My son has lived in Canada most of his life, so I would like to ask the member, is he saying my son is not Canadian enough to pass down his citizenship to his kids if, by happenstance, he happens to have a child outside Canada? Is that what he is saying?

My son is not a terrorist. My son does not need a security background check. Please stop the fearmongering.

Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, it is very funny and unfortunate that the government asks us to be transparent, but it is not transparent itself. It is bringing forward a bill without giving any information to Canadians. It is as though no accountability and transparency is needed. Before it asks the question of us, it needs to remind itself about what it has done and what it has included in the bill. After that, we will have a conversation.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is sad when debates become personal. What we just heard from the parliamentary secretary is rather appalling.

As far as the proposed amendments are concerned, since my colleague has likely spent 1,095 consecutive days in Canada, she would be eligible. Her child may have to take a test to be eligible. I am sure he can pass a test.

I would like to know where in this debate anyone accused another person of being a terrorist. Does this lady realize that she is in a position of executive power? Does she understand the weight of her words? Does she realize how much she is embarrassing her government and how awkward it is?

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• (1725)

[*English*]

Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, obviously, it is the oldest trick of the Liberals. Every time we question them about something they do, they turn it into trying to divide Canadians further, calling us names and trying to narrow the conversation to their level of non-transparency. Unfortunately, that is what they have done here. This is what they have been doing all along. We cannot reject the premises of their questions and their argument because, first and foremost, they have to be transparent and come to Canadians clearly before they can expect anyone to co-operate with them.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to address the issue of doing a background check, of really doing a criminal check to ensure the people coming into the country are people who are going to be safe walking around our communities, our schools, our malls or anywhere down the streets near our homes. I really fail to see why the Liberal government does not understand the importance of doing these criminal checks. Under the bill, someone could be born outside the country to someone who was here 30 years ago, have never lived a minute in this country, have never contributed a penny to this country, and expect to come to the country as a full Canadian citizen without giving our country the right to do a background check as to their criminality.

The member opposite in the Liberal party mentioned her family. I am sure she is not concerned about her son passing a criminal test.

I wonder if the member can weigh in on this.

Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, the obvious thing is that this is a government that made a disaster of the immigration policies in Canada. In the last 10 years, it brought in millions of people. It made slavery, a housing crisis, a health crisis and an education crisis. There are crises across the board because of its policies. Now, it has the face to come to Canadians to ask for more citizenships to be granted without any background checks or criminal checks. It has made a disaster out of Canadian society because of its policies, and now, it is still coming forward to present more disasters to Canada.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, once again, I am pleased to speak here today.

This debate is somewhat surreal. I am standing here yet, given the nature of the debate, I feel as though I am somewhere up in the stratosphere, floating in a space shuttle.

We know how Liberals think. Liberals have a switch with two positions: “off” and “on”. They think one thing on Monday, switch to “off” that evening and then to “on” the next day. Then they think something else the following day. They might be in favour of a carbon tax before the election but against it afterwards. What these people do is win elections. They win them by changing their ideas and opinions and by having no values.

I have proof. Yesterday, we were supposed to debate Bill C-3, but a committee report on ethics came in. We have a Prime Minister who holds shares in more than 900 companies. We know that when Canada subsidizes Westinghouse small modular reactors to increase production in the oil sands, the Prime Minister gets rich. We know

that when he abolishes the digital services tax, even though he has a blind trust, he is lining his own pockets. These were legitimate questions.

A report came in from a committee. The illustrious member for Winnipeg North told us, yesterday and all afternoon, that we should be debating Bill C-3 instead and that the House of Commons is not a place for debate. He told us that we were wasting our time here and that we should let committees do their work, because committees are good, members study the issues there and do good work, and we should not be debating that in the House. The Liberal switch flipped to the “off” position yesterday, and they went to bed.

They woke up the next morning and the reset button switched to the “on” position. They told us that the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration studied Bill C-3, that it heard from witnesses, like the minister and the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and that there are amendments that do not distort the bill, that are in order and that fulfill the court's requirements.

Today, we are being told that all the committee's work can be torn down. That is the typical Liberal way. They never debate on the substance of the issue. They attack, insult and irritate people, and address substantive issues as little as possible. That is exactly what we are seeing today, and yet we are being told that we are the ones acting in bad faith.

One member even claimed that the Conservatives were treating her child like a terrorist because of these amendments, which are clear. The parliamentary secretary went to study abroad, outside Canada. In her lifetime, over a five-year continuous period, she very likely spent 1,095 consecutive days in Canada. In any case, she has been eligible since the election. Upon their return, the child would have to take a test if he or she is of age. Actually, I wonder if the child was not a minor and if, in the case that had the parliamentary secretary all worked up, any of these amendments applied. Most likely, none of them did. Now she says that her child is being treated like a terrorist.

The member for Bourassa says that we are against immigration. We need rules when it comes to immigration. There are borders. There are rules. It would only be fair if second- and third-generation children had to meet the same requirements for naturalization, but now we are once again being labelled anti-immigration racists.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons says that we are living on another planet. I would like him to say which one.

Since this debate began, not a single Liberal has been able to explain why they oppose these amendments. There were Bloc members and Conservative members. People came prepared to debate. It has been substantive. We have the right to disagree. Those folks over there cannot say why they oppose the amendments.

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We have a problem because the work was done in committee. An assessment had to be done. Here is the timeline of events. A court told us that we could not systematically deprive the children of Canadians born abroad of their citizenship. Then the Ontario Superior Court of Justice said that rules were needed, and clear rules at that. The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration got to work and decided that it would establish clear rules.

● (1730)

What did the committee members do? They figured they would just apply rules similar to the ones imposed on naturalized Canadians. Is the parliamentary secretary across the way, the one playing with her notes, is she saying that we are calling naturalized people terrorists? Is she saying that she opposes immigration rules for naturalized individuals, like my wife, for example? These are low-level debates. We need not take these things personally.

Things were not great in committee. Our job as opposition parliamentarians is to keep the government in check, so we ask questions. The first question was whether Bill C-3, in its original form, affected very many people and whether it might allow a bunch of people to apply for citizenship without ever having set foot in Canada. The minister said that that was impossible to estimate.

The minister arrived at committee unprepared. She did not know her bill. She did not know her numbers. The minister seemed to think that her inability to estimate something meant that it was impossible to estimate. If she is unable to build a space shuttle on her own, then space shuttles do not exist. That is how she thinks. The Parliamentary Budget Officer came and told us that this would affect 115,000 people. Economists certainly understand that these things can be estimated. This would affect between 80,000 and 300,000 people with a large confidence interval. The Parliamentary Budget Officer told us honestly that it was at least 80,000, but it could be as many as 300,000.

The committee members therefore decided that they would apply rules that are already agreed upon in Canada. If we allow people to have spent 1,095 days of their entire life in Canada without requiring those to be consecutive, that means that a 50-year-old person could have spent their three weeks of vacation here their entire life, without ever having worked or made a significant contribution to the Canadian economy, and the unamended version of the bill would apply to them. Canada is not a summer camp, so it stands to reason that people should be required to have lived here for 1,095 consecutive days.

Proposed amendments called for a background check, as is required for naturalization, and an official language test in French or English. We would prefer French in Quebec, but we are still in Canada. These rules do not even apply to children under the age of 18. To suggest that a Canadian could go study in the United States, have a child there, come back here and leave their child at the border is straight-up disinformation. Could it be that people did not read the bill before coming here to call us names?

What the Ontario Superior Court said in its ruling was that a person born abroad to Canadian parents had to have a substantial connection to Canada and that their parents had to have a substantial connection to Canada. "Substantial" is the operative word for citizenship to be passed on. The question that the committee members

then asked themselves was: what is a substantial connection? The court asked for clarity. The court said that not everyone can be rejected outright. The committee therefore put forward the same definition as for naturalized persons. How does it logically occur to a legislator that substantial connection for a person born abroad who comes to Canada is now defined, but that this definition of a substantial connection no longer has any value if the parents of the person born abroad also lived abroad for a long time?

I, for one, believe that these amendments make sense. They are consistent. They align the criteria required by the court with the Citizenship Act, which governs the naturalization process. Saying that we are racist, against immigration, no longer interested in having people study abroad, and depriving the children of Canadian diplomats of their Canadian citizenship is like rejecting the Citizenship Act itself. I think that these amendments make sense, are consistent with the superior court ruling, and need to be passed.

● (1735)

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague says that we are engaging in low-level debate. I would like to remind him that it is kind of the result of everything that has been said in the House.

Earlier this afternoon, a member on the other side of the House said that the Liberal government had removed the Mexican visa regulations to let the cartels in, and that it put those regulations back in place once the cartels were here. Unfortunately, that is where we are with this debate.

My colleague said that the only thing the Liberals are good at is winning elections. I would like to remind my colleague that it is thanks to the Liberal government that we have the Canada we have today, with the social programs we have, including those that benefit all Quebecers and all other Canadians.

That is all I have to say.

Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, do you see what is going on? Insults are being tossed back and forth.

Here are the facts on these amendments. The committee determined that, for a person to be considered to have a substantial connection to Canada, they must have lived in Canada for a certain number of days over a certain period of time. Anyone over the age of 18 has to be able to speak an official language, undergo a security screening, and so on. That, incidentally, is what the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act provides.

My colleague did say that we were practically attacking her own family. I imagine that she did not mean it but feels emotional about it. In fact, a Canadian student who travels abroad, gives birth, comes back to the country and has a life here is by no means targeted by these amendments.

I said that we have to read bills carefully and be scrupulous parliamentarians, and that is how we improve the quality of our debates. I stand by what I said.

• (1740)

[*English*]

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked about the fact that the government has not even looked at, or cannot quantify, what the costs are going to be.

I have had the pleasure of serving on the operations committee for close to 10 years. My colleague attended as well for a short period. At one time, we had a visiting delegation from Vietnam, from their version of the operations committee. We were looking at a government bill, and the government stated that it had not costed what the bill would cost Canadians. The Communist Party members from Vietnam lectured us, saying that they would never, ever bring forward legislation without knowing what it would cost their citizens.

I wonder what my colleague thinks about Communist Vietnam being more concerned about taxpayers and transparency than the Liberal government.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, I think it is useful for us as parliamentarians to know how many people will be affected by the legislation. The fact that the government says that it has done no calculations whatsoever gives us some idea of just how unprepared it is.

I am concerned that the government is increasingly unwilling to let the opposition know how much things cost. The proof is that it appointed an interim parliamentary budget officer when it had had seven years to find one. A few weeks after appointing him, the Liberals began to publicly disparage him, both during question period and in committee. In committee, the Parliamentary Budget Officer presented carefully calculated, evidence-based figures. In response, the Minister of Finance and National Revenue said that the Parliamentary Budget Officer was entitled to his opinion, but that he, the minister, would rather read the newspaper.

I think Canada has lessons to learn. I am not certain that they need to come from communist Vietnam, but we have lessons to learn from many places.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

The Chair has chosen to group all of the amendments presented at this stage in a single vote. In other words, a single vote in the House will decide whether all the work that was done in committee will be undone. With a single vote, the House will let the committee know whether everything it accomplished was for nothing.

What does my hon. colleague think about that?

Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, I would never question the Chair's good faith or way of working, but we can still assume that his decision will have consequences.

From what I understand, the parties may not share the same opinion on two categories of amendments. The parties do not seem to

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have the same opinion on the number of days of continuous residence in Canada as on the other qualification criteria, including the citizenship test, the security assessment, the language test, and so on. Grouping them together could force some members to unwillingly vote against amendments they support.

[*English*]

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour and a privilege to rise on behalf of the great people of Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley.

I want to take a few moments here as I begin my speech to say happy birthday to my daughter Kenzie. She turned 11 today. Happy birthday, sweetie. I love her very much. I am really proud of the great young girl she is growing up to be, and I look forward to seeing the great woman she will be as well. This morning, she had to get up at 5:30 a.m. to get to the hockey rink in time for practice. She did that, and her teammates sang her happy birthday on the ice, which was pretty exciting. I think she brought cupcakes for her teammates. They got to celebrate her birthday at the hockey rink, so that must have been a lot of fun.

We have a bill before us today to deal with immigration. Immigration is always a fun topic to talk about. My grandmother immigrated to Canada from Scotland, and I have a great appreciation for people who have immigrated to Canada. I can track down the history of my family, the country of origin they came from, how they came to North America and what that journey looked like for them. We can obviously see the contributions that many people have made to Canada in building this country. This country is largely a country of people who have immigrated to Canada, so we know how important immigration is. I think it is important to make that comment right off the top.

I was happy to see that we were able to get many strong amendments at committee. I also want to echo the sentiment from some of my colleagues earlier. The minister mentioned that they were open to amendments. There was another member from Ottawa here who said, "Let us work fast at committee, make the improvements". Even the member from Winnipeg said that he wanted to talk about the amendments. We have heard him talk a lot about some of the amendments here tonight, but more so about how he does not think it is right that the Conservatives and the Bloc voted in favour of amendments and they got added to the bill. I mean, the minister herself said that she was looking forward to amendments to the bill, and we were able to get those amendments. I think it looks really good, with the amendments we put into the bill.

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In particular, there is the requirement for consecutive days in Canada, to have the time that is laid out in the bill be consecutive. I think that is a good starting point, because beyond the people who were affected by a decision, that four-year period, who were impacted by the bill originally, there is obviously the ripple effect for other folks who would be impacted by the bill. When we look at the requirement to spend 1,095 days in Canada, the government wanted it to be an arbitrary number for a parent. We made an amendment to make that consecutive time spent in Canada, which is a key piece. It would show a more substantive commitment to Canada and being committed to our country. I think that is a very strong place to start, because we want people who are going to be citizens of Canada to have a vested interest in Canada. If a person has no interest in Canada, if their parents have not spent any time in Canada, it would seem natural that there would be tough requirements to be able to gain Canadian citizenship, because there is a certain value that is added to our citizenship. However, we have seen, for 10 years, the Liberal government water down what it means to be Canadian. We continue to see that trend with this particular bill.

Going back to the case of my grandmother immigrating from Scotland, let us transpose that to Scotland, a country that has gone through its own independence revolution to break itself free. Looking at Scotland's requirements, one parent has to be born in Scotland. Based on the Scottish requirements, my mother would have been able to become a Scottish citizen, but it would not apply to me. I think about the 1,095 days. It would not be easy for me to spend 1,095 days in Scotland. I would have to have a very strong interest in being in Scotland. Therefore, that requirement is very important. I think it is a good amendment that we have here, and I look forward to continuing on this thread tomorrow when I have a chance to speak again.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR FLOOD AND DROUGHT PREDICTION ACT

Tatiana Auguste (Terrebonne, Lib.) moved that Bill C-241, An Act to establish a national strategy respecting flood and drought forecasting, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, before I go any further, I would like to acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin nation.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to a critical issue: protecting our country from natural disasters, especially floods and droughts.

First of all, allow me to thank John Pomeroy, director of the Global Water Futures Program and a professor at the University of Saskatchewan, and the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis for their contributions to this bill.

Extreme weather events are becoming more and more frequent and intense. Every year, they threaten the safety of Canadians, jeopardize our crops, damage our infrastructure and put our water re-

sources to the test. This is no longer hypothetical; it is an ongoing and urgent reality that requires our immediate action.

To combat these growing events, we need a coordinated national strategy. We need to get all the players involved if we are to properly manage and protect this vital resource that Canada is blessed to have so much of in its rivers, lakes, ice cover and soil.

This bill is vital. It is a major tool for protecting Canada from the devastating effects of natural disasters and for limiting the costs involved.

Let us talk about the costs of floods and droughts. They are expected to cause estimated GDP losses of more than \$128 billion U.S. between now and about 2050.

In 2024, hurricane Debby caused an estimated \$2.7 billion in insured losses in Quebec. Ontario saw over \$990 million in losses caused by flooding in the greater Toronto area. The Jasper wildfires cost about \$1.1 billion, and these are just some of the costs incurred in the last year.

According to available data, the 2013 and 2021 floods in Alberta and British Columbia resulted in estimated losses of between \$5 billion and \$9 billion. It is projected that droughts, floods and storms could cause an average total loss of 0.2% of our GDP.

Passing Bill C-241 will enable us to limit the repercussions and protect our livelihoods while strengthening the country's economic and social resilience in the face of extreme weather events. Thanks to the implementation of early warning systems and rapid response plans, we have the ability to save lives.

This legislation is not just about managing natural disasters. It represents a long-term vision, a clear recognition that climate change is no longer a distant threat, but a very present reality that is already affecting our communities, ecosystems and economies.

Whether we are talking about droughts or floods, there is always one common element at the heart of both: water. Water is the source of all life. It is a fundamental issue for our society, our environment and our future. That is why water should be regarded as a non-partisan issue, an issue that transcends political differences, because water belongs to no party and no ideology. It belongs to all Canadians.

That said, water is also a vast and complex issue. It can be a source of life and prosperity, but when there is not enough or too much, it can be a source of destruction and suffering. That is precisely why this bill is so important. It aims to better understand, predict and manage this vital resource in order to protect both our citizens and our environment.

I would like to emphasize that this bill in no way calls into question provincial jurisdiction over water. On the contrary, it aims to establish strong collaboration between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, indigenous peoples and experts in order to protect our water resources effectively.

It is important to understand that water is central to the climate. We feel the effects of climate change through the medium of water, whether in the form of prolonged droughts or sudden flooding. It is essential to remember that floods are among the deadliest natural disasters our societies experience. According to some studies, more than nine million people have died in the last century as a result of floods. This means floods are a major hazard, second only to earthquakes and tsunamis.

• (1750)

Flooding is not an isolated or distant phenomenon. It is a daily reality for many Canadian communities.

In 2024, insured losses caused by climate events reached \$8.5 billion Canadian, smashing previous records and highlighting the worsening climate risks that we face.

These events have devastating consequences: Lives are lost, infrastructure is destroyed, and entire communities are displaced. Flooding in particular causes considerable economic losses.

For example, the 2013 floods in Alberta caused damage estimated at \$3.7 billion Canadian, making that year one of the costliest in terms of economic losses from natural disasters.

Bill C-241 is a proactive response to these challenges. It aims to establish a national strategy respecting flood and drought prevention, enabling effective coordination between governments and the affected communities. This collaborative approach is essential to anticipate risks, minimize impacts, and protect Canadians and ecosystems.

The answer is simple: every year, in both urban and rural areas, thousands of people are affected by natural disasters. Lives are lost, families are displaced, and property is destroyed. Climate change is making these risks both more frequent and more severe.

This bill is not only a preventive measure, but it also protects human life, as well as our planet and future generations.

This bill could also reduce our reliance on foreign data. Here in Canada, we currently have all the expertise we need to prevent natural disasters. However, our compartmentalized approach prevents us from being leaders in this field. We rely on data collected by NASA, which has been sending spotty data to some organizations since October 2025. We do not know when these services will resume, but we cannot rely on others when researchers at universities such as UQAM and the University of Saskatchewan are internationally recognized leaders in the field. Even so, they cannot do all the work. It is up to us to step up and work together on a national strategy.

In conclusion, this bill will enable effective coordination between the provinces and territories, indigenous peoples and experts. This is about creating a table where everyone can sit down and work together for the good of our country.

Private Members' Business

This is not just a piece of legislation. These are concrete, urgent and necessary measures, something that can mean the difference between life and death, between destruction and resilience.

That is why I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Together, we can protect our constituents, our country and our planet. Together, we can build a safer, more responsible and more sustainable future.

Together, we can build a strong Canada.

• (1755)

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, the member for Terrebonne, for her excellent speech and her excellent bill, which I am pleased to endorse.

This is a critical step in our efforts to protect Canadians from the risks posed by climate change. It is a major issue for my riding, Madawaska—Restigouche, which has been affected by rising water levels in recent years, and it is a major issue for many other regions across the country.

I would therefore like to ask my colleague if she could explain why it is so important, at this time, to have the tools to forecast floods.

Tatiana Auguste: Mr. Speaker, climate change means that these phenomena are no longer rare occurrences. They are happening more and more often. There are droughts, and water levels are rising because glaciers are melting.

That is why it is extremely important that we create a national strategy that will enable experts and all levels of government to work together to protect our citizens across Canada.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague a question, and I would like to congratulate her on her election.

The current bill you are proposing does not amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, which is the enabling legislation of the Department of the Environment. However, it is the Department of the Environment that is responsible for the current weather forecasting services.

Why does the bill not amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act? Is there an issue with the current Canadian Environmental Protection Act?

The Speaker: I will remind the hon. member that he must ask questions through the Chair.

The hon. member for Terrebonne.

Tatiana Auguste: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate my colleague on his election.

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The national strategy really aims to bring everyone to the table where decisions are being made. That will give us the opportunity to share expertise from across Canada, whether it be from Saskatchewan or Quebec. We want to enable all provinces to benefit from this expertise because if there is a problem on one side of Canada, it affects the environment and water, and it will eventually reach the rest of the country. We have a duty to act to protect all citizens.

• (1800)

[English]

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague could share her thoughts on how a national strategy might be developed and what key components or structures she envisions for it.

[Translation]

Tatiana Auguste: Mr. Speaker, what we are envisioning is a consultation process that includes experts, the various levels of government and indigenous peoples. This will allow us to benefit from the expertise of first nations and different governments, the technology available in some provinces, and the expertise currently found in Canadian universities.

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank my hon. colleague from Terrebonne for this bill, because I think it is remarkable.

In Montreal, particularly on the West Island or even in Rivière-des-Prairies, there has been flooding that affected people's lives and their peace of mind. The member has taken a unique approach to this problem, which affects everyone. She raised a very interesting aspect in her bill, namely research and novel technologies.

Can she elaborate on that? How can technology, including artificial intelligence and geomatics, and universities help us in connection with this bill?

Tatiana Auguste: Mr. Speaker, we already have quantum computers and artificial intelligence working to help us in these areas. All we need now is to pool our resources so we can support Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

[English]

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to open by saying what an honour it is to be back where I started, on the environment file. I was the environment critic for the Liberal Party back in British Columbia as an MLA. Back in 2003, my main goal was to remediate the environmental damage done to my territory by industrial development. That led me down different pathways. It led me to aboriginal rights and title, for example. It led me to economics, permitting and environmental assessments.

Some may remember that in my territory, we had an aluminum smelter plant, a pulp and paper mill and a methanol plant. Back in the fifties, sixties and seventies, environmental standards were not a priority, not just in Kitimat but all across Canada, and maybe even North America for that matter. In understanding what environmental standards meant and what environmental assessments were, I found there was a logical way to address environmental impacts, both past and proposed. Quite honestly, I found myself very igno-

rant of how that tied into our society, Canadian society, and aboriginals living in our region.

This is where I first came across the term “balance”, and the standard of living versus environmental issues. It has been a very tough battle over the years to try to maintain that balance, especially when we consider that first nations, for the last 100 or 150 years, have been excluded not only from the economy but, to a large extent, from the society of Canada. It has been a very long journey to try to rectify those two provisions of the Indian Act. Today is a 180° turnaround in the environmental considerations we are talking about versus what we were doing 20 or 40 years ago.

I heard my colleague from the government side talk about what Bill C-241 is not. It would not be an encroachment on provincial jurisdiction, for example, and it would not negatively affect aboriginal rights and title. Consultation would be carried out. First nations and Canadians have heard this before. It would not be right to not address this directly.

Like a lot of MPs in the chamber, I have gotten a lot of emails from and had a lot of Zoom calls and meetings with first nations that are specifically worried about Bill C-5, for example, and how it is going to be rushed through for major projects and ignore the case law that was established in the courts of B.C. and Canada, specifically the Haida court case of 2004. I just got off a call with the Ontario chiefs, who talked a lot about the chemical valley and Sarnia. They are clear that they do not want to oppose development, but they do not want the past to be repeated and they get ignored.

They feel that talks with the commercial sector were going fine until Bill C-5 was enacted, and now they are feeling ignored. They feel they are being ignored because there seems to be a way to get to the finish line without talking to these chiefs about their treaty rights and title or their aboriginal rights and titles, which are two distinctly different topics.

In terms of environmental issues, the point I would like to make is that this is not new for first nations. For many first nations, we have to address environmental issues first. I know we are talking about forecasting for floods and disasters, mainly for better insurance purposes. I have talked to different people about what this could mean. Everybody agrees that it is a good idea to do this, but it is a duplication.

• (1805)

Is the private sector already doing this, especially in terms of insurance for flood protection or farming? Can we do better? Yes, we can do better, and I sincerely hope we are going to do better, but it cannot be a top-down approach. It has to be inclusive. There are many people and organizations that are affected by these disasters, as my colleague pointed out. We are talking about indigenous people. We are talking about people who live close to rivers. We are talking about farmers.

Nobody is immune from environmental disasters, so I think what Canadians want is to ask whether this is going to be an open and transparent process, in terms of getting Canadians' interests into the bill and making sure it not only does what it says it is going to do, but that there is no government overreach, such as what we have seen in other measures carried out by the government. Is it going to be rolled out in a way that does not provide more cost to the Canadian taxpayer?

Most Canadian taxpayers are already limited out. They cannot afford any more taxes. We talk about the affordability issue in this chamber every day. We are talking about how mothers and dads cannot afford groceries. Even if someone works in a grocery store, they cannot afford groceries. As Conservatives, it is our strong belief that this can be done within existing entities using existing resources and that the government could do it more efficiently without adding more cost to the taxpayer and without increasing the affordability crisis we are facing right now.

More taxation is not the answer. I have listened to the answers and the questions coming out of this chamber regarding Bill C-241, and it has always been pointed out that we already have some of the strongest environmental standards in Canada, if not in North America, both provincially and federally. It seems to make sense that with this high level of expertise Canadians have, we should be able, with existing resources, to do a better job of predicting floods and droughts and to prepare not only our entities to actually combat this and deal with it, but also regular Canadians.

I agree that the impacts are stressful for Canadians, both mentally and with the cost attached to them. Anything we can do to actually limit that suffering is a good thing, as long as there is no overreach and as long as there is no extra taxation.

I have also heard the idea that somehow this would not encroach on provincial jurisdiction. I go back again to Bill C-5, which talked about how we would build major projects in a fast-tracked fashion, and they would be fast-tracked within two years. It was in the constitutional authority Canada has to actually get this done in the national interest, and everybody, to a certain degree, agreed. However, the very next day the government came around and said it would not do something without national consensus, without defining what "consensus" meant. They did not talk about whether they meant provincial or municipal. They did not talk about regional districts. They did not talk about any of that.

We always get mixed messaging with all the measures that come out of the government, and all the Conservatives want to make sure of is that we do this in a very common-sense fashion with fiscal responsibility and practical solutions, because Conservatives' goal is

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simple: We want to protect Canadians, strengthen our economy and preserve the natural beauty of this country for generations to come.

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, right now, the St. Lawrence River is at its lowest level ever. The drought currently affecting Quebec is impacting ecosystems, the local economy, maritime trade, and agriculture. Towns are bringing in drinking water from different locations. There are drought issues. We saw the forest fires in Canada; this year was the second-most devastating year for forest fires after 2023. We had catastrophic flooding after the tail end of hurricane Debby passed through. This all comes at a cost to families, to groceries and to insurance.

Unfortunately, the only conclusion we can come to is that the Liberal government is not being serious about the climate crisis that is making these phenomena more intense, more frequent and more severe and causing more suffering and higher costs.

When it comes to climate action, the Liberals have taken a number of steps backward since they came to power after the last election. I could list at least a dozen examples, starting with the elimination of consumer carbon pricing and the EV incentives, which they were supposed to reinstate but did not. People are no longer buying electric vehicles because they are waiting for those incentives to come back. There was the suspension of the strategy for the sale of zero-emission vehicles.

There is also the passage of Bill C-5, which literally allows environmental legislation to be disregarded and completely blown off, in addition to providing for the approval of LNG Canada phase 2. This is going to double LNG exports.

The same goes for public transit. There is currently no agreement with Quebec for the Canada public transit fund. The government has spent \$5.7 billion, but there is not even an agreement with Quebec.

We now see that the Liberals are even refusing to commit to meeting the country's GHG reduction targets. This is a major step backward, and it is worrisome. I could go on. If the Liberal government really wants to prevent floods, droughts and runaway climate change, it should cut GHG emissions. That is the priority.

Unfortunately, the government can announce a whole range of adaptation measures, but if it keeps moving backward the way it has been doing, it will never be able to adapt as much as it needs to. The government has gone backward for long enough. Now is the time for it to shift out of neutral and get in gear. We are talking about a climate crisis. The government talks about flooding, but then it buries its head in the sand about the need to reduce GHG emissions and refuses to do more than just talk about adaptation.

At present, if we want to protect the economy, we know very well that this requires drastic GHG emission reduction measures, and that is not what is being presented to us today. When I look at the purpose of this bill, it is to improve drought and flood forecasting.

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Obviously, the Bloc Québécois agrees that we need to do more to adapt to climate change. We have been saying for several years now that information must be more readily available and that the communities affected by the droughts and flooding we were talking about need more predictability. However, is a bill that establishes yet another strategy with no budgetary impact really necessary? That is what we are currently having trouble determining with this bill, so we have doubts about its real scope.

Is this a legislative firework? Is it just meant to draw people's attention away from bad news on the climate front? We hope that is not the case.

Let me elaborate a little on my concerns. The bill proposes to create "a cooperative, national hydrological and water resources forecasting service and system". Why is this bill necessary if it does not amend the existing framework legislation, which is the Canadian Environmental Protection Act? That is the enabling legislation of Environment Canada, which takes care of weather forecasting.

Is there currently a problem with the law regarding hydrological and weather forecasting that prevents the government from properly fulfilling its responsibilities or from improving the quality of its activities? That is our question. Where is the problem right now? Why could these proposed services not be provided directly by Environment Canada's existing weather services? Why do we need to create a new government body and a new general bureaucracy? That is a big question mark for us.

• (1815)

Environment Canada's Meteorological Service of Canada can get information from Quebec's environment ministry, which already oversees Quebec's regime governing bodies of water. Quebec's environment ministry already gathers data. It processes, analyzes and disseminates that data. It measures water levels and flows. Some 230 hydrometric stations are scattered across Quebec. This data enables the Government of Quebec to develop simulation models and forecast flows in certain waterways, snow melt and runoff. Quebec has been doing this for years. It is used to it. These activities obviously also provide the hydrological and hydraulic expertise required for proper water management. There is a lot of data on the ministry's website, including water levels, flows, flood zones and hydroclimatic forecasts. The Government of Quebec has the expertise necessary to protect the public from floods and droughts.

It appears to us that Environment Canada already has the authority to establish partnerships, both internationally and domestically, if the objective is to improve the services and practices of the Meteorological Service of Canada. This bill assumes that there is a need for coordination between the governments of the different provinces. However, it is not clear to us that this need is real. It is even less clear that it should be up to the federal government to oversee coordination between the provinces. They can establish relationships among themselves without the need for Ottawa's intervention.

Why does this bill imply that the Meteorological Service of Canada would not be able to perform the duties referred to in the current strategy outlined in the bill? I must admit that this confuses me. If the government is truly concerned about the issue of floods and droughts, why are these revelations not included directly in the

budget? Why is there a bill presenting a strategy when we do not even know if we need a bill to have this strategy?

One thing is certain, however. The cost of inaction has skyrocketed in the meantime. Just look at the consequences of climate change. We commissioned a study on the topic. Over the past 10 years, insured disasters have cost an average of \$2.5 billion per year. Last year was a record year, with \$8.5 billion in insurable losses related to severe weather in Canada. The average amount paid out annually in claims for disasters in Quebec is \$428 million, a number that will obviously continue to rise. We know that climate action costs much less than inaction, that every dollar invested in emissions reduction saves money, and that every dollar invested in adaptation saves \$13 to \$15 in avoided costs for damage. That is why adaptation is a priority for us.

Dealing with floods and droughts is a priority, but is it a priority to pass a bill and create a strategy that does not seem to require a bill to exist? That is why we are essentially also asking the government to set aside some money in the next budget. What makes adaptation so challenging is the need for money, the need for help for the provinces and municipalities. Municipalities in Quebec alone currently need \$2 billion a year to adapt their infrastructure to climate change.

That is what we need, not a bill that leaves us feeling unconvinced. Obviously, we could stand to gain from being convinced. We always keep an open mind. However, for now, we have very specific demands. We included plenty of proposals in our election platform. Here are a few: Prepare people for the cost of climate change, increase the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund, protect and help people with insurance too, increase funding to prevent shoreline erosion, and ensure that the federal government makes transfers to local governments, which are in the best position to manage the consequences of climate change.

When we look at all this, it does not seem as though the government is serious about climate change. We are very concerned that we are having a big debate to initiate something that we do not need, when the government could move forward quickly on its own. The Bloc Québécois is serious about this climate crisis and we are going to take the bill that is before us seriously.

• (1820)

That said, for the moment, the Bloc Québécois is confused. We have serious questions about the need for this bill.

We need to be convinced.

[English]

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a huge honour and privilege to rise tonight in support of Bill C-241, otherwise known as the national strategy on flood and drought forecasting act.

Rapidly shifting weather patterns and the existential threat posed by climate change have made extreme weather events more common and more devastating than ever. According to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre, in 2023 and 2024 alone, drought-induced wildfires claimed about 22.5 million hectares of land, which is just over one-third of all hectares burned in the past 20 years. Floods, meanwhile, caused roughly \$800 million in insured damages annually between 2014 and 2023.

We know that catastrophic weather events are both a symptom of and a contributing factor to the climate crisis we all face. However, mitigating the impacts of extreme weather events is not just an environmental issue; it is also a fiscal issue. Last week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer projected that spending on the disaster financial assistance arrangements will reach \$1.8 billion annually between 2025 and 2034, making the next 10 years of disaster relief costlier than every single extreme weather event serviced by the DFAA since its founding in 1970.

This is not just a cost to government, either. In 2024, catastrophic weather events caused a record \$8.5 billion in covered damages, squeezing insurers and everyday Canadians further during a cost of living crisis. GHD, a global engineering and architecture services firm, projects that the overall financial toll to Canada will reach at least \$139 billion over the next 30 years. The cost of inaction is high and rising exponentially, making bold climate action the only fiscally responsible choice.

Further, it is a mental health imperative. On October 8, I put forward a motion in the House calling for a national strategy to address the mental health impacts of emergencies because the impacts of extreme weather events ripple far beyond the disaster itself. The trauma and grief that are often caused by losing homes, loved ones and a sense of security to extreme weather events cause and exacerbate mental health challenges for far too many Canadians.

It is also deeply important for reconciliation with indigenous peoples and justice for rural communities. Wildfire displacement disproportionately impacts first nations and indigenous communities, with indigenous people representing approximately 40% of all wildfire evacuees.

Earlier today, I spoke with Leah Main, a councillor in Silverton and a director of the Regional District of Central Kootenay. I would not say she is a city councillor, because her community is quite small. It is a town. She is here on FCM lobby days. She pointed out that despite rural communities being the places where climate mitigation is most necessary, they often do not have the capacity to adequately monitor or prepare for extreme weather events. We need to do better in supporting those small, rural communities.

As the federal NDP critic on emergency preparedness, I have been consistent in my support for proactive coordination across all levels of government to mitigate the impacts of extreme weather events. That is why I presented motions to establish a national fire

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administration for better coordination and a national aerial firefighting fleet as crucial measures to bring resources, information and true partnership to Canada's emergency preparedness systems. New Democrats have also championed the call for a youth climate corps to mobilize young Canadians looking for work toward renewable energy projects, emergency response efforts and more, to support climate mitigation and adaptation. We hope to see these priority investments for a climate-resilient Canada reflected in the upcoming federal budget.

As we advance the important work of climate change mitigation, Bill C-241 is a promising step in the right direction. Establishing a national strategy on flood and drought forecasting would have the potential to improve monitoring infrastructure in communities across Canada. If it is properly resourced and done in true partnership with provinces, territories, local communities and first nations and indigenous communities, better monitoring would support climate mitigation efforts, thereby saving lives, preventing devastation to local economies and tackling Canada's mental health emergency.

• (1825)

As far back as 2016, I have spoken in the House calling for a national flood strategy, so I appreciate the work done by the member for Terrebonne on this very important issue. I congratulate her for putting forward this private member's bill.

New Democrats will always stand up for working Canadians, rural communities and indigenous peoples. We will stay involved in the consultation and implementation process to ensure that those most impacted by extreme weather events are top of mind in the government's national flood and drought monitoring strategy.

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Long Range Mountains and on behalf of Canadians across the country to speak to Bill C-241, an act to establish a national strategy respecting flood and drought forecasting.

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In Newfoundland and Labrador, our connection to water is part of our identity. In fact, we are one of only a few places in the world that has an island on an island. We are literally surrounded by water. It shapes our history, our communities and our livelihoods. It is a part of who we are.

This bill would require the Minister of Environment to work with provinces, territories, indigenous governments, municipalities and industry partners to develop a coordinated national strategy for forecasting floods and droughts. Its purpose is to improve how Canada gathers and shares data to identify infrastructure at risk and strengthen our ability to anticipate and respond to extreme water events before they become disasters.

That is a goal every Canadian can understand. Whether they live beside the Fraser River, the Red, the Humber, or along the rugged coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, every Canadian knows what water can give and what it can take away. It connects us and sustains us. When it turns against us, it reminds us of how small we are against the power of nature. It also reminds us how strong we are when we face it together.

In Long Range Mountains, we have lived that truth many times. This past June, a severe rainstorm washed out major sections of road on the great northern peninsula, isolating multiple coastal communities. People found themselves cut off from emergency services, food and work simply because every road in and out was underwater or damaged. When the road is gone, so is the ability to move, and families are left waiting and worrying.

We also remember the devastation caused by hurricane Fiona in Port aux Basques in September 2022. Homes were torn away from their foundations and shorelines were carved away. We are still rebuilding today. Entire neighbourhoods were changed forever. That is how quickly water can reshape a community and the lives within it. Even before that, in November of 2021, storm after storm soaked western Newfoundland and Cape Breton, causing destructive flooding, damaged roads and infrastructure collapse. Every one of these events is a reminder that, whether there is too much water or too little, the results can be equally devastating.

This year, drought has been the challenge. Producers across Newfoundland and Labrador have endured one of the most difficult seasons in memory. Dairy, forage, fruit, vegetable, berry and honey producers have watched feed supplies vanish and transport costs soar. They are resilient, but they cannot do it alone.

Earlier this month, I wrote to the Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador and to the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture to support their members during this crisis. I pointed to the AgriRecovery program as proof that co-operation between federal and provincial governments works when disaster strikes. A strong forecasting strategy could help those same producers act sooner to protect crops, animals and livelihoods before the damage is done. Better information leads to faster action and smarter recovery. Information saves dollars and early warning signs saves lives.

That is why we will support Bill C-241 at second reading, so that it can move forward to committee. We agree in principle, but we will insist that this is done responsibly. This strategy must use exist-

ing departmental resources. Canadians cannot afford another bureaucracy. It has to be about coordination and efficiency, not expansion.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, I have seen how effective policy depends on fiscal discipline and respect for jurisdiction. Conservatives believe that protecting the environment and growing the economy can and must go hand in hand. At committee, we will press for guarantees that this strategy respects provincial and indigenous authority, builds on existing systems and delivers measurable results.

Floods and droughts may not stop at borders, but jurisdiction matters. The provinces and indigenous governments already manage their own water systems. Ottawa's role should be to coordinate and connect, not to control. Canadians do not need more taxes to change the weather. They need a government that helps them prepare for it.

● (1830)

Canada already leads the world in clean energy and responsible resource development. We should build on that success through partnership, not punishment.

A national forecasting strategy done well can give farmers, engineers and local officials access to reliable data before a crisis hits. When everyone has the same information, decisions are faster and communities are safer. Forecasting is not political; it is practical. By improving our ability to anticipate risk, we can prevent hardship, lower recovery costs and protect Canadians before disaster strikes.

We also believe that private insurance should be the first line of protection; taxpayers should not be footing the bill after every flood or drought. With accurate mapping and forecasting, insurers can assess risk fairly, homeowners can find affordable coverage, and public disaster funds can focus on the truly extraordinary events. That is fairness and fiscal responsibility working together.

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Before entering public life, I spent years working in real estate, first in sales and later as a broker leading a team of agents across our communities. I spent countless hours looking at market data, helping my agents and clients understand the real costs of home ownership and the risks that come with it. I have seen first-hand how a single flood or storm can wipe out years of investment and how confusion over insurance or lack of affordable coverage leaves families exposed. That is why this issue matters to me, because protecting homes means protecting people's stability and their future.

The strategy must serve all of Canada, from large cities to rural, coastal and northern communities. When a road washes out on the Great Northern Peninsula or a drought forces farmers to import feed at enormous cost, the impact is equally real. Rural and agricultural voices must be part of the design.

Conservatives have long supported practical environmental stewardship. Since 2019, our party has called for co-operation with the provinces and territories to identify and protect key aquifers and improve water quality. Bill C-241 fits within that vision, provided it remains grounded in accountability and respect for jurisdiction.

Across Canada, from the farm fields of the Prairies to the coastal communities of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canadians share a deep respect for water. It sustains our families, our farms and our communities. It also reminds us that strong planning and strong partnerships are essential. We are learning that water can be unpredictable. Storms are stronger, droughts last longer and the costs continue to rise. That is why the legislation matters. It gives us an opportunity to modernize how we prepare and respond, without adding more red tape or waste.

At the environment committee, Conservatives will focus on outcomes, not optics. We will push for measurable timelines, standardized data sharing, integration of indigenous water knowledge and transparent reporting to Parliament. We will hold the government accountable to ensure that the strategy delivers real results for Canadians.

Canadians understand the value of preparation. They know that good planning beats panic and that co-operation achieves more than division. We cannot control the storms, but we can control how ready we are when they come. That is what leadership looks like: practical, prepared and proud to protect Canadians.

Conservatives will support Bill C-241 at this stage because we believe in common-sense solutions that protect Canadians but also respect taxpayers. Let us build a strategy that does not grow government but grows Canada's capacity to face whatever tomorrow brings.

• (1835)

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Terrebonne for introducing this bill. This subject is very important to me.

As members know, I am the member for the riding of Mirabel. A large part of my riding borders the Lac des Deux Montagnes. Folks in my riding are very familiar with extreme weather events that have a devastating impact on our built heritage and people's lives.

As everyone knows, in 2019, extreme weather events caused the Lac des Deux Montagnes to flood 2,500 homes with more than 60 inches of water, or much more in some places. Six thousand people were displaced. Lawsuits are still going. The financial toll was in the millions or tens of millions of dollars.

Understandably, when I go to my constituents and talk to them about policies to fight climate change, to adapt to it and mitigate its effects, people do not ask for an empty national policy with no budget and no teeth that does not amend the environmental legislation. No one ever asks me for that.

This government is not taking action. It was doing a little bit to fight climate change, promote adaptation and provide assistance, but this government is losing more and more ground. This kind of national strategy looks a bit like greenwashing. The government says it wants everybody to sit down, plot together, think about this issue and write a report so people think we are taking action. Droughts are happening, and there are ways to deal with them. Our farmers experience this every day.

Here is an example. Why does the government never talk to us about the possibility of enhancing AgriRecovery? In the previous Parliament, my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé hounded the Minister of Agriculture for months because of extreme weather events in Quebec. There were some in my riding. Farms were flooded in Saint-Janvier. We are facing challenges, and we have had droughts this year. The program was designed to use Canada-wide criteria, and, because it was so convoluted, no action was taken.

The current government has no idea what it is doing in the fight against climate change because this government is interested in just one thing: winning as many seats as possible and going with the flow, no pun intended, going wherever the wind blows it. This government eliminated the carbon tax. Quebec still has its own system. The federal tax did not apply in Quebec, and it still does not apply. It may be detrimental to our trade relationships because, starting next year, Europe will start enforcing its carbon border adjustment policy. Quebecers will foot the tax bill for Canadians once again.

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Industrial carbon pricing is at risk. The government has backpedalled when it comes to energy retrofits and electric vehicles. However, it needs to take action. There are phases in the development of new technologies. The early phases are expensive, and more measures need to be adopted. However, the government is backpedalling on such measures. The government woke up one Monday morning and decided that it is over. The Minister of Finance and National Revenue gave his word to our car dealers that they would be reimbursed for any rebates already given to customers for the purchase of EVs. Then he presented the estimates, but the money was not in those estimates. We had to fight for it.

It is hard to believe that the Prime Minister was once a UN special climate envoy. There are days when I look at him here, in the House, and think how miscast he is. The Prime Minister wrote a book called *Values: Building a Better World for All*. He spent much of his life talking about important values, claiming that boosting the value of the stock market or the amount of money in our pockets was not all that mattered in life. He said that we needed to stand together and care for the most vulnerable among us, who usually bear the brunt of climate events, as has been shown.

Once he came to power, however, he tossed out all the principles he supposedly held most dear and announced that what we urgently need is pipelines. He told us we need as much gas as possible, as fast as possible. How did he go from an economist known for his ambitious stance on fighting climate change to someone pitching oil today?

• (1840)

As members know, public life has its risks. When someone becomes prime minister or a candidate for party leader, people start to get interested in that person's financial affairs. People found out that the green funds, the environmental funds that the Prime Minister was investing in, were more brown than green. There was some greenwashing going on. Apparently the Prime Minister had an innate talent for greenwashing, as demonstrated by this bill.

We are being told that people are facing flooding, that they are facing droughts, that there is 60 inches of water in their homes, and that people are losing all their childhood mementoes. However, this bill essentially tells us that what these people need is a federal website to give them the weather forecast. People can tell when it is raining.

That is not what people need. They need resources.

There is going to be a budget. The government is jeering at us during question period, saying that we are not going to vote in favour of the budget and that we are going to trigger an election. The Bloc only has 22 members in the House. All we have done is present clear, costed demands. We made six demands.

Quebec's share is one-third of a percentage point of GDP. For the skilled mathematicians across the way, the Einsteins over there, it is one-third of a percentage point of GDP. How much less could we ask for? That is still too much. However, we are asking for that to include investments in infrastructure, resilient infrastructure.

The members for Vimy and Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel on the island of Montreal know that there are challenges related to re-

silient infrastructure, given the new rainfall levels and the large variations currently being recorded by precipitation gauges.

There are municipal elections coming up, and the Union des municipalités du Québec, or UMQ, and the Fédération québécoise des municipalités are asking for a transfer to Quebec so that that money can be redistributed. Everyone knows that building sewers does not win elections. However, we know that there are significant infrastructure needs. That is one of our budget requests.

The Liberals are introducing a bill with no budgetary impact and no royal recommendation. Those who were asking for infrastructure will not get any money for that because of the passage of Bill C-5, so they will just get the weather forecast instead. After passing Bill C-5 under a gag order with the help of the Conservatives, the Liberals were in too much of a hurry to build a pipeline.

What can I say? I cannot say that we are going to vote for this.

There comes a point when we have to wonder why this bill does not amend any section of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. We even have to wonder whether it should be sent to committee. What could the committee do with it? Under parliamentary rules, the committee cannot change anything other than the sections of the act that are amended by the bill itself. However, this bill does not change anything. What can the committee do? Should the committee members sit around and twiddle their thumbs?

The member for Terrebonne has not done her job properly. Maybe she did not have enough time. Maybe she was busy doing something else. She is not even giving us the chance to put this bill through a modicum of parliamentary debate. Meanwhile, the budget is right around the corner.

For a long time now, the Bloc Québécois has been calling for an \$875-million increase in the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund. That would be a concrete measure that would have a meaningful impact on people's lives.

Do members know that this would cost less than one German submarine, and far less than four? This is one thing we are asking for.

They are asking for a co-insurance program. Insurers are coming to see us. I understand that houses will no longer be built in flood zones, but houses have already been built in certain areas. They will not be demolished, but there needs to be some sort of help to reassure these people, who are generally low-income earners. They do not have an answer to that. They are asking for \$500 million for riverbank erosion, and that can be spread out over a few years.

However, here we have a bill that says the federal government will write a report and suggest, in a nicely put together strategy that no one will read, to do what Quebec is already doing. Quebec's environment ministry already has a system that does all that.

In all sincerity, it will be difficult for the Bloc Québécois to support this bill.

• (1845)

The Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

EMPLOYMENT

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this evening we are discussing the jobs crisis facing Canadian young people. Conservatives have been sounding the alarm about this jobs crisis ever since the last election and, in fact, in many ways before that.

The crisis has continued to get worse. Over the last three years since we came out of the pandemic, unemployment numbers have continued to go up, especially for young people, so it is not just something that has happened in recent months, but something that has continued to get worse in recent months. This is now, I think we can say, a metastasizing crisis that affects not only the present but the future, as young people miss out on the critical skills and points of development that come with those first jobs.

Right now, we are approaching half a million unemployed young people between the ages of 15 and 24. Over 460,000 are currently unemployed, and we are getting closer and closer to 15% unemployment for young people. This is a serious problem. It responds to clear policy failures from the government, failures on the economy, immigration, training and a number of other areas.

We have been hearing about how the cost of living crisis, the price of groceries and the price of housing are contributing to unemployment, because it makes it harder and harder for employers to be able to afford a living wage when what is required to live in Canada is much more than it used to be because of the increase in the cost of things.

In response to these events, Conservatives have put forward the Conservative youth jobs plan, which highlights our response, what we are constructively proposing to the government and suggesting it implement as part of the upcoming budget. Our proposal is to unleash the economy, fix immigration, fix training and build homes where the jobs are. This is a plan with detailed policy behind it that we have put to the government and encouraged it, again, in the constructive spirit Canadians expect of us, to implement.

Unfortunately, we have not seen any jobs plan from the government. In fact, it has taken to denigrating our constructive proposals rather than seriously engaging with them. This is unfortunate. We have presented these ideas in a constructive spirit, and the government is denigrating our ideas and failing to present any proposals of its own. The best it can do is point to programs that have existed in this country since the 1990s as if they are something new. It talks about the continuation of programs that have existed since the 1990s that are clearly not meeting the present moment in terms of the metastasizing youth jobs crisis.

Then, we have had announcements to replicate existing programs: for instance, on top of the existing credential recognition fund, to create another, separate credential recognition fund without really contending with the fact that the government's existing programs are not working to meet the crisis we have.

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I think Canadians are very disappointed by the performance of the government on this file. They would have liked to see the government come constructively to engage with the ideas we put forward as an opposition. We have put forward a detailed Conservative youth jobs plan that is about unleashing the economy, fixing immigration, fixing training and building homes where the jobs are, and on each of those points we have articulated a policy.

I hope we will see the government stop denigrating good ideas and recognize how its policies have contributed to the problems we face right now. Instead, I hope it will listen to our ideas in a constructive spirit and consider implementing some of them as part of a plan that it can put forward in the budget, building on what we have proposed. Will the government do that?

● (1850)

Annie Koutrakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Jobs and Families, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan that students need jobs to pay for their education and to gain vital experience and skills. Young Canadians are the workforce of the future. Anything we invest in them today will reap rewards for Canada in the years ahead.

We are investing in them. Take the student work placement program, for example. In budget 2024, the Government of Canada proposed \$207.6 million for the program to create 40,000 work-integrated learning opportunities for college and university students: 40,000 is almost like a full Blue Jays' home baseball game. It is a packed stadium of students, all gaining valuable work experience. This is the scale we are talking about.

[Translation]

When given the opportunity to learn on the job, particularly in their field of study, post-secondary students can acquire professional skills, build their resumés and make connections that will help them get high-quality jobs after graduation. These opportunities also help them to adapt. They acquire new skills that will be useful as the job market evolves.

When we say skills, we are talking about communication, creative thinking and negotiation skills, which are best developed through practical work experience.

[English]

Since it launched in 2017, the program has created over 300,000 opportunities for post-secondary students across Canada. These opportunities span several fields of study, and 45% of them have gone to students from under-represented groups.

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The youth employment and skills strategy, YESS, is another way we are investing in young Canadians. YESS is a Government of Canada initiative that delivers 16 programs through a network of 12 federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations. The strategy is designed to support diverse youth aged 15 to 30 to become job-ready through work experience, training, skills development and wraparound supports that allow them to successfully transition into diverse sectors of the labour market.

Employment and Social Development Canada is the lead department for YESS and delivers two programs: the YESS program and the Canada summer jobs program. In July 2024, the government announced \$370 million for ESDC's YESS program to support over 200 projects, most of which are now under way, and in February of this year, we announced an additional \$23 million that will fund over 35 new projects. This brings the total investments in ESDC's YESS program to over \$393 million for 2024-28. That means we are on track to help more than 26,000 young people overcome job barriers and secure meaningful, lasting jobs.

The Canada summer jobs program is another example of how much we are investing in young Canadians. I do not have much time left to go into the details, but the CSJ supports are meaningful to thousands of youth during the summer.

There is no doubt that we are supporting youth at every stage of their journey toward a brighter future and a stronger Canadian economy.

• (1855)

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, very respectfully to my hon. friend, I will say that we need to measure the performance of the government by the results. The appeal of the parliamentary secretary, ministers and others is to say we should look at all the things they are trying to do, but I think the government will be judged by the results in the aggregate.

Here is the reality: After the government has blocked natural resource projects, denigrated the natural resource sector, made a mess of our immigration system and failed to align skills training in the main with the needs of our economy, we are now in a situation where there are close to half a million unemployed young people. I am sure of the personal sincerity of the parliamentary secretary, but despite best efforts, unemployment numbers have continued to go up.

At what point do we recognize that it is just not working and that we need new policies to fix the problem?

[*Translation*]

Annie Koutrakis: Mr. Speaker, we are investing in young people.

We are investing in young people through the student work placement program, the youth employment and skills strategy and the Canada summer jobs.

[*English*]

The labour market today looks very different for young people than it did for past generations. New and emerging technologies, a rise in gig work, an aging workforce and globalization are profoundly changing the labour market and how the jobs of the future

will look. Programs like the ones I just mentioned help young Canadians face those challenges. These programs are smart investments in our economy and in the next generation of leaders, because when young people get a strong start, all of Canada benefits.

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise this evening in Adjournment Proceedings to pursue a matter I raised on October 8. It is an unusual question I want to pursue tonight because it is not a “gotcha” moment. It is not about how I wish the government had done this but failed to.

I was very impressed and, I must say, inspired by a piece written in *The Globe and Mail* on October 3 by a Canadian professor, Franklyn Griffiths, who is an expert on Arctic affairs, among other things. For a long time, I have been concerned about how we establish our sovereignty in this current climate and with particular people who live in the White House. We know there have been claims that Canada should be a 51st state. Our sovereignty is important to us. One of the places where our sovereignty can be seen as vulnerable is in our claim to the Northwest Passage. Of course, it is the storied Northwest Passage of Stan Rogers. It is the storied Northwest Passage of Canadian imagination. However, it rests on the fragile legal claim that it is the internal waters of Canada.

What Professor Franklyn Griffiths raised, and I asked this question at the time of the hon. Minister of Northern Affairs, was this: If we were to see the U.S. president launch a naval vessel through the Northwest Passage from the United States, how would we assert our claim of sovereignty? I asked whether the Prime Minister might not think that it was a good idea to follow the line of argument that Professor Griffiths advances, which is that we have a much stronger claim to Arctic sovereignty by virtue of the fact that, through the negotiations of Nunavut, through the conveyance of vast territories of our Arctic and through the Inuit people to Canada in the claim of Nunavut, our legal status is much stronger in recognizing that indigenous sovereignty is Canadian sovereignty. That is a lock on Canadian sovereignty.

Obviously, we need to invest more in our Arctic. We need to invest more in the infrastructure of ports. We have to deal with the fact that, due to the climate crisis, winter ice roads are disappearing. Recent articles have appeared in the Nunavut press about the need for roads and airstrips, which are disappearing or at least very bumpy because of permafrost melt. In terms of the investment in the Arctic, and the hon. member for Nunavut here in this place speaks so eloquently to this issue frequently, we need to pay attention to our north.

The argument advanced by Professor Griffiths would be a very good place for our federal cabinet to spend some time, think about it, mull it around. We can imagine for a moment that the leader of the ITK, Natan Obed, who is an extraordinary leader, was engaged more fully in the decisions that are made by Canada about how we protect our sovereignty. We can imagine actually investing in fighting the climate crisis so that the permafrost of the north stays frozen. We can imagine for a moment that we decide that we want to invest more in the Arctic Council, the only multilateral body to which Canada belongs and probably the only multilateral body in the world with a permanent seat for the Inuit peoples and the Inuit Circumpolar Council.

In pursuing this tonight, and I am very grateful that a parliamentary secretary is here to take this up with me, I ask this: Why can we not do more to assert Arctic sovereignty through solidarity with the Inuit peoples?

● (1900)

Brendan Hanley (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for asking about Canada's role in affirming Arctic sovereignty and appropriately citing the role of Arctic indigenous residents in protecting it. I am grateful for her sharing the article, which was also sent to me by a constituent of mine. I thank Karen. I think this is a reflection of how invested northerners are in Arctic sovereignty and Arctic security. Indeed, the member is correct in reminding us that Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic has always and should always depend on the presence and stewardship of Inuit Nunangat, northern first nations and all northern peoples.

As it happens, the foreign affairs committee is currently conducting a study on Arctic sovereignty, and I was able to participate in asking questions of the panel last week. In that time, I pointed out many areas where Arctic leaders and residents are taking the lead on Arctic defence, security and sovereignty, including with the upcoming Arctic summit in February 2026 in Whitehorse, which will bring together leaders from northern Canada, Alaska and Greenland to discuss Arctic security, infrastructure and economic development. It is hosted by the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and the Government of Yukon. As I said at committee, what leaders throughout the Arctic expressed is that they are here to partner with Canada in defining their sovereignty and protecting the Arctic from external threats, including climate-related environmental degradation and geopolitical threats.

Looking specifically at Nunavut through modern land claim agreements, Inuit governments manage vast lands and coastlines across Inuit Nunangat. The co-developed Inuit Nunangat policy ensures that every federal program and service in the region supports Inuit prosperity and self-determination. It is guided by a simple principle: nothing about us without us. That same co-development approach is foundational to the Arctic and northern policy framework.

Our government's defence policy update, “Our North, Strong and Free”, recognizes that the Arctic is warming at four times the global average. Melting sea ice has opened up new shipping routes and attracted foreign interest. Climate threats are as pressing as geopolitical security threats. That is why our new government has made de-

Adjournment Proceedings

fending the Arctic one of Canada's highest national priorities by increasing our presence, sharpening our awareness and strengthening our ability to respond. We are modernizing our defence with Arctic and polar over-the-horizon sensors and enhanced undersea detection, delivering earlier warning, better tracking and faster response to any threats to Canada's north.

We are also growing a persistent, visible presence at sea. The Harry DeWolf-class Arctic and offshore patrol ships are now operating each summer navigation season. Canada has also awarded contracts to two new polar icebreakers to ensure access to the High Arctic. Operating together, they will ensure continuous icebreaker function in the region, which is in collaboration with Finland. I was grateful to have the opportunity recently to meet with the Canadian ambassador to Finland to learn how this project is already revitalizing shipbuilding in Helsinki.

Members of the Canadian Rangers, drawn from northern communities, continue to patrol, mentor and support operations across the north. Under “Our North, Strong and Free”, we are enhancing their equipment and mobility so they can do even more of what they do best: local leadership on the land and rapid support to civil authorities for search and rescue and emergency response.

There is so much more to tell, and I again thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for citing the article and raising the issue. In partnership with indigenous and territorial governments, and indeed all who live in the Arctic, we must continue to protect and define Canada's sovereignty so that the Arctic remains peaceful, secure and protected.

● (1905)

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I want to share with Canadians how much respect and affection I have for the hon. parliamentary secretary, who, as a medical doctor, was the public health officer for Yukon during COVID. That is no small thing, and now he serves as a member of Parliament. The fact that I think he may have picked the wrong party does not really make any difference at this point.

We are in a common discussion, which happens too rarely in this country. We are an Arctic nation, but we mostly live in southern Canada. I sometimes say to people, knowing about Brazil, that the people of Brazil living in Rio know as much about the Amazon as the people of Canada living in Ottawa or Toronto know about the Arctic.

The challenges of Arctic sovereignty are challenges of national security. The challenges of losing permafrost are a threat to global survival. Keeping the Arctic cold is a global challenge.

Adjournment Proceedings

Brendan Hanley: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the chance to return some of the compliments. It would obviously take much more than a minute to return much of the esteem I have for the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and her leadership on climate action for many years, as well as on so many other parliamentary issues.

Arctic security and sovereignty are matters for all parties, all levels of government and the people who live across the Arctic. Regional and local engagement to integrate the perspectives and prior-

ities of northerners will be central to unlocking economic potential across the north. We need to continue to work together so that we can keep the Northwest Passage safe through preparedness, strong partnership and persistent patrols.

The Speaker: The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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

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