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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)
[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Randeep Sarai (Secretary of State (International Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) and consistent with the policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaty entitled “Amendments to the Agreement Establishing the African Development Fund”, adopted by the Board of Governors of the African Development Fund on May 23, 2023.

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[*Translation*]

RULES FOR PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: Before giving the floor to the members who wish to present petitions, I would just like to point out that I have noticed that, when they are presenting petitions, members often make comments that could be described as rather partisan. That goes against standard practice for petitions.

In other words, when a member presents a petition, they must simply present the meaning and content of the petition without making statements that could be construed as critical of the government or the opposition. This is also out of respect for the signatories of the petition because they likely do not expect the member presenting the petition on their behalf to use it as a partisan weapon, so to speak.

[*English*]

To summarize and repeat that, when we present petitions, I have noticed that there are often partisan editorial comments accompanying the presentation of petitions. This goes against *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*. In this regard, I will quote the third edition of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, at page 1192:

No debate is permitted during the presentation of petitions. Any comment on the merits of a petition—even a Member’s personal agreement or disagreement with the petitioners—has been deemed to constitute a form of debate and is therefore out

of order. Members are permitted a brief factual statement, in the course of which they may allude to the petition being duly certified, to its source, to the subject matter of the petition and its prayer, and to the number of signatures it carries.

[*Translation*]

In order to ensure respectful and productive discussions and to give as many members as possible the opportunity to present petitions, I would ask everyone to carefully follow the rules on petitions.

[*English*]

I thank all members for their attention.

* * *

• (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 ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*For text of questions and responses, see Written Questions website*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CITIZENSHIP ACT

Hon. Marjorie Michel (for the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship) moved that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025), be read the third time and passed.

Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in the House once again to speak to Bill C-3. It is a very important bill that seeks to respond to an important court challenge calling into question citizenship law in Canada. It would do so by pointing to an inconsistency in citizenship law that has to be rectified in order for it to be what it should always be: equal and applicable to all.

In my previous speech on Bill C-3, I began by talking about the philosopher Hannah Arendt, who famously said that citizenship is “the right to have rights”. Without citizenship, we cannot even speak about democracy.

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The bill would codify into law what we all know, which is that all of us, as individuals, have certain inalienable rights. If democracy is to mean anything and stand for anything at all, citizenship matters. In our case, as Canadians, citizenship and the rights it entails, such as freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of expression and all of the freedoms we hold dear, are codified in our charter. A perfect example of that is when citizenship entails living up to the expression of rights, which, without that document, cannot be held in high regard at all.

The Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruled in December 2023 that citizenship law in Canada is not consistent. In fact, it is two-tiered. It came to that decision because Canadians who obtain their citizenship either through birth or through naturalization can pass down that citizenship to their children, but this is not true of Canadians who are born abroad. Bill C-3 seeks to rectify that. How would it do so? It would all Canadians who were born abroad and have children born abroad to pass down their citizenship. That would address the Ontario court decision of December 2023, which said the fact that this right does not currently exist and is not currently available stands as an inconsistency. It goes against the equality provisions under the charter.

There is a very important condition, though, that the government has added, which is that there must be a substantial connection to Canada that is upheld over a cumulative period of three years. That is required. This is a very important condition that allows for citizenship to be meaningful, and it is something that advocates have called for for a long time.

I know colleagues across the aisle will point to other ways of achieving this goal. At committee, the Conservatives worked with the Bloc on a number of amendments, which were passed at committee but defeated here, as we saw yesterday. Colleagues in the House have raised concerns about that, but I would remind them that, ultimately, it is the House of Commons that decides. The House of Commons has various committees, and amendments can be passed there, but we have report stage for a reason. I thank the NDP for working with us to restore the bill, in essence, to its original form. The bill is justified and needed, and it speaks to the needs of the moment.

We have to respond to this court ruling. November 20 is the date by which we have been asked to respond. I would urge colleagues to think about being as expeditious as possible in getting the bill out of the House of Commons and over to the Senate so that senators can look at it and it can ultimately receive royal assent. This is of paramount importance. Think about what is at stake.

● (1010)

Canadian identity and citizenship can mean many things, but I go back to the example of a Canadian born abroad who also has children born abroad. They would certainly feel very close to Canada and feel a real tie to Canada. They could have served Canada as a diplomat or a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, or by participating in non-government organizations. A substantial connection builds through experiences like these. We could think of many other examples as well.

That substantial connection needs to be understood, and it is understood and respected in this bill. It would be cumulative, not con-

secutive. What does that mean? Think of a diplomat who was born in another country, like Germany or France. They would have the opportunity, as a diplomat, to spend time in Canada, but perhaps be stationed or assigned to different postings abroad. A consecutive stay in Canada is therefore not always possible, but a cumulative requirement in the bill would allow for that diplomat to still maintain that connection to Canada. It would allow that diplomat, under the provisions of the bill, to meet the requirement so that citizenship could be passed down.

Colleagues have raised this concern about the consecutive requirement that they hoped would be in the bill. However, a cumulative requirement is what the government has gone with, for reasons I have talked about today and in my previous speech, and it is entirely justified.

Again, November 20 is the court deadline. We have an opportunity now to move forward with this bill. I hope colleagues get behind it. I am still struggling to understand exactly what the issue is, although I am sure that my colleagues will raise that in the comments and questions. We have an opportunity to abide by the deadline. Yes, amendments were made, but the House of Commons' procedures allow for those amendments to be overturned, and they were.

I am thankful for the time, and I look forward to questions.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would note that it was the Liberal government that prorogued Parliament for its leadership race, called an election earlier this year and then allowed Parliament to sit for only a few short weeks this year. It is now asking Parliament to expedite a bill that would allow unfettered chain migration in a very short period of time. I digress.

My colleague talked about the rights of Canadian citizenship. Could he please explain how this bill would deal with the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship? Why has his government gutted things like language requirements and security checks for adults?

What are the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship, and how would this bill allow them to be upheld?

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, there was a prorogation during the time of the previous government. That is a practice available to parliaments in Canada and elsewhere. This is the Westminster tradition.

We should focus on the present, and especially the future. The court is asking us to do exactly that. If members across the way want to continue to dwell on the Trudeau years, they can do that. It seems they have an obsession with Justin Trudeau. They keep talking about him.

There is a new Prime Minister. There is a new government, which is, among other things, trying to put forward legislation that is entirely consistent with the Charter of Rights. The Ontario Superior Court of Justice has said there is an inconsistency, and we needed to rectify it in a way that would allow us to uphold vital democratic principles.

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• (1015)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. parliamentary secretary highlighting the importance of the decision by the Ontario Superior Court. I am wondering if he could provide his thoughts on what would happen if this legislation were not to pass. There is an expectation for November 20.

There is a difference between naturalization from a permanent resident into a Canadian citizen, which has a 1,095-day requirement, and someone who has a birthright to citizenship. That was established when Stephen Harper was the prime minister, as was not having to take English or French exams and so forth.

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, our colleague, as he so often does, points to a number of critical things.

First of all, on his question about what would happen if this bill does not pass, we would have a citizenship law that is not consistent with the requirements of the Charter of Rights, especially the equality provisions. If citizenship laws are to mean anything in Canada, as I mentioned here today and on previous occasions, we have to ensure they abide by the charter and its equality requirements.

My colleague also points to the differences between citizenship by birth and naturalization. There are a number of nuances and differences. We have a bill that seeks to put in place a requirement that helps bring to life the citizenship requirements in terms of birth.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, to sum up, what my colleague is telling us is that we should adopt anything and everything on the pretext that the deadline set by the superior court is looming. I beg to differ with his view of things, especially since work was done in committee and proposals were put forward. The committee did some serious work. One aspect had to do with citizenship applicants' knowledge of French or English.

Why is that a problem for my colleague?

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, our country is a bilingual country. We are very proud of that.

My colleague talked about the work done in committee. A few amendments were adopted in committee, but the House of Commons is sovereign. I mentioned that in my speech.

[*English*]

Parliament and, in this case, the House decide. We saw that yesterday. That is a sacrosanct principle.

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a few things I would like to point out with respect to the parliamentary secretary's speech.

First off, the approach of the government creates an ethical dilemma when citizenship is passed on to the grandchildren of naturalized citizens. There will come a time when Canada has to use its conscription laws.

How will a Canadian living in another country be treated versus a Canadian living in Canada properly? We have not heard an answer from the government about how our military and conscription laws will apply to citizenship in this case. I think it is an important point, given that the military just announced it wants to mobilize 400,000 reservists.

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, I might have missed something, but at no point have I ever heard this, whether in the press or from advocates. I would say that this is the first Conservative talking about conscription, in my experience.

Brad Vis: I spoke about this the other day.

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, he apparently has spoken about it before.

I do not know if there has been another Conservative talking about conscription. We can raise all sorts of hypotheticals. The key is that, as we said before, citizenship law in Canada has to be consistent. It cannot be two-tiered. The Ontario Superior Court of Justice said that it is two-tiered and that we have to act to rectify this.

• (1020)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting debate we are having regarding citizenship.

Within the riding of Waterloo, I have had constituents tell me about their experiences. These are hard-working Canadians who have had opportunities to be abroad. I think global citizenship has some value to it. They have shared the importance of this legislation.

There is also frustration within the riding of Waterloo when it comes to the Conservative Party's disregard for what Canadians decided six months ago in terms of who they sent to Parliament. The Conservative leader made despicable comments about the RCMP, without having regard for these independent, hard-working institutions. Think about the wrong-headed comments on court rulings. Courts have an independent job to do. They are not partisan entities.

I would like to hear the member's comments in regard to the court ruling and the importance of this government, and all parties, having a role to play respecting what the courts do and the work they provide.

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague of almost 10 years, who devotes herself every day to the needs, interests and concerns of the people of Waterloo.

I will focus on this: Ultimately, this is a bill relating to citizenship and, yes, immigration. My colleague mentioned the Leader of the Opposition, who never fails to play games on issues of immigration. Just a few years ago, he was talking about Canada needing more immigration. He was visiting cultural centres and promising to stay the deportation of those who were found to be ineligible to be in Canada. This is the kind of so-called leadership we find across the aisle.

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Now he is singing a different tune. It might have something to do with a leadership review that is coming up in January. This is not an acceptable approach. As I said in question period a few days ago, the politicization of citizenship and immigration matters has no place in this country. We need reform, but we do not need games.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary mentioned the Westminster system in Parliament. Let me remind him that, in the Westminster system, it is Parliament that is supreme. While we respect the judiciary, it is Parliament that makes laws.

He also mentioned that Supreme Court ruling. I would like him to tell me where in that Supreme Court ruling the court said that we had to have unfettered chain migration, that we did not need to have background checks and that we did not need to have language requirements.

Could he tell me where in the judgment it says that?

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, it was an Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruling, but I digress.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Peter Fragiskatos: Mr. Speaker, he said, “Supreme Court”.

In any case, what is required is a law that is consistent with the charter. The cumulative test provides a substantial connection that meets the requirement set out by the court.

As for the Westminster system, I am glad the member has served on the student council at Queen's University. I congratulate him on that, but this is the House of Commons, and what is required is respect for the House of Commons. Report stage, yesterday, showed how this place actually works.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are here today to debate a bill that was precipitated by the fact that the Liberals decided not to challenge a lower court ruling that would allow unfettered citizenship by descent and create untold citizens of convenience. The department does not even know how many.

We are now on the third reading of the bill after the government decided to gut amendments passed by the committee that would have required basic things like language, cumulative residency and security checks. After not challenging a court ruling, the Liberals gutted these amendments, which were common sense. Even *The Globe and Mail* said that the amendment we put in place was common sense and that the government should have accepted the Conservative and Bloc amendment regarding the residency requirement.

The parliamentary secretary's comments were rote and kind of feckless, frankly. I want to say why.

This bill deals, fundamentally, with the value of Canadian citizenship. The reason I cannot support the bill, particularly without those amendments, is that, without national identity, integration is impossible and the collapse of our country is inevitable. I want to lay out why we need to put more value on Canadian citizenship, why the bill so denigrates Canadian citizenship and why it is going

to create citizens of convenience that some future parliament will have to deal with.

The bureaucrats who are listening in the lobby can mark my words: Future courts will be dealing with this. Future ministers will be looking at evacuations from some country. This bill would create citizenship of convenience. It would take away the notion of responsibility from citizenship. It would impact our country, absolutely, in the future.

What is Canada's national identity? Ahead of every election, I try to find the reason for running again in order to ground myself in that purpose. For all of us, of all political stripes, running is such an honourable thing to do but also comes with a cost to our families. I took my family to visit a visual art installation at the National Gallery that uses Thomas Tallis's *Spem in Alium*. It is a speaker setup. We sat in the middle of the installation and I tried to explain to my family that this was why I was running. When our democratic institution of pluralism is upheld, Canada is a unique, beautiful thing in history. It has all these individual voices. They have disparate tones and disparate harmonies, but they come together and work together. They are greater than the sum of their parts. I encourage people to go and sit there if they ever want a moment of inspiration in terms of what our national identity can and should be.

In telling them that Cardiff's installation at the National Gallery still offers an accurate analogy for what Canada is today, I may have sold my children a bill of goods. Many in Canada would now describe our nation less as a melodically pluralistic counterpoint and more as a ghettoized cacophony. That sentiment flares up most often in discussions of skyrocketing immigration levels, especially regarding whether Canada can integrate all the people it has welcomed in the last five years.

Attempting to answer that question leads to even murkier waters. In 2025, what does integration into Canada mean, anyway? What is the value of Canadian citizenship? That ambiguity belies the actual problem. Canada's sense of national identity has been eroded by the government to the point of non-existence. Immigrants cannot be expected to integrate into something that is not there.

In recent decades, successive Liberal governments have used legislation and regulation like the piece in front of us today to segregate Canada along regional and ethnocultural lines. Thus, in 2025, our country Canada is perhaps most aptly described as lines on a map, home to tens of millions encouraged by their federal government to prioritize differences over similarities, to reject nationhood for globalism, to take from the country before giving back and to self-flagellate over historical feelings rather than build on the nation's strengths for future resilience.

• (1025)

Upon hearing that statement, many of my colleagues will have a visceral reaction. That is good. How dare anyone question whether Canada still has a national identity. We are a multicultural nation based on the rule of law, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, and equality of opportunity. Canada is the place where newcomers can retain their cultural identity while plugging into a sense of peaceful, pluralistic Canadian nationhood. That is the Canadian national identity, right? Well, it is not today, not after the Liberal government.

While that might be the prevailing romantic notion of Canadian identity held by some colleagues who have eroded it over the last decade, it is no longer accurate to describe it as reality, and admitting the truth is the first step in addressing the problem. For people requiring evidence, it abounds in our country's recent political history. Canada's political left has long led the global postnational movement, best described as the purposeful erosion of national identities in favour of supranational organizations and globalism.

Former Liberal prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau set Canada on a postnational course with the 1971 multiculturalism policy, which encouraged newcomers to retain their cultural differences rather than embrace a shared Canadian identity. The erosion of Canada's national identity was further normalized in the 1980s by the Liberal government's national energy program, which deepened economic divisions between western and central Canada.

The aftermath of the 1995 Quebec referendum further contributed to the erosion of Canadian national identity by entrenching exclusive Quebec nationalism. Then, in 2000, former Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien stated the following in a speech:

Canada has become a postnational, multicultural society. It contains the globe within its borders, and Canadians have learned that their two international languages and their diversity are a comparative advantage and a source of continuing creativity and innovation. Canadians are, by virtue of history and necessity, open to the world.

Former Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper's government pumped the brakes on postnationalism during its tenure. On immigration, former prime minister Harper's government prioritized national identity with stricter language requirements for citizenship and a tougher citizenship exam. Regarding Quebec, it enshrined a key nationhood motion, which included the phrase "within a united Canada".

Economically, Harper attempted to ease western alienation by bolstering Canada's natural resource industries. Culturally, Harper's government focused on heritage spending on platforming nation-building victories like the War of 1812.

However, all those reforms were reversed and far exceeded after former Liberal prime minister Justin Trudeau took office in 2015. Essayists discussing Trudeau Junior's famous 2015 postnationalism statement that "[t]here is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada," often forget that he did not just say those words but that he also operationalized them through a decade of socialist-oriented, postnationalist policies, so much so that his fervent focus on abolishing Canadian national identity may be remembered as the most enduring aspect of his legacy.

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On immigration, the Trudeau Liberals narrowed the age range for mandatory language requirements in citizenship applications, thus diminishing shared language roles in the Canadian identity for newcomers. They eliminated in-person citizenship oath requirements. They sought to erase references in the Canadian citizenship study guide to practices like female genital mutilation as abhorrent, arguably normalizing their importation into Canada.

They turned a blind eye to judicial rulings, allowing immigration status to factor into sentencing violent criminals, valuing the process of entry into the country over the responsibilities associated with citizenship. They allowed Canada's compassionate asylum system to be abused and made a mockery of. Thus we have the bill we have in front of us today.

The Trudeau Liberals have also normalized the practice of importation of conflicts from newcomers' countries of origin, rather than primarily encouraging the shedding of those quarrels in favour of a pluralistic, united Canadian identity rooted in western democratic values. This phenomenon is best exemplified by the Trudeau government's tolerance of diasporic lobby groups' influence in elections and in Canadian institutions while simultaneously turning a blind eye to groups who sought to plant international conflicts and even terrorist principles in Canadian soil. Despite clear evidence of rising foreign interference in elections, the Liberals have yet to implement a foreign agent registry.

• (1030)

The Trudeau Liberals have also prioritized cultural and ethnic differences over a shared ethos of equality in hiring and storytelling. For example, they embedded divisive, quasi-racist hiring policies into federal funding for educational institutions, they allowed Canada's publicly funded national broadcaster to consider abandoning objectivity for racialized narratives, and now they allocate news funding based on whether or not outlets sufficiently highlight ethnic, religious or other group differences.

Rather than enlisting newcomers to help strengthen a cohesive national identity, such as by constructively addressing the nation's historic injustices while simultaneously celebrating its positive achievements, the Trudeau Liberals actively erased symbols of shared historic Canadian identity from public view. They redesigned the Canadian passport to replace images of Canadian national heroes like Terry Fox with inert objects like a wheelbarrow. They supported activities that established the Canadian flag as a symbol of shame as opposed to a representation of patriotism. They worked to erase Canada's founders from places of prominence.

Thus, Canada's political left has profoundly succeeded in transforming Canada into a postnational non-nation, free from the trappings of cohesive national identity.

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People who might argue that this was a good thing are very wrong. What Justin Trudeau overlooked in his Liberal government's zealous pursuit of postnationalism is that his father's multicultural vision could thrive only under robust western democratic institutions. Without a government's prioritizing, above all else and especially over partisan ideology, the safeguarding of principles like freedom of speech, secularism and the equality of opportunity, multiculturalism will inevitably destroy a peaceful and democratic nation.

The proof is in the pudding. Today in Canada, after decades of postnational identity's destroying policies, less than half of Canadian youth say they would fight for our country. This marks a startling shift from generations ago, when Canadians fought in great wars for what seemed to be immutable freedoms. Diasporic conflicts now erupt on Canadian streets, hate crimes against ethnic and religious groups have surged and the once-strong Canadian consensus on immigration has been solidly broken by the government.

If Canadians want to reverse the pluralism-destroying course that Liberal postnationalism has set us on, every member of the House, regardless of political stripe, must acknowledge that postnationalism has eroded Canada's national identity to the point of non-existence. That state of affairs is likely the biggest threat to our sovereignty today; no other nation is. History proves this conclusion correct.

For a civilization to survive the test of history, it needs some sort of cohesive shared identity; without it, collapse occurs. There are even examples to be found within Canada's own evolution in the 20th century. In the early 1900s, a Canadian national identity had taken root in spite of high levels of immigration; it was forged in the crucibles of battlefields like Vimy Ridge, where people of many backgrounds fought together as Canadians, united by the shared values of democracy, rule of law, bilingualism and loyalty to the Crown. To be Canadian then was to embrace English or French as a primary language, respect parliamentary institutions and demonstrate civic duty through collective efforts in war and in nation-building.

Fast-forward to today. Our domestic efforts have failed to build critical national infrastructure and have allowed our military to atrophy to the point of near non-functionality. Our foreign policy rewards the tactics of terrorist organizations and abandons western allies in times of crisis.

Logic dictates that if the Liberal government continues eroding the western democratic values that once but arguably no longer underpin Canada's rapidly disappearing pluralistic national identity, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, and equality in the application of the rule of law, then collapse is what should be expected of Canada's once-vaunted pluralism.

People looking for a remedy from the Liberal Prime Minister who sits here today will be disappointed, as evidenced by the fact that he put forward a bill like the one that is before the House and then gutted amendments on things like language requirements.

The Prime Minister has long been an adherent to the World Economic Forum's globalist brand of postnationalism, and the best def-

inition of Canada's national identity he managed to muster was that we are not the United States. His new Minister of Canadian Identity managed an arguably worse response, offering pithiness like "I won't stand here and pretend that I can tell you what [a] Canadian...is or should be."

• (1035)

It is telling that neither of them could define Canadian identity as rooted in shared respect for things like the rule of western-based law, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, and equality of opportunity. Nor could they talk about the supremacy of this place and the fact that we here, who represent all the Canadians in this country and abroad, have the right to challenge court rulings and to set law; that is a core part of what we do to strengthen Canadian national identity.

The reality for the current Liberal Prime Minister is that his government must reverse the many changes his predecessor made under the Liberals' aggressive postnational doctrine, in order to rebuild Canada's national identity, prevent pluralism's collapse and retain Canadian sovereignty.

How can we talk about things that are in the national interest if the government cannot define what the national interest is? If the current Liberal Prime Minister fails, the effect will be the same as if he were to tip over the art installation in the National Gallery I spoke about, a shameful and purposeful squandering of an intricate and delicate masterpiece. That is why I stand here and oppose the bill.

There should be no citizens of convenience. If somebody is to be a citizen of this country, they should be able to speak one of Canada's official languages. They should have a clear and demonstrated ability to understand that the responsibility of Canadian citizenship is to uphold our democratic institutions. How can we measure that? We can do so through a citizenship test, but the Liberals gutted that amendment we made at committee.

The fact that the government put a bill forward after not challenging a lower-court ruling on something as vital as the value of Canadian citizenship and who should be eligible for that is bananas. It says that the Liberals do not give a rip about Canada's national identity, and it reconfirms the current Prime Minister's continuation of a postnational doctrine.

We have been in a period of time, especially with the trade situation we find ourselves in with our neighbours to the south, when the Prime Minister is talking about the need to have nation-building initiatives and whatnot, but he cannot even talk about what Canada's national identity is. The only thing I have heard the Prime Minister talk about with respect to that is the fact that we are not American. What are we, then?

There are very clear definitions of what it could mean to be Canadian, even in Canada's citizenship guide right now. There is not a cohesive definition, but certainly on this side of the House we could manage a definition that was rooted in pride, in democratic institutions and in how to maintain pluralism and multiculturalism through respect for the rule of law.

What we have seen with the Liberal government is the denigration of Canada's democratic institutions, the Supreme Court ruling this week on child pornography, and censorship bills that take away our ability to speak truth to power. These are all things that erode Canadian sovereignty and support postnationalism. There has never been a more important bill to oppose than this one.

For people who might have been affected by the small number of lost Canadians, there was a bill in front of the Senate years ago that would have addressed the issues, but the Liberals expanded the legislation far beyond the scope of what our colleague in the Senate tried to do. The minister already has powers to rectify circumstances of citizenship.

However, what the Liberals would do today in the bill before us, especially by gutting the amendments the Conservatives put forward, is entrench the sense of postnationalism in the country, further erase our national identity, erode our pluralism and further devalue Canadian citizenship.

Oftentimes in the House, we are tasked with the mundane details of program spending or of different types of policy, but we have to be tasked and seized with restoring Canada's national identity and with restoring and protecting the value of Canadian citizenship.

I implore colleagues to vote against the bill, to make the Liberals go back to the table and come forward with a bill that is narrow in scope. There are tools at their disposal that they could use to challenge court rulings, but they have chosen not to. The value of Canadian citizenship, our national identity, is worth something more than what is in front of us today, so I implore colleagues to vote against the bill, protect our heritage and protect the value of Canadian citizenship.

● (1040)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the member get out into the community if she does not quite understand what our Canadian identity is all about. At the end of the day, this legislation would add value.

The member talks, and she has put a whole pile of stuff on the record. She talks about, for example, military spending and that we are not doing enough. Her leader actually went to 1%. We are bringing it to 2%, with a goal of hitting 5%. The member talks about not supporting allied countries. She and her Conservative Party voted against the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement. She talks about infrastructure, and we are going to see massive investment in infrastructure, no doubt, in the budget. The Conservatives, true to form, will vote against that.

Does the member not have an ounce of respect for the democratic process that she—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): We need to provide time for a response.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill has the floor.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to stand here to reject Liberal postnationalism, to reject everything the Liberals have done to erode the value of citizenship and the value

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of our democratic institutions, and to fight. I will stand here to fight for what is right.

My colleague opposite has a lot of shame to wear for all the years he has stood by to actively help erode our national identity, our military and our national institutions. He stands up in here day after day to say, "It is okay the Liberals upheld this court ruling." The Liberals have not even talked about the child pornography ruling.

I have been out in the community. I see a Canada that has been reft apart by levels of crime I have never seen before, by hunger, by loss of affordability and by a loss of a Canadian national dream. We need to restore that, and that is what Conservatives would do.

● (1045)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while I may have some disagreements with my colleague, I cannot help but agree—for the most part, of course—with what she said in her presentation on national identity.

In Quebec, the issue of collective identity is critical. A cornerstone of Quebec's collective identity includes the idea of secularism. How can we integrate migrants if we do not have a collective identity? It is absolutely impossible.

The challenge of integration is a challenge that Quebec must face. That is why we are trying to establish immigration guidelines. We want to ensure that migrants are integrated into society in French and that they respect the values of Quebec society, which include gender equality and secularism.

It is true that, within the Canadian framework, it is much more challenging to have this type of thinking. I would like my colleague to tell us more about the issue of integrating migrants in a context where we are told that a national identity does not exist.

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague that Canada needs to have a strong national identity that is clearly defined and supported in shared symbols by a government that rejects postnationalism, which the government has not done.

I want to talk about language because the government gutted a language requirement amendment from the bill, which the Bloc and the Conservatives worked on together. Briefly, my maiden name is Godin. I am speaking English in the House of Commons because of laws in Manitoba that prevented my family from being able to learn the language. My family history was robbed from me.

Part of my identity was robbed from me, and now we have a government that is rejecting that new citizens should have to learn one of Canada's official languages. It would further erode Canada's national identity. It would further erode the fact that we have two official languages in this country, and again, it would erode that principle of national identity, which Canadians need for newcomers to integrate into our shared social and economic—

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): With questions and comments, the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul has the floor.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her incredible speech outlining how, since the 1970s, successive Liberal governments have worked very hard to dismantle a national identity in Canada and the obvious detriment that has caused in society.

My question for my colleague is in regard to what is happening through the courts with respect to those people who are not yet citizens in Canada, but are seeking to become citizens, and who then break the law. We are seeing concerning things that have been happening after 10 years of influence on our court system. We are seeing that, for them to become Canadian citizens, they are making excuses and having lighter sentences for people who are breaking Canadian laws. Can she comment on that?

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, Parliament is supreme. We have the right to make laws in this place. That is what parliamentarians need to re-embrace after a decade of Liberal governments acquiescing to the courts' nonsensical rulings, such as the ones they should have appealed that precipitated this bill and the Supreme Court ruling that said there should be no mandatory minimum sentences for child pornography. Across political stripes, we had Premier Wab Kinew of the NDP in Manitoba say this was a ridiculous ruling and the UCP premier in Alberta saying that the ruling needed to be appealed.

Part of Canada's national identity and protecting our pluralism has to be protecting Canada's democratic institutions, which includes the supremacy of Parliament. It includes our challenging court rulings. We have to get back to our roots in so many different ways to restore those ties that bind us together as Canadians and that allow a pluralism to flourish. If we do not do that, the collapse of the country is inevitable.

• (1050)

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am so sick and tired of this “Canada is broken” narrative from the Conservative party. I am a proud Canadian, as is everyone in my riding. My family tree goes back to Laura Secord and the United Empire Loyalists, and I grew up and lived in Hamilton, where the Battle of Stoney Creek was one of the defining battles that kept Canada Canadian and part of the British Empire, so I will not be lectured on Canadian identity by the Conservative Party of Canada.

My question is this: Do these Conservatives have no shame?

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, that is big talk from somebody who ran for a party that has pulled down all the statues of the leaders of our country. That is tough talk from a guy who ran for a party that was rooted in postnationalism and that supports disgusting rulings, such as no mandatory minimums for child pornography. Do they have no shame?

Those guys do not have any shame, but Conservatives will always fight for our country, for shared national identity, which is rooted in things like respect for the rule of law, for responsibilities associated with Canadian citizenship, for affordable budgets and for an affordable life. That is what we are fighting for, and I think

my colleague opposite needs to check himself on the shame meter today.

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Calgary Nose Hill for her speech. She and I participated in a few missions together as members of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. During those missions, we tried to explain who we are.

I want to go back to the committee's work. In her speech, my colleague talked about language. The Bloc and the Conservatives supported amendments concerning language. What are the consequences of those amendments being rejected? More importantly, immigrants must satisfy a language requirement, so why is that requirement not in this bill? Why were the amendments rejected?

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, there are the practical aspects of the rejection of the language amendment, and then there is the more macro-level impact. Practically, by rejecting the language requirement, somebody could be an adult, gain citizenship through descent, and not be able to speak one of Canada's official languages. My colleagues opposite are mocking that. To me, that goes to the macro-level narrative, which is that the Liberals do not believe there is a national identity, and they do not believe in the importance of language rights.

By rejecting this amendment, they are sending a signal that it is okay to gain citizenship by descent, as an adult, without being able to speak one of Canada's official languages. How can we be unified as a nation if there is not a requirement to speak one of Canada's two official languages? How can we continue to respect how Canada operates if that is not in place?

My colleague mentioned that we have travelled with the Inter-Parliamentary Union before, and travelling with her has given me a lot of insight into why French language rights are so important in Quebec. She helped me rediscover my family history, too, and how language rights have impacted me. I have to say that, by rejecting this amendment, the Liberals have sent a strong signal that they do not give a rip about language rights and they do not believe that language is an integral part of Canadian national identity or the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today we are talking about Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act. I will focus on the all-important issue of citizenship, because that is the crux of today's debate.

First and foremost, I would like to debunk some myths. Since the beginning of the debate on Bill C-3, the Liberals and the NDP have repeatedly attempted to demonize the intentions of the opposition, whether Bloc Québécois or Conservative. They have accused the Bloc and the Conservatives of being a bunch of racists and xenophobes, of fuelling anti-immigration rhetoric and so on.

Now, I have to say that the Bloc Québécois is used to hearing such accusations. This is nothing new. We know that others often use such accusations to shut down criticism by discrediting the speaker. They can then avoid having to debate the other person or justify their position. After all, they have simply discredited that person.

We refused to let that intimidate us. We asked questions and even proposed amendments, even though this upset the Liberals on the other side. What is even more interesting in these circumstances is that the bill is not even an immigration bill; it is an emigration bill. The bill would apply equally to everyone, to any descendant of a person who has citizenship and decides to go live abroad—

• (1055)

Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am sure that my colleague will share his time if he is asked.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): That request requires the consent of the House.

Does the hon. member have the consent of the House to share his time?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères can continue his speech.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Jonquière for his very appropriate intervention. I wanted to share my time with the member for Shefford, who will certainly have a lot to say about the bill as well.

As I was saying, Bill C-3 applies equally to everyone. It applies to anyone who has obtained citizenship by birth or naturalization, whether or not they are an immigrant or, like me, someone who was born here and whose family has been citizens for several generations. The bill will also apply to me. If I decide to leave Canada to live elsewhere and my descendants do not return to live here, this bill will apply to them just as it would apply to any other immigrant.

The notion that these proposals are anti-immigrant is simply wrong. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the discussion we are having today. I would like to clarify this, as it is creating some confusion, given that what we are discussing is citizenship. Immigrants are people coming into the country, and emigrants are those leaving the country. This bill does not apply to immigrants, it applies to emigrants. That is the difference. An emigrant leaves the country and will no longer be living here. The purpose of this bill is to define the criteria that should be applied for granting citizenship to the descendants of people who have left the country. This applies to everyone, regardless of religion, skin colour or any other personal

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characteristics, with no distinction as to race, ancestry or anything else. It is equal for everyone, without exception.

As for the current state of the law, it already allows two things. Firstly, people who leave the country keep their citizenship. If a person has citizenship and goes to live somewhere else, unless they no longer want it and give it up, they do not lose their citizenship because they went to live somewhere else. This has always been the case. Secondly, the law as it now stands allows citizenship to be passed on to the first generation born and living outside the country. If I leave the country to go and live abroad and I have children, I can pass my citizenship down to my children. That is the law as it currently stands.

Today, we are discussing the possibility of expanding that right so that not only the first generation of persons born abroad, but also the second and subsequent generations, may obtain Canadian citizenship. We are having this debate because the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruled that the current law is too restrictive. In the court's view, the first-generation limit on citizenship is unconstitutional. The Liberals had a choice: They could challenge the ruling, or they could accept it and amend the law. The Liberals chose not to challenge that ruling. What they said, indirectly, is that they were in agreement with the court's ruling.

The court also decided to give Parliament six months to define what constitutes a substantial connection with Canada. Everyone knows what happened over the past few months. There was an election, and it took longer because of that. The new deadline is November 20, just a few weeks from now. What will happen if Parliament does not comply? Since the judge ruled it is unconstitutional, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruling would become the law if there is no challenge to the ruling. Thus, the current rule setting out the first-generation limit on citizenship by descent would no longer exist. There would no longer be any limits on citizenship by descent. This means that it would be unlimited until the end of time, even 100 years, 1,000 years or as much as 10,000 years from now, and even if it involves the descendants of the descendants of people who no longer live here. They would still get citizenship. That appears to be the Ontario Superior Court of Justice's view, unless the government intervenes to counter it.

Today, we are debating Bill C-3, which is actually the very same as Bill C-71. It is a carbon copy of the former bill. Although a bill was introduced prior to the election, an election was called before we could resolve the matter. What we are examining now is basically an ultimatum from the government and, indirectly, from the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. This is partly because an election was called, but it is also because if we choose not to define the conditions under which a citizen born outside Canada qualifies for citizenship, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruling will apply by default. The onus is on us, and the government is asking that we support the bill before us.

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• (1100)

When we examined this bill, the first question that came to mind for the Bloc Québécois was this: What criterion does the government wish to impose? The criterion it wishes to impose is based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, which states that a person must have resided in Canada for 1,095 days. A descendant of a Canadian citizen would therefore have to have resided in Canada for 1,095 days, the equivalent of three years. The government itself admitted that it looked to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act when it established this criterion.

We thought that sounded a bit lenient, but we decided we would do our homework by studying the bill, asking questions and sending the bill to committee. At committee, we heard from witnesses, including the Parliamentary Budget Officer. We asked questions, such as how many people would be affected by Bill C-3, how many more citizens the bill would create, and how many more people would be entitled to vote. The government side told us that they did not know, but that there would not be very many, a hundred, perhaps a thousand. The government had no figures to give us. We were being asked to vote on a bill without knowing what the repercussions of the bill would be. That basically sums it up.

We asked the question again. The Parliamentary Budget Officer seemed to have done a bit of work on the topic, because he estimated that the bill could affect 150,000 people. That is not an insignificant number. It is not a handful of individuals or even a few hundred. It is a lot of people. Let me also be clear that in the event of an international conflict, those 150,000 people who do not live here would need us to charter planes to go and get them. As Canadian citizens, those people would have to be defended and looked after. That also means 150,000 people who could potentially obtain a passport, as well as the right to vote. On that subject, we might ask ourselves this: In which riding would these people be allowed to vote? No one knows. However, we do know that there are a number of ridings where the results are often very close. We saw that in the last election. Some ridings are won by a whisker. The government would like us to meekly agree and let this bill go through as easily as a letter goes through the mail, as the saying goes in Quebec, although these days, it is no secret that the mail does not go through all the time, especially during an election.

For the Bloc Québécois, this simply did not work. We believe that citizenship is not a prize to be given out in a box of cereal or handed out like candy on Halloween. We believe it should be taken seriously, so we proposed some amendments. Knowledge of French or English should be a basic requirement. It seems logical to me that citizenship should not be given to someone who does not speak the language of the country. We agree with the 1,095 days, but for immigrants, it is 1,095 days over a period of five years. Why not apply the same requirement in this case, since the government took inspiration from this criterion for its bill? Also, why should there not be an assessment to check whether the person poses a threat to national security? Why should there not be an annual report tabled in Parliament about how many people obtained citizenship under this law?

All of these are proposals that we wanted to put forward. Unfortunately, the government teamed up with the NDP and dismissed them out of hand. It was so insulting of the government to act that

way. We are disappointed that the reasonable proposals we put forward in good faith were rejected like that.

[*English*]

Michael Coteau (Scarborough—Woburn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that was a very informative speech. Can the member speak a bit more about the consequences of implementing a new law and the impact the Ontario Superior Court ruling would have on that decision if the law was not implemented?

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Mr. Speaker, I already gave an explanation in my speech. The Ontario Superior Court of Justice's decision will apply by default unless we pass the bill before us today. What I said, and what my colleague needs to remember, is that the amendments we proposed were reasonable. Requiring knowledge of French is not too much to ask, nor is it too much to ask someone to spend three out of five years in the country over their lifetime. They could attend CEGEP or university or work on contract for a few years to obtain their citizenship.

It boggles my mind that every time we moved a perfectly reasonable amendment, it was voted down. Members simply voted against every amendment at every opportunity. To me, this points to the government's intransigence, and that is completely unreasonable.

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the introduction to his speech, my colleague did a great job of explaining a major problem facing the federation, which is the fact that people try to smear Quebec's reputation whenever there is talk of immigration. The same thing happens when there is talk of secularism.

Looking back, the same issue came up when Bill 101 was passed. However, today, not a single elected official would suggest that Bill 101 is a regressive law that prevents people from integrating.

I would like my colleague to tell us whether we are experiencing something similar when it comes to secularism. Perhaps in 25 years, federalist politicians will understand that it was a good thing after all.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. I would say that there is a big difference between when Bill 101 was passed and the bill that is before us, which we wanted to amend. The same applies to the issue of secularism, a subject we could no doubt discuss.

The main difference is that Quebec does not have a majority in this House. We do not have a majority, so the rest of Canada will decide for us and determine the criteria for obtaining citizenship.

In an independent country, we will decide for ourselves the criteria for granting citizenship.

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[*English*]

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in listening to the member's speech. Clearly, he has a lot of knowledge on the topic. I did not follow the bill through committee really closely. I was just wondering if he could comment about whether there are other countries that are doing this or proposing this. What are the differences between those countries and Canada, particularly given old-world versus new-world issues? I am wondering if he has any comments around that.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Mr. Speaker, I have not done an in-depth analysis of how citizenship is granted around the world, but I know that there are several different approaches and several possible ideologies.

In my view, what we proposed is reasonable. I believe my Conservative Party colleagues agree with us, since we voted together on these amendments. I urge the government to listen to what was said in committee and, above all, to reflect carefully on this.

The government is about to grant citizenship, and therefore voting rights, to 150,000 people who do not live here. They will not even be required to know French or English, nor will they be required to have even a basic knowledge of the country, since the government does not want to incorporate a citizenship test. This measure does not even require a security check.

I think this could be a case of wilful blindness, a desire to see the world as though there were no problems anywhere, as though everything were easy, as though this citizenship had no value whatsoever.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments and I would like to ask him a question.

One of my constituents in my riding of Waterloo was born abroad. She has a family who is proudly Canadian, who speak both official languages and who contribute to our community and our country. She attended a conference abroad and could not return to Canada without putting her unborn child at risk, so the child is not Canadian.

I would like the member to tell me what he means. Should this child be Canadian? He will speak both official languages and contribute to Canada. He lives here in our country, but he is not entitled to citizenship.

• (1110)

Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Mr. Speaker, my answer to that question is this: Do the child's parents speak French or English? Did the child's parents spend at least three consecutive years in the country over a five-year period?

These criteria do not seem that extreme to me. Am I wrong?

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act, 2025, following my colleague from Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, who explained the issue well.

This topic interests me because certain places in Quebec have been identified as settlement areas, and Granby is one of them. These are communities located in regions outside major urban centres. The Quebec department is asking people to settle there and discover Quebec culture, which is who we are. Granby is included in these settlement areas, and that is a tremendous asset. One organization in Granby is working very hard to teach immigrants French so that they can take their place in Granby's regional community. It is called SERY.

I would like to salute the members of that organization this morning as they prepare to present their intercultural recital on Saturday, which is returning after a forced hiatus because of the pandemic. This performance is being presented as part of Quebec's week of intercultural encounters, which is being held this week, from November 3 to 9, with the theme "Quebec in common". The goal is to really emphasize encounters and exchanges between Quebecers of all origins. This is extremely important, and I will be stopping by to say hello to everyone at Verbe Divin Secondary School on Saturday and to take in the cultural richness, beauty and various forms of artistic expression.

That said, today we are talking about Bill C-3, which corrects a historical injustice in the Citizenship Act in response to a December 2023 ruling by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, which found that the first-generation limit on citizenship is unconstitutional. This limit was put in place by the Conservatives in 2009. Now we are in a bit of a bind, because if we do not take action, the court's ruling is going to apply instead of Bill C-3. Could that open the door even wider? We do not know, but we want to know. That is why we are debating Bill C-3 in the House today.

We also know that this issue has been dragging on for years. Bill C-71 and Bill S-245 were introduced to address citizenship. An election was called and the bill died on the Order Paper. Now we have to hurry due to this court ruling and the fact that this matter has unfortunately been dragging on for some time.

The goal is to make the right to citizenship fair, consistent and inclusive. It is true that the current law creates some bizarre situations. I am going to begin by talking about the Bloc Québécois's position and the amendments that were proposed in committee. Next, I will talk about what the bill fixes, and I will close with a few statistics.

For now, the Bloc Québécois is reserving judgment. We are going to wait and see how things play out. We know there are negotiations going on. We are a bit disappointed about what happened, and we are asking that the work done at committee be respected. The amendments were rejected at report stage. We opposed the amendments from the government, which teamed up with the NDP. Those amendments sought to eliminate the requirement that the 1,095 days of residence take place within a five-year period, abolish the tests for adult applicants, and remove the obligation to report to Parliament. These are important matters. They are not trivial.

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In contrast, we did support the amendments presented at committee that called for a residence requirement of 1,095 days in Canada during the five years preceding the child's birth. We also supported the amendment that established a language test, a citizenship knowledge test and a security assessment for applicants 18 years of age and over. The Conservative members and my Bloc Québécois colleague, who rose to speak just before I did, told us in their speeches how important these amendments are. They deal with language, culture and citizenship knowledge. They also deal with the security risk people might pose. That is essential. The same requirements apply to other naturalized citizens. They are requirements, and we want to have the same rules for everyone. In a nutshell, that is what we are asking for.

• (1115)

We also want accountability through an annual report to Parliament on the number of citizenships that are granted. We have the right to get a report and to know where we stand. We want these measures to ensure that applicants have a real connection to Canada, as required by the court. We need to ensure that this is the case. We are concerned that the new amendments proposed by the NDP and the Liberals will water down this bill and undermine the essential amendments that we worked on in committee with the Conservatives.

This bill also seeks to correct absurd situations, as I mentioned earlier, where a child born abroad to Canadian parents cannot obtain citizenship. Take the case of Jean-François as an example. His father was born abroad, and he himself was born abroad while his father was completing his doctorate in the United States. Even though he returned to Quebec when he was three months old, and even though he grew up here and spent his entire life in Quebec, his daughter was not automatically granted citizenship.

The spark that ignited this whole debate came from Don Chapman, a former airline pilot who worked for United Airlines and whose story attracted public attention. Chapman discovered that his citizenship had been revoked when his father emigrated to the United States. His astute demonstration that this problem affected many Canadians, such as Roméo Dallaire, without them even knowing it, forced Parliament to take serious action on this issue.

The bill aims to remedy the status of the following individuals: Canadian women who lost their citizenship before 1947 upon marrying a non-Canadian; individuals born between 1977 and 1981 who lost their citizenship because they did not renew it by age 28; and children adopted abroad whose Canadian parent died before the adoption. It would fix situations such as these.

I will conclude my speech by presenting some data. We will also assess the scope of this bill. My colleague from Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères mentioned that this reform would affect 150,000 people over five years. The estimated cost is \$20.8 million, which is not insignificant. We know that 91.2% of the Canadian population already has citizenship, that 50.6% are women, and that gender equity with regard to citizenship remains essential.

As well, 19.5% of the population is 65 or older. Many seniors have been affected by the old laws and exclusions. As the Bloc Québécois critic for seniors, I have heard about some cases that deeply concern me. All of this has reduced naturalization rates,

which were 57.5% for immigrants admitted between 2011 and 2015, down from 68.5% between 2006 and 2010. New citizens tend to integrate well: 93% are filing taxes in Canada 10 years after landing.

In Quebec, the percentage of first-generation individuals born outside of Canada has grown among young people, climbing from 9% to 18% in the 15- to 24-year-old age group. Among members of the second generation, it increased from 11% to 16% for that age group, according to Statistics Québec. In 2021, Statistics Quebec also reported that immigrant women accounted for 14.9% of all women in Quebec, excluding non-permanent residents.

As I was saying, a significant number of seniors could be affected by the old citizenship rules, including the parents and grandparents of the individuals concerned.

Staying with Quebec, it is estimated that nearly 10% of Quebecers have at least one second-generation foreign-born parent, and nearly 10% of Quebecers are second-generation immigrants, according to New Canadian Media.

This is a serious topic. In conclusion, I would like to say that, aside from everything the bill could change, this situation shows that the Liberals are not mindful of the minority mandate they received for a third time in the last election, nor do they respect the work done in committee. The committee heard from witnesses, and there were discussions and negotiations among MPs. The Conservatives and the Bloc worked hard on amendments to fix the flaws in this bill, but all that work was ultimately undone by the NDP and the Liberals. What a blatant lack of respect.

I want to acknowledge the work my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean did on this file. This is a minority government, and it should take that into account. Passing laws on closure and disregarding the work done in committee should not happen in this democratic institution.

• (1120)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know there is a sense of disappointment within the Bloc in regard to their amendments, and I can understand and appreciate why.

I look at it in terms of birthright. There is a difference between birthright and naturalization of citizenship, in other words, from a permanent resident to a citizen.

Would the member not agree that principles of democracy here in Canada say that all members of Parliament are equal, and even though she might not like the position of the NDP, their votes should matter, too, and that is why their amendments failed? Should we not respect that?

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, if I understand my colleague's question correctly, he is saying that the amendments put forward by the Bloc Québécois and the Conservatives were actually crucial.

All we wanted was for applicants to undergo a security test and be able to speak our language. We asked for accountability to Parliament. I think the proposed amendments absolutely respected democracy.

I would like to ask my colleague a question. Why undo the work that was done in committee? Everyone knows the Bloc Québécois is rigorous when it comes to correcting deficiencies, so why undo what was done in committee?

That is what we are having a hard time understanding.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the safety of our fellow citizens must always be a priority for us all.

I have a simple question. Can my colleague explain why she thinks the Liberals opposed criminal background checks for people coming into Canada under this bill?

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak for the Liberals and say why they voted against that.

I would like to remind the House that naturalized citizens are subject to security screenings. Those requirements are already in place.

Why should the two groups be treated differently? Why should these applicants not also have to undergo security screenings? There is a reason why these amendments were put forward.

Someone should ask the Liberals that question. It is hard to understand their position. Security is a crucial and important issue. Security screening, language testing and knowledge of citizenship are important issues that should have been brought before the House and voted on.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship openly admitted in committee that she had no idea how many people would be affected by this bill. The Parliamentary Budget Officer finally gave an estimate of 150,000 people.

The Bloc Québécois, with the support of the Conservatives, tabled an amendment to make sure that, after the bill is passed, a report is made to Parliament on how many people have benefited from the bill, meaning how many people have obtained citizenship because of it. Unfortunately, the Liberals rejected that amendment.

The Liberals currently have no idea how many people will be affected, and they do not even want to know. Why does my colleague think that is?

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, yes, it would be good to know that.

Will it be 150,000 people? Will it be less or more? Evidently, the number of people affected has a financial impact. There needs to be

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accountability. As parliamentarians, we have the right to know and we should get an annual update. That would be critically important. There is a reason this amendment was proposed.

This confirms to me that, unfortunately, accountability to Parliament is not the Liberals' strong suit. They are not transparent. They do not show respect for democracy and the mandates they have received. Accountability to Parliament should be a given.

I sincerely hope that we will be able to get this annual report and find out the exact number of new citizens and the financial impact this will have. It is important.

● (1125)

[*English*]

Michael Coteau (Scarborough—Woburn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Davenport, a great member of Parliament.

It is an honour to stand in the House of Commons today on behalf of the people of Scarborough—Woburn to talk about this important issue, Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act. To me, this is a very simple piece of legislation that would extend automatic citizenship to anyone who was born abroad to Canadian parents before the legislation came into force, which I believe was in 2009. This includes people who are not currently able to claim citizenship by descent due to the first-generation limit, such as the remaining lost Canadians and their descendants.

This is about fairness, equality and protecting the rights of Canadians. The folks watching at home or paying attention to this debate should know that the Ontario Superior Court made a decision that was based on two parts of the Constitution. It was based on sections 6 and 15, which speak to mobility rights and equality rights. If Canadians living abroad have descendants, they have the right to be Canadians. It is a very simple piece of legislation.

I am an immigrant to this country. I was born in the U.K., in Yorkshire, England, in a town called Aidsensfield. I spent the first four and a half years of my life in England. My mother is from a small town in Yorkshire called Barnsley. It is known for coal and glass-blowing. If we look at its coat of arms, that is what we see. My father is from a small island off the coast of Grenada called Carriacou, where there are about 10,000 people. My father went to England and met my mother, and they started a family and came to Canada.

To quote one of the greatest prime ministers this country has ever had, "Canada is the best country", period. I love this country. It has been so good to the many people from Carriacou, Grenada, who have come here and people from all around the world.

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The reason this issue is so important to all members of Parliament is that we understand the value of Canadian citizenship. We love our country. I would say there is no debate on that in the House; each of us loves our provinces and our country. Being immigrants, coming to Canada was probably the best decision my parents could have made. We value Canadian citizenship, and that is why this issue is such a difficult issue for some people to debate.

I grew up in Flemingdon Park in Toronto, and in that part of town, the majority of people were first-generation Canadians. There were people from all around the world in my building, from the Philippines, Korea, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and a lot from Greece. It was such a multicultural environment. At dinnertime, in the hallway where I lived, we could smell every spice from around the world because there were so many different cultures in the building.

Many people now vilify immigrants coming to this country. They blame them for a lot of things, but make no mistake that outside of our indigenous past and the indigenous people in this country, every single person in this country has an immigrant past. They could have been here for 400 years, 40 years or four years. We all have an immigrant past in this country outside of our indigenous brothers and sisters. This country has been built by the efforts of many people from many different places around the world.

• (1130)

If someone who is granted Canadian citizenship decides to do some travelling, under a first-generation rule for someone who is the descendant of a Canadian citizen, they should be allowed to come back to their country. I believe the Ontario Superior Court made the right decision on that, because it is about equality and our ability to have mobility. It means that under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, we can leave, travel from and return to Canada at our own choosing as Canadians. It is part of our constitutional rights. It is part of our charter protections.

There are people who will say that Canada is broken. They will say that Canada is not the country it used to be. I do not believe that. I believe Canada is the greatest country in the world. I believe that wholeheartedly.

I was in an Uber a couple of days ago and met a gentleman who is a doctor in his country. He is a Canadian citizen now and is trying to get his Canadian medical residency in order to practise here. I said to him that I knew this was very challenging, because the statistics sometimes do not support any optimism in the possibility of becoming a doctor. He said the fact that he was in this country and that his rights were protected meant a lot to him. I asked him what he meant by that. He told me where he came from and talked about some of the challenges there. He said that we collectively as Canadians protect each other through our rights by making sure individual and collective rights are protected, and these are the things that help define who we are as Canadians.

We are here to protect each other. We are here to protect people so they can pray to whoever they decide, love whoever they want and have the ability say what they believe or criticize the government. These are the protections afforded under our Constitution. Within those constitutional rights, Canadian citizens have the right

to enter and return to the country. There is another section for equality.

There is no question that we need to continue to support lost Canadians. We need to make sure there is a pathway so Canadians can return home and we can continue to build the type of country that has made all of us proud. To be Canadian is a very special thing, and I am so happy to stand here on behalf of my riding of Scarborough—Woburn and on behalf of all Canadians who agree with the position about making sure lost Canadians can return to this country. I want to say how proud I am to stand here and support this piece of legislation.

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a Liberal questioner earlier talked about somebody who had been away on deployment and came back and had a child while away on deployment. I do not think this bill addresses that. I think it is second-generation citizenship that this bill in particular answers to.

I am wondering if the member opposite could clarify for me if this bill is indeed about the second generation.

Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite must be reading something he was given by his whip, because I never talked about somebody being deployed and then coming back here. What I did talk about was that the bill would extend automatic citizenship to anyone who was born abroad to Canadian parents before the legislation came into force.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the amendments put forward by the Bloc Québécois and the Conservative opposition were intended, among other things, to ensure that adult applicants have a knowledge of English or French, that they have undergone a security check for national security reasons, and that they were in the country for 1,095 days over five years. There was also a requirement to report on the number of citizenships granted under the bill.

I want to know why the member voted against that. I also want him to explain what was so unreasonable about these requests.

• (1135)

[*English*]

Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, I was not at the committee when these issues were being deliberated on, but I am happy to hear that the Bloc Québécois is participating in the democratic process and making suggestions in the committee process for consideration. Some amendments will be passed and some will not, but I thank the member for his contribution to the strengthening of this bill.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide some clarity.

Government Orders

Let us imagine that I moved to Germany, and my daughter Cindy is born in Germany. If I had Cindy when I was in Germany, in order for her to pass on Canadian citizenship to my potential grandchild, she would have to prove a substantial connection to Canada of 1,095 days. As long as she was able to do that before she has a child, that child, my grandchild, would be a Canadian citizen.

Would my colleague agree that providing the opportunity for Canadians to have their grandchildren be Canadian is a good thing?

Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member's grandchild was not afforded Canadian citizenship after he has contributed so much to Parliament, it would be a real shame.

Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I am glad he is clarifying this.

The point is that if his daughter became a Canadian citizen, she could easily pass Canadian citizenship on to her children.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: She is a Canadian citizen.

Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, the member is saying she is a Canadian citizen, but if she was born in Germany, there would be a process for her to establish Canadian citizenship. If she is a Canadian citizen and has children while she is still in Germany, she too can pass it on. That is all currently—

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: No, she can't.

Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, if someone is a Canadian citizen, they are capable of passing it on. This bill, as far as I understand, is about the third generation and people who were missed.

An hon. member: No, it's the second.

Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if the Liberals could please explain to me where I am wrong on that.

Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, the member has to go back and check the notes he was provided. It sounds like his question was not very precise and to the point and does not reflect the proposed legislation.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, hypothetically, if my daughter Cindy was born in Germany, she would have to have a substantial connection to Canada before she gives birth so that her child, my future potential grandchild, would be deemed a Canadian citizen. That is what the legislation would do.

Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, that is right.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure, as always, to speak on behalf of the residents of my amazing constituency of Davenport on the third reading of Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act.

Before I go further, I would like to acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people.

I will spend the next nine minutes or so reminding members about why it is important for us to be passing Bill C-3, which, again, is in third reading. Soon we will be having a vote on it. This will be a nice refresher, because sometimes we go through a lot of

things in this House and we can forget about the importance of the bill and why we are moving forward on it.

I am grateful there is broad, cross-party support for the key part of Bill C-3, which is fixing the status for the remaining lost Canadians. The bill would remedy the status of people who, were it not for the first-generation limit imposed in 2009, would have been Canadian citizens by descent from birth. This is largely a cohort of children 16 and under, and also includes the descendants of previously remedied lost Canadians. It would also address a small historical cohort who lost citizenship under outdated provisions of the 1977 Citizenship Act. Only 35 to 40 people came forward annually at first, and numbers have declined in recent years.

I have the privilege of being able to chair the committee, and I want to thank the committee members and witnesses for the collegial work that brought us to this point of consensus. During the committee study, members proposed and adopted several amendments to Bill C-3. The government carefully reviewed each one and appreciates the intent behind them. However, after our review, we remain confident that the original design of Bill C-3 achieves fairness and transparency in the citizenship system and upholds the value of Canadian citizenship.

The framework set out in this bill for citizenship by descent is straightforward. Once enacted, a Canadian parent born abroad may pass on their citizenship to a child also born or adopted abroad only if that parent has at least 1,095 days of physical presence in Canada before the child's birth or adoption. Each generation after the first one must demonstrate their connection to Canada. If a parent does not, citizenship by descent stops with them.

Let me be clear on what this bill is not. It is not about creating a new way to immigrate to Canada nor about passing on Canadian citizenship in perpetuity while living abroad. It is about allowing the children of Canadians who have a strong connection to our country to access citizenship by descent regardless of where they happen to be born or adopted. It is about protecting the value of Canadian citizenship by requiring these parents to show they have spent meaningful time in Canada, before starting a family, reaffirming their connection to our great country.

The question, then, is how best to measure that connection. For people who move to Canada and seek to become part of its story, we already have a clear way to assess whether they have a substantial connection to this country. Under the Citizenship Act, permanent residents must accumulate at least 1,095 days of physical presence in Canada within a five-year period before they are eligible to apply for naturalization. However, citizenship by descent, which is what this bill is about, is different. It is not about granting citizenship to someone seeking to join Canada but about confirming citizenship at birth based on a parent's connection to Canada prior to their child's birth or adoption. For that reason, the test for connection must be applied differently.

Government Orders

Bill C-3 is built on a cumulative model. For Canadian parents born outside of Canada, this model counts every day they have spent here before starting a family regardless of when those days occurred. This approach recognizes the many ways Canadians maintain deep ties to their country, even when work, study or family responsibilities take them abroad.

Consider a Canadian child born overseas whose family relocates every two years for work. That child could live nearly a decade in Canada before age 18 without ever spending three consecutive years here within a five-year period. When that child grows up, they may start a family abroad or choose to adopt internationally. Under a fixed three-years-in-five time frame, their genuine life experience in Canada may not qualify their child to access citizenship.

• (1140)

However, the cumulative model allows Canadians whose lives span borders to demonstrate their connection to Canada from birth right up until they start a family, rather than expecting them to compress their presence into a narrow window. The 1,095-day cumulative requirement is therefore the fairest and most practical way to uphold the value of Canadian citizenship. Importing the naturalization requirements into citizenship by descent would conflate two distinct policy purposes and risk excluding the children of Canadians whose ties to Canada were built over time.

The integrity of Canadian citizenship depends on applying the right standards in the right context. For people who move to Canada, the naturalization process assesses their readiness to join the Canadian family. It requires—

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order out of respect for the interpreters and to avoid a problem.

They are telling us that a telephone seems to be interfering with the audio.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. member for her intervention.

The hon. member for Davenport.

• (1145)

[*English*]

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I will start from maintaining integrity and fairness.

The integrity of Canadian citizenship depends on applying the right standards in the right context. For people who move to Canada, the naturalization process assesses their readiness to join the Canadian family. It requires establishing a substantial connection to this country through recent residence, knowledge of Canada and knowledge of one of our official languages, tests that confirm they are ready to become part of our shared civic life.

Citizenship by descent, again, is different. It is not an immigration pathway. It does not confer membership in Canada on someone new. It recognizes citizenship that already exists from birth, through a Canadian parent who has a real connection to Canada ei-

ther because they were born here or because they have met the statutory test of physical presence in Canada.

Introducing additional requirements, such as language proficiency, knowledge testing or security screening, for Canadians who are citizens at birth would blur the line between immigration and citizenship by descent. It would impose a process meant for newcomers—

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The interpreters are again saying that there is a telephone ringing near a microphone.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. member.

[*English*]

Perhaps the member could hand her phone back a couple of rows or put it on—

Julie Dzerowicz: It is just that I am looking at my time, Mr. Speaker. It is hard for me to know my timing. I will put it on my chair.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. member. The Chair will indicate the two-minute mark.

I will invite the member for Davenport to resume her comments.

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, introducing additional requirements, such as language proficiency, knowledge testing or security screening, for Canadians who are citizens at birth would blur the line between immigration and citizenship by descent. It would impose a process meant for newcomers on people whose citizenship is already recognized in law.

We do not ask Canadians born in this country to pass tests to retain their citizenship, nor do we impose these kinds of tests now on Canadians who are born abroad. Extending such tests to those born or adopted abroad beyond the first generation would create distinctions between Canadians based solely on their place of birth. Extending such tests only to adults would create distinctions based on age. Canada cannot have different classes of citizens. Bill C-3 maintains the proper separation between immigration and citizenship law. It ensures that citizenship at birth, whether by place or by parentage, remains clear, consistent and secure.

Government Orders

I want to reassure Canadians that Bill C-3 already includes strong safeguards to uphold both the integrity of citizenship and the security of our country. Citizenship by descent will not operate on the honour system. The burden of proof rests squarely on the Canadian parent, who must provide evidence of their 1,095 days of physical presence in Canada before their child's birth or adoption. Documents such as educational transcripts, pay stubs and leases will be reviewed carefully by officers, who may request additional information when needed. If a parent cannot demonstrate the required physical presence, their child born or adopted abroad will not be Canadian.

All of Canada's existing integrity measures continue to apply as well. Passport controls, law enforcement co-operation, prosecution for extraterritorial offences and citizenship revocation in cases of fraud remain essential tools to protect the safety of Canadians and the trust they place in our citizenship system.

I am running out of time, so I am just going to go to my conclusion.

I will just say that Bill C-3 represents a thoughtful and balanced step forward in Canada's citizenship laws. There is broad, cross-party agreement on the need to remedy the status of remaining lost Canadians, and this bill delivers that solution. It also modernizes how citizenship by descent is applied, preserving the connection between generations of Canadians while ensuring that our laws remain clear, practical and consistent.

I would ask that my hon. colleagues on the other side of this House kindly consider voting in favour.

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to, perhaps, pick the hon. member's brain a little about Bill C-3. It is an interesting thing that the government brought this forward. I remember that during the campaign, the Prime Minister talked about how we were going to build projects at lightning speed, we were going to have to change some legislation and we were going to do all these great things in Canada.

Then there is Bill C-3, the third piece of legislation the Liberals brought forward. This whole thing was not even mentioned in the Liberal platform. I am just wondering why Bill C-3 is such an important thing for the Liberal government when we have a whole bunch of other things to do.

Why was this put forward now?

● (1150)

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, it is a great question. In December 2023, in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, we had a judge who declared section 3(3)(a) and section 3(3)(b) of the Citizenship Act, key provisions limiting the passing of citizenship by descent to the first generation, to be of no force or effect.

There were three main constitutional violations that were found, and the courts gave our government a certain period of time to address that matter. We had no choice but to introduce legislation to address these constitutional violations. We have been granted a number of extensions. The last extension we have is November 20. That is why we are anxious to pass the legislation.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, one of the proposed amendments sought to ensure that adults living abroad who are descendants of Canadian citizens and who wish to obtain citizenship would be required to know either French or English. The Liberals rejected that amendment.

Why are they against making a knowledge of French or English a condition of citizenship?

[*English*]

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I have tried to spell this out in my 10 minutes of speaking. We treat Canadians differently than we do newcomers to our country. If I am born here as a Canadian, I am not tested as to whether I speak a certain level of French or a certain level of English in order to be Canadian. It is the same requirement that we are applying to Canadians of descent.

That is the reason.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to amplify the fact that it is really important the legislation pass before November 20, and when I say "pass", it also has to go through the Senate. It has to receive royal assent. It is absolutely critical. Otherwise, if it does not pass, it puts into question the whole birthright issue of acquiring citizenship.

Would my hon. colleague not agree that collectively, as a House, we need to push hard to get the bill passed, so that ultimately it can get royal assent?

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I agree wholeheartedly with my colleague. We have to deal with some of these issues when we find that our laws are not constitutional. I do think it is a priority for us to make sure we handle them as expeditiously as possible. There are a lot of items that are going to be before the House. I know everybody is looking forward to budget 2025 being introduced today. I think that as soon as we can get very clear pieces of legislation like this passed as quickly as possible, we can then move to other business of interest to Canadians.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know that in Bill C-3, after the Liberals rejected the amendments that were passed at committee across party lines, the bar for citizenship has been lowered.

I would like to ask the hon. member, very candidly, a very simple yes-or-no question. Does she believe citizenship of this country should be easier for people to access?

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the premise of the member's question.

We have a bill that is very strong before the House. I think it meets the requirements of the constitutional test that have been raised by the Ontario Superior Court judge. I think we put forward an excellent piece of legislation.

Government Orders

• (1155)

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to speak again in the House about this issue. Bill C-3 has been before the House a number of times already, so here we are talking about it again.

One big reason that we are talking about this comes back to the fact that the immigration system has been messed up by the Liberals over the last 10 years. In the bill, Bill C-3, in particular, we are talking about the value of citizenship. The bill would actually devalue citizenship. I want to chat this morning about that and how we are struggling with the way that the immigration system has been broken by the Liberal government. I remind people here, as we are all aware, that we are going to be seeing a budget later today, which will also give out the immigration-levels plan. We are all very curious to see whether there is any hope of restoring faith in our immigration system. I guess we will see that later today, potentially.

Bill C-3 all started because there was a lower-court ruling that the existing second-generation limit was not proper. The core problem is that the current Liberal government chose not to appeal that ruling and instead just accepted the ruling as it was. It really reflects, in my view, something we have seen many times from the government, which is that rather than actually putting forth legislation and exerting Parliament's influence and power in this country to make laws and make the laws people want, the government tends to rely on what the courts say: What the courts say, they will just accept. That is what happened here. A lower court made a ruling. I did not agree with it, and the federal government had every right to appeal that ruling, clarify it and try to get something that was more in line with what Canadians want.

We see that all the time; for example, we see it with Bill C-12, which is also before the House right now. The government has had warnings that the powers it is putting in Bill C-12 would be likely to be challenged constitutionally and are likely to fail, yet the government does not want to promote legislation that would be good and ultimately pass. Instead, the Liberals are throwing it to the courts and letting the courts tell them what to do. That is completely wrong.

What we, as a committee, attempted to do was to clean this up a bit. Bill C-3 is really about chain migration. It is about people not born in Canada getting citizenship and having children who are not born in Canada, never even living in Canada but having a very loose connection to Canada, and then passing on that citizenship to generation after generation after generation. We tweaked it a bit and tried to make it better, and that is what came back to the House. That was defeated by the NDP and the Liberal government, the NDP-Liberal coalition that still seems to be alive and well. Now we are back to the original text of the bill, which in my view is not good. The reason I do not think it is good is that in the bill that we are debating today, the original text of Bill C-3, we would hand out citizenship and lower the value of citizenship. We would create a situation of chain migration.

We would not ensure that people who attain citizenship through this method can speak one of the languages and are not criminals, which are basic things. The Liberals have said that this is not about

that; it is about automatically getting citizenship. The reality is that what the Liberals have proposed has a condition, which is that people have to have spent 1,095 days in Canada as a parent before the birth of the child. There is a condition there, so it is not automatic citizenship; they are not deemed to be a citizen automatically. If a parent not born in Canada has a child not born in Canada, that child would not automatically be a citizen under the new legislation. There is a condition there, which is that it has to be at least 1,095 days. What we proposed was to tighten those conditions even further to make it 1,095 days, which is three years, within a five-year period. That would show a substantial connection to Canada. If someone has spent three out of five years in Canada, that is a substantial connection. We also want to make sure that an older person coming into the country speaks one of the two languages, is not a criminal and understands what it means to be Canadian. These are not unreasonable things; they are just further conditions to what the Liberal government has already proposed.

The other thing that I find quite telling is that we proposed and passed at committee, with the help of the Bloc, the requirement for the government to report to Parliament the number of citizens created by this method. Of course the government refused to do that. The Liberals are not at all into transparency. They do not want anything that is done by them to be known by Canadians. As a result, when this amended bill came back to the House, the government, with the help of the NDP, undid those changes.

• (1200)

Therefore, here we are with devalued citizenship again, with citizens of convenience. These are people who do not live in Canada but realize that, through a loophole, they can actually claim citizenship, because their parents spent a random 1,095 days in Canada. These are going to create future problems for future governments, for future ministers and for the people of Canada in the future. The bill would further make sure that Canada's immigration system remains a joke.

I neglected to mention that I am going to be splitting my time with the member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South.

That leads me to our broken immigration system. We have a broken system in Canada. I know the Liberals do not like to talk about Canada's being broken, because it just reveals everything they have done to our country in the last 10 years. However, by any objective measure at all, Canada's immigration system is a mess. In fact, it has become a bit of a joke in the world, and it is an embarrassment, to be frank.

Government Orders

The asylum system is one good example. We had this infamous tweet that has been mentioned many times, by Justin Trudeau; it said, “#WelcomeToCanada”. Of course, that started an avalanche of people coming into our country, wanting to get into our country through Roxham Road. That is a good example, in which they were not using normal processes and not using the same system that every other newcomer to our country has followed. By the way, the people whom I talked to who are the most upset about this system are the actual newcomers who used the system the way it was intended to be used, who waited the time they had to wait and filled out the paperwork that they had to fill out, as opposed to those who came into our country through a backdoor system.

Of course, the government, in its infinite wisdom, not only endorsed this method but built infrastructure and instructed the police to welcome people. It is such a strange thing, to say, “Sorry, you cannot cross here, but welcome to Canada” and help them carry their bags in. It was ridiculous. Ultimately, that is part of our broken system.

The other thing I wanted to highlight is what is called our humanitarian and compassionate category. Certainly, it is important for us to focus newcomers in our country on skills and requirements that we have in our country, so the newcomers who come here are able not only to work and succeed but actually to add great value to our country. That has been the history of immigration in Canada for years and years. That is not happening right now.

However, there is one category that we should always try to do, and that is to help people when we can. We can only help so much, but we should still be doing that. There have been cases with Ukrainians, for example, or with Hong Kongers who have been invited to come to our country. They are now here, but the government is not providing a way for them to actually become citizens.

It is really quite ridiculous, so we end up with wait times, and we can go and see it on the website. It is hard to believe, but it is true. It actually says 10-plus years of wait time for some of these categories. In the briefing notes that were given to the immigration minister when she became minister in the spring, it said, in some cases, over 50 years, which is absolutely ridiculous. It just further proves how broken our system is.

That brings me to today, which is budget day. We are going to hear about the levels plan, which tells how many people the government hopes and intends to let into this country. One thing I want to point out is that we have asked numerous times, and the government is unable to provide a number of people who would become citizens through the legislation. They defer the question. They do not seem to know, which does not give me much confidence that they actually know what they are doing. They have a lot of people working for them, as we know. There are hundreds of thousands of people working for the government, yet they cannot figure out how many people this would have an impact on.

One thing I want to note is that, in the last year's levels plan, it showed that our non-permanent, temporary resident population was going to come down to 5% in 2026, so I am very curious to see how that number is reflected today. Are we going to hit the 5% number for 2026? I would remind the government that 2026 is a couple of months from now. I think we are well over 7% now, so I

would say the plans made a year ago are probably not going to happen, if I were a gambling man. I am just curious about what we are going to see from that. I am also very curious about how we are going to see spending come in at a “generational” level, as the government likes to say. To me, that is generational debt. We are giving generational debt to our children.

The system is broken. The bill would devalue the value of citizenship. It would create a chain migration system that I believe is wrong. I would encourage people in the House to vote against this. This is not something that would help our country, and the government could have done a far better job creating legislation that would stand up to the courts, that would protect Canadians and that would restore and protect the value of citizenship.

● (1205)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, shortly, I will be able to provide a lot of details in terms of the content of the bill. However, I want to ask a question specifically with respect to temporary workers. We have the leader of the Conservative Party saying he is going to get rid of the temporary worker program. He is saying we should not be renewing temporary workers.

I just heard the member across the way comment on people who have come from Ukraine. Does the member not realize that the tens of thousands of people here from Ukraine are here with work permits? These need to be extended. If they are not extended, the people are obligated to leave.

Does the member believe the government should not listen to his leader and should allow for an extension of work permits for people from Ukraine who have those permits?

Brad Redekopp: Madam Speaker, there is so much to talk about in that question. I will talk about the Ukrainian people, and I would frame it a certain way.

Right now, we can imagine that the member opposite had a temporary permit to work in Canada and was worried about the fact that it was going to expire in, let us say, two months. The government is not very good at renewing permits. Anyone who has worked in the system knows this. Basically, the government is telling these people they can be here because they have a temporary permit, but they have to trust the government to get the permit renewed.

It does not happen in a timely manner. These people are living with stress. There needs to be a better solution than just throwing them into Canada to fend for themselves, without giving them the proper documentation. This is the problem with the government. There is a lack of ability to create a system that actually works for the people who are here and that benefits them, as well as all of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the House that some of us worked collaboratively in committee to propose obvious amendments to Bill C-3.

Government Orders

I know that the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois worked on these amendments so that the bill would include a language requirement, so that people would have to be able express themselves in French, particularly in Quebec, or in both languages. It is important that people pass a citizenship knowledge test and undergo security screening.

Why were those three amendments so important? How does my colleague explain the fact that the Liberals and the NDP rejected those three obvious amendments?

[*English*]

Brad Redekopp: Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. The Bloc members at our committee were very co-operative and helpful with creating good amendments, particularly around the issues of language and knowledge of Canada. This was the work of the committee. This work was delegated to the committee by the House. The Bloc members had very good responses and reasons for why we want to protect language.

Of course, we want to make sure those in our country understand one of our two official languages, be it English or French. This is critical to making sure that we are able to put a value on citizenship, that we are able to define what it means to be Canadian and what Canadian values are. Language is probably core to that issue.

It is very sad to see the Liberal government just throw language away, not make it part of the bill and not consider it important.

Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, who serves on the committee and who amplified the question asked by my colleague from the Bloc.

There were common-sense amendments proposed by the Conservatives, in conjunction with the Bloc Québécois, that upheld the value of Canadian citizenship, that looked at language and the ability to speak one of the two founding languages of the country, and many other things. However, those were blocked by the Liberal government.

Why does the member think that is? Why is there this reticence to uphold the value of Canadian citizenship when we should be doing that with a piece of legislation like this?

Brad Redekopp: Madam Speaker, I think my colleague's question points to a broader problem on the other side of the aisle in the government, and that is a lack of creativity and a lack of ability to create good legislation.

We can see that in the current legislation. This is a carbon copy of Bill C-71, which was a carbon copy of the highly modified Senate bill that came to the House prior to that. There is not one bit of difference between Bill C-71 from the last Parliament and Bill C-3 in this Parliament. There was no thought put into it. The new minister just took it and ran with it. There was no consideration given to some of the limitations raised in the previous discussions and debate. It is clear that the government does not know what it is doing when it comes to immigration.

● (1210)

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege to rise on behalf of the citi-

zens and residents of Elgin—St. Thomas—London South. I say that because citizens and residents are two different things. All of them are important to me as a member of Parliament, but they are different. As a country, we have always made a distinction between those who are citizens and those who are not. The reason for this is that citizenship has intrinsic value. Citizenship is not a right for everyone. For some, it is a privilege.

We are here because we are discussing Bill C-3, which is the Liberal government's attempt at devaluing Canadian citizenship by making it easier for people to access when they do not have, contrary to the way the legislation is framed, a genuinely substantial connection to Canada and to Canadian identity.

We have to understand the idea from which this bill came. It is not just a response to an Ontario court ruling, because the government could have, as any government can, appealed that court ruling. For example, the Federal Court found that the Liberal government had violated the charter rights of Canadians in invoking the Emergencies Act, and the federal government is fighting that ruling tooth and nail in court. For this particular court ruling, the government did not mount an appeal. It did not combat it. It has accepted, at face value, some of the court's arguments. It expanded that now, in Bill C-3, beyond what the court even sought, as a way to make Canadian citizenship easier for people to access and to make citizenship by descent easier, even for people who do not have a truly substantial connection to Canada.

The idea for this came from the Liberals. About Canada, former prime minister Justin Trudeau said, "There is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada". This is what he said: "no core identity". There is no meaning to being Canadian. There is no meaning to Canada. He said, "Those qualities are what make us the first post-national state." A postnational state is a country without a national identity, without a core heritage and without a shared belief about what this country is.

We heard the Minister of Canadian Identity unable to even describe what Canadian identity is. We heard the current Prime Minister unable to describe what Canadian identity is, except to make it relative to American identity. He said, "We are Canadian because we are not American." No, we are Canadian because we have a shared set of values that are tremendously important, which we should, as a country, be so proud of.

In my maiden speech in this chamber, I spoke about Canadians of convenience, people with a new-found patriotism who had new Canadian flags flying from their houses that still had the creases in them. They had never before in their lives identified Canadianism with something specific. It is not just about hockey, maple syrup and beavers. Canadian identity is about liberty. It is about individuality. It is about pluralism. It is about tolerance for different ideas, freedom of speech and democratic freedom. These are Canadian ideas. These are Canadian values. When we try to strip this away from what it means to be Canadian, we are left with the question of what it means to be a Canadian citizen and a Liberal government trying to make only tenuous connections between Canada and Canadian citizenship for people around the world.

When we talk about citizenship by descent, we are not talking about the children of Canadian citizens who may be born abroad. We are talking about the children of children of Canadian citizens born abroad, who may have never resided in Canada, worked in Canada, desired to vote in a Canadian election or desired to run for office in Canada. They are people who have no connection here but who may have spent, at any point in their lives, a little bit of time here. Three years sounds like a lot unless we consider that it could be spread over the course of decades. Under Bill C-3, the Liberals would view that as a substantial connection to Canada.

• (1215)

Canadian citizenship is not something that should be freely given out to people who are not born here. It should be earned and, more importantly, given to people who genuinely want to build up this country and contribute to this country. Some of the proudest Canadians I have ever met are people who adopted Canadian citizenship after being born abroad. They came to Canada because they loved something here: our values, our freedoms or our opportunity. They learned our language or languages, chose to become Canadian and have contributed. We have members of this chamber who are proud, patriotic Canadians who were not born in Canada.

I am not arguing that citizenship should never be available to people. I am saying that we need to make sure that those who become Canadian citizens truly want to contribute to Canada and be Canadian. We do not want what we have seen in the past, which is Canadians of convenience. When a crisis unfolds somewhere in the world, all of a sudden, someone with no desire to live or contribute in Canada pulls out a Canadian passport and demands that the federal government help them. These are people who do not want to be Canadians but who want, when convenient for them, the benefits of Canadian citizenship.

We see the alternative of this happening: Birth tourism has been allowed to thrive in Canada. There are companies that, for a certain amount of money, will facilitate someone's coming to Canada to give birth to a child here who will then become a Canadian citizen automatically, by birthright, despite having parents who are not at all Canadian citizens or permanent residents. They do not even have work permits. They may be here on visitor visas, as international students or as temporary foreign workers. They are people whose relationship with Canada is temporary.

When we put forward an amendment at committee to ensure that birth tourism would not be permitted as a path to Canadian citizenship, it was rejected by the Liberal government. By the way, many of its members, including the Minister of Immigration, said before the House, at second reading, that they would entertain amendments at committee. The committee worked hard across party lines at amending Bill C-3, and to take a bad bill and try to mitigate some of the harms and devaluation of citizenship. The committee, as I said, worked across partisan lines and sent an amended bill back to the House. The Liberal government, with the NDP, rejected those amendments outright.

Despite claiming that they are willing to work with all parties, the Liberals now expect the House to rubber-stamp the original bill they were planning to ram through regardless. This is something that is tremendously concerning. If Canadian citizenship is to mean

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anything at all, we need to be able to ground it in a discussion about Canadian identity and a connection to Canada, ensuring we have a core identity and set of values that we all know, intuitively, are part of who we are as a people.

I am so proud to be Canadian. As I said, I have spoken to so many people who have spent generations in this country with their families, to people who came here for the first time as a child, or even as an adult, and became Canadian, and to every iteration in between. They are all frustrated by the devaluing of Canadian citizenship we have seen by the Liberal government.

Justin Trudeau said that Canada is “the first postnational state”. That is the core idea anchoring the way the Liberal government is viewing citizenship and what it means to be Canadian. This is not a new idea. There is a class of globalist elites, and the Prime Minister has proudly identified with people who collect passports. The Prime Minister had three citizenships before he ran for the leadership of the Liberals, and potentially has them now. I do not know for sure what the status of that is. What sort of commitment does a person have to any country when they collect passports like trading cards? This is what the Liberal government is facilitating. For people whose primary affiliation or allegiance is to a different country, the Liberals want to make it easier for them to have Canadian citizenship. How does this build up Canada and foster pride and citizenship in this country?

I will be voting against Bill C-3, and I encourage all members of the House to do the same. It is the only way to protect the value of Canadian citizenship.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is very sad to hear the comments by the member opposite. In the last Parliament, I spent many hours on the committee that was working on this bill. I met families that served Canada and that are impacted through this policy, which was implemented by Harper. In fact, I think this was the policy that made him lose his election.

What does the member have to say to Canadian families that served their country, are impacted, are part of the lost Canadians, a system Harper created, and that are very sad to hear his very shameful comments in the House?

• (1220)

Andrew Lawton: Madam Speaker, this is a gross misrepresentation of what the Conservatives have been trying to do on this bill. There are already tools available to the government to deal with lost Canadians. The minister has tremendous latitude on this.

What we are talking about is not a government that has not been in power for 10 years. We are talking about the value of Canadian citizenship and people who, despite no real meaningful connection to Canada, will be permitted to access Canadian citizenship if this bill passes.

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[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, we know that there is a deadline for passing this bill, and if it is not met, the ruling of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice will take effect.

Has my colleague looked into what will happen if the bill is not passed and the court ruling takes effect?

[*English*]

Andrew Lawton: Madam Speaker, I do not think we should allow external pressures to force something through that is imperfect.

[*Translation*]

I want to thank my colleague for her question. I respect Quebecers a lot for having these conversations about identity and nationality. Quebecers understand their heritage and they have a clear definition of who they are.

What bothers me about the Liberal government's approach is that the Liberals do not believe that there is such a thing as a Canadian identity. The Liberals think that Canada is a postnational country. That is dangerous. It devalues Canadian citizenship.

[*English*]

Michael Coteau (Scarborough—Woburn, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member talked a lot about Canadian values and what our Canadian identity is. I am a big supporter of diversity in this country. I am a big supporter of equality and, of course, building an inclusive society.

Does the member agree that those three elements are part of the Canadian identity, and are they things he personally supports?

Andrew Lawton: Madam Speaker, I love how much of a range there is of people, backgrounds and beliefs in this country. It is interesting that, when members of the Liberal government talk about the value of diversity, they never promote diversity of thought and diversity of opinion. That is a form of diversity they do not particularly go for.

I hope the Liberal government will truly back off on its attempt to censor and restrict what Canadians say online.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, can the member give us an indication of whether or not he believes there is birthright for individuals who should be getting their citizenship in certain situations, such as a substantial connection? Does he believe that would justify issuing it for a second generation?

Andrew Lawton: Madam Speaker, the question at hand is, what constitutes a substantial connection? Again, the Conservatives worked across party lines at committee to beef up this definition because we do not believe the one in Bill C-3 adequately ensures there is a substantial connection to Canada.

I most certainly believe Canadian citizens should be invested in our country. That is absolutely not disputed, certainly not by our side.

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

Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with a Conservative friend across the way. I will let you guess which one.

Let me start by saying there is a need to have some clarity on the issue we are debating so that the individuals who are following the debate are perfectly clear about it. To explain the Conservative position versus the government position, I will give a hypothetical situation, using my family as an example. This is not true; I am using it as a hypothetical example.

Let us say I was born in Canada and now I live in Germany. It might be for economic reasons, I might be a member of the Canadian Forces or I might be a foreign diplomat. For whatever reason, I am living in Germany and I now have a child who was born in Germany. For the sake of argument, let us say that child's name is Cindy or Raymond. I do not want to show preference over my children, but I will call this child Raymond. I then come back to Canada. My son, who has been living in Germany, is a Canadian citizen. Nothing changes. He is a Canadian citizen.

If he decides to have a child, that child can only be deemed a Canadian citizen if my son has a substantial connection to Canada before his child is born. This means that my son, who was born in Germany, would have to have spent a minimum of 1,095 days in Canada. Coincidentally, for an immigrant who comes to Canada to qualify to be a citizen, they must have been a resident for 1,095 days, albeit over five years. That is where the 1,095 days comes from.

As long as Raymond spends a minimum of 1,095 days in Canada before he has a child, because he was not born in Canada, he would be able to show a substantial connection to Canada so that his child can be deemed a Canadian. For that three-year period, if he came to my cottage every summer or studied at a university, whatever it might be, his child would be deemed a Canadian citizen. His child, by the way, would be my grandchild.

Here is the difference between the Conservatives and the Liberals. The Conservatives will come up with all sorts of reasons why my potential grandchild should not be a Canadian citizen, even though my son had established a substantial connection to Canada. That is what they are saying. I do not think they fully understand this.

I want members to think of the thousands of Canadians who serve in our armed forces and the thousands of Canadians who have served in foreign affairs over the years, and those are just the public servants. This is not to mention private sector workers and so forth.

What we are trying to do is respond to an superior court decision that said we needed to go beyond the first generation. That is a direct response to previous Conservative legislation. I have heard Conservatives stand in their places today and indirectly, if not directly, make reference to the notwithstanding clause.

Costas Menegakis: That is not true.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is true. He should read what the immigration critic said. The default radical right position of the Conservatives is ridiculous. They are saying we should just use the notwithstanding clause. If they do not like what a court says, we should use the notwithstanding clause.

• (1225)

The point is that the Conservatives are trying to say that a grandchild would not be deemed a Canadian citizen and would have to go through some form of process that could take many years in order to become a permanent resident, if they are fortunate enough, and then wait additional time. They need to open their minds on this issue and realize that there is justification for the superior court's decision. It was not a political decision; the Ontario Superior Court made the decision. We did not appeal it to the Supreme Court of Canada because we agree with the superior court, and understandably so. We now have until November 20 to get royal assent on this legislation or there will be no rule. Imagine the chaos or confusion that could be caused as a direct result.

During debate, the critic for immigration talked about Canadian identity and how we are somehow assaulting it. Seriously. Our country is not broken, contrary to what many speakers from the Conservative Party say. Our country is the greatest country in the world to call home. This is something we have built on and continue to build on. This is why the Prime Minister is in Asia and has been over in Europe. We are looking at ways we can enhance opportunities for Canadians and build a stronger, healthier economy. By doing that, we are building our heritage, who we are and our sense of identity, contrary to what the critic for immigration said.

We have symbols, such as the maple leaf or, better yet, the Canadian flag or the RCMP. The leader of the Conservative Party made the despicable comment that the leadership of the RCMP was “despicable” and then the other Conservative members piled on. Contrary to the impression Conservative members try to give at times, the RCMP is a very important symbol for Canada.

If someone does not understand our Canadian identity, they need to spend more time in their constituencies. They should be proud of the fact that we are a multicultural society with great diversity. It is that diversity that gives us opportunities like the Prime Minister meeting with President Marcos and talking about getting a trade agreement with the Philippines. There are over a million people of Filipino heritage in Canada today. We were able to achieve a trade agreement with Ukraine, at least in part because of our Ukrainian heritage. We should recognize the true value of being a Canadian.

We do not have to deny individuals, such as the grandchildren of Canadians, the opportunity to call themselves a Canadian. These are the types of responses we are getting from the Conservatives. Get real.

They talk about the amendments being proposed. Why would we support amendments if we disagree with them? There are more Liberal MPs than there are Bloc MPs and Conservative MPs combined, so it is not undemocratic to undo something the committee did if the majority of the members of the House of Commons disagree with it.

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With all due respect to the Bloc members, there are issues. Yes, I have as much a passion for French as anyone else inside this chamber. Because of Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Liberal policies, I believe there are more people speaking French in Canada today than there have ever been. It is called bilingualism. Let us be proud of that.

Are they going to tell an indigenous child up north who has never had the opportunity to learn English or French that they are not a citizen because they cannot speak English or French? Are they going to tell someone adopting a 17-and-a-half-year-old that because they cannot speak English or French, they are not going to be a citizen of Canada? Their arguments are flawed and they need to recognize that this is the reason we voted down the amendments.

• (1230)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I appreciate my Liberal colleague's lyrical flight of fancy, but there is still one niggling question. What about integration? Migrants need to integrate into the host society.

Even in his speech, he sort of proved our Conservative colleague right when he said that Canadian society is not actually founded on any strong symbols of identity.

Language is the strongest symbol of identity. If someone does not speak the language when they arrive in a country, how can they communicate? How can they be part of a collective identity? It is downright impossible.

My colleague spoke about the RCMP but, even though I have the utmost respect for the RCMP, it does not help develop a collective identity.

I would like my colleague to explain why the Liberal Party is upset about the fact that our amendment on the issue of language testing to ensure minimum language proficiency was rejected. It is completely inconsistent.

• (1235)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, through the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, members will find settlement programs. There are agreements between provinces and non-profits for all forms of support for immigrants, because not everyone around the world can speak English or French. Let us take a look at the individuals who came from Ukraine to settle, for example. Members will find that there were private sector and government-supported English and French classes to encourage individuals to become better integrated into society. I do not necessarily have the same fears that my colleague across the way has, because the government does provide support mechanisms.

I think Canadians, as a whole, value diversity and understand and appreciate how being a multicultural society has helped us make our country the number one country in the world to call home.

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Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague raised a lot of points of misinformation that the party opposite has been spewing on this really important bill. We made a promise to lost Canadians that we were going to restore this specific requirement to access their citizenship for their children and grandchildren. Many of us did that work. The member put those points of misinformation to the forefront and explained what the party opposite was lying to Canadians about.

Can the member expand on why we cannot use this as a divisive point to lie to Canadians and mislead them into thinking that we are doing something we are not?

Jeremy Patzer: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I believe the member insinuated in her question that the Conservative Party was lying to Canadians. We know that is not true, and it is unparliamentary to insinuate it.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Madam Speaker, I agree that my emotions may have got the best of me. I apologize to the member opposite. I agree that we should not use those words in the House. However, I have to say it is very misleading and very un-Canadian of the Conservatives. I will switch out those words to “misleading Canadians”.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, there are many individuals who have contributed to what has been a very lengthy debate over many years. I think of individuals like Don Chapman and others who have been there to support members on all sides of the House in recognizing the need to give citizenship to those entitled to it by birth. The lost Canadians have been at the forefront, pushing the government and, ultimately, the courts to address this issue.

I am hopeful that Bill C-3 will finally put to rest many of the different concerns that are out there. It would have been a powerful statement for all Canadians to see every member's support for the principles of Bill C-3.

• (1240)

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, what I found interesting about my Liberal colleague's comments is that he said that one of the criteria the Liberals included in Bill C-3 to establish a substantial connection to Canada was the 1,095 days. We are talking about the same 1,095 days that are required for naturalized citizens.

Another criterion that naturalized citizens must meet is that they must know how to speak French or English. Why does the member opposite think it is okay to use the same 1,095-day criterion that we have for naturalized citizens, yet not require these people who are being granted citizenship to have a knowledge of French or English?

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member does not recognize the difference between a birthright and someone who is naturalized. In the bill, the member will find the answer.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, Bill C-3 is once again before us.

The Liberals have dismantled our immigration system and turned it into a circus. They have thrown open our borders, inviting in millions of people over the last decade without the necessary housing, health care or jobs to support them. Let us look at the results.

Housing prices have shot up to unattainable levels. We were already in a housing deficit before increasing our population. Adding millions of new people to a housing market that was already under-supplied created an environment that resulted in skyrocketing rents and out-of-reach home prices.

Just last week in my riding, a mother told me that her daughter wanted to start a family but could not because they could not afford to buy a home. A father told me that his son is working full-time but cannot afford a place to rent and is stuck in the basement. Many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle, and I am sure on the other side of the aisle as well, are hearing the same stories across our entire country.

At the health committee, witnesses noted that if immigration levels continue to be mismatched with provincial health care delivery, outcomes for all Canadians will suffer. Canadians are already suffering. The Liberals' not considering health care capacity in their immigration policies has meant longer wait times for both immigrants and Canadians. People are waiting upwards of eight hours in hospital emergency rooms, and when they are admitted, they are in the hallway for hours and hours, if not days. People are waiting months to see a specialist for basic diagnostic services. Longer wait times mean that everyone's health suffers.

Right now there is also a huge job crisis. In the greater Toronto area alone, youth unemployment is hovering dangerously close to the 20% mark. The importance of a first job in high school or when coming out of higher education cannot be overstated for our youth wanting to start their adult life. A first job for youth builds critical skills and kick-starts a career. Without the ability to get a job, especially a first job coming out of higher education, long-term earnings are impacted, careers are stalled and a sense of hopelessness kicks in.

That is the situation our youth find themselves in after 10 years of disastrous Liberal immigration policies, when a mind-boggling number of temporary foreign workers and international students were let into the country. When the Prime Minister says we need to make sacrifices, what he really means is that both new immigrants and Canadians must suffer because of 10 years of Liberal failed policies.

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With all that in mind, forgive me if I am a bit skeptical about the Liberal migration bill before us, as it promises to potentially add thousands of new Canadians into an already overburdened system and would do nothing to address the challenges we already have.

As I have previously mentioned in speeches with respect to the bill, Liberals will say that they have to pass the legislation because of a lower-court ruling that said that the first-generation limit of citizenship by descent could go on indefinitely. What the Liberals fail to mention is not only that they did not appeal the court ruling but also that they have control over how it is implemented, through the legislation they put forward, as a minority government.

The legislation before us today does not include the common-sense amendments passed at committee, as we have heard all morning. Those amendments would have turned a lousy Liberal bill into a slightly less lousy Liberal bill. Yesterday felt a bit like *déjà vu*: Liberals once again were joined by their coalition partner, the NDP, to vote down our common-sense amendments.

I am going to summarize what happened. The committee studied the bill. Conservatives worked together with our Bloc colleagues to pass reasonable amendments, such as new Canadians' being required to know one of our two official languages and to have a criminal background check to protect the safety of Canadians. There were a lot of other important points.

The Liberals then came to the House and voted down all the amendments. What were the amendments? Liberals voted against new Canadians' having a criminal background check. Residents in my riding do not want people with criminal records immigrating to Canada and walking our streets.

● (1245)

Liberals voted against new Canadians' knowing a little bit of either the English or the French language. It is hard to integrate into a new country already knowing the language, let alone not knowing the language, which is certainly setting immigrants up to fail. Even the minister said that our official languages were part of Canadian values. If they are Canadian values, as the minister suggested, why did the Liberals vote against putting them in the bill? Why did the minister, who believes that, not put the requirement in the bill in the first place?

Liberals also voted against harmonizing the residency requirements that someone needs to fulfill in order to obtain citizenship through naturalisation with those for citizenship by descent. Providing proof of three years of residency over the entirety of someone's life would cause huge administrative problems. The proposed amendment would have changed this to three years within a five-year period, consistent with how our immigration system works now. How is an immigration officer supposed to verify three years of physical presence over the course of someone's life, using records that are decades-old or that, in many cases, may not even exist?

I have something to get off my chest. At the immigration committee last week, the immigration minister, the seventh Liberal one in the last 10 years, was questioned on a different bill. When I started mentioning to her the potential improvements, she said that suggestions and helpful comments are very much appreciated, and she

went on to say that the committee is there to give recommendations.

How the process on Bill C-3 has played out is emblematic of the last 10 years of the Liberal government. The Liberal government does not care about recommendations. It does not care about what other parliamentarians have to say. It has no respect for amendments or recommendations coming out of the standing committees of Parliament.

Our immigration system is an unmitigated disaster right now. Multiple parties took part in the legislative process, proposing amendments to make a lousy piece of Liberal legislation better. What do the Liberals do? They vote down amendments, not only on the bill before us but on pretty much every bill that comes into the House.

I have news for the members opposite: Canadians elected them, just as much as they did us, to come to Ottawa. In fact, 174 members of the 343-member House are not Liberal. That may be a surprise to the members opposite, who are behaving as if they had a huge majority in the government. Do the members opposite realize that their voting down these amendments tells me and all Canadians that Liberals do not care if Canadians can speak English or French?

It tells me and all Canadians that Liberals do not care if they can execute their immigration policies. It also tells me and all Canadians that Liberals do not care if new Canadians with criminal background records are being released into our communities.

I will end with this: I am not surprised that the Liberal government is putting forward more legislation that would add to the chaos in our immigration system. We know that the immigration system is a train wreck, because each of our constituency offices is inundated with immigration files, every office except, of course, the Prime Minister's. It has been half a year since the out-of-touch Prime Minister was elected; he still does not have a constituency office to serve his riding, so he would not know what we are dealing with every day in our constituency offices.

If the Prime Minister cannot figure out how to serve his own constituents, how can we expect him to serve the country? The Prime Minister's priorities are everywhere else but here.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I imagine that the member opposite was here in the last Parliament. His party voted for the bill to pass. This is part of the misleading misinformation. They are trying to fearmonger, trying to get Canadians to think that we are doing something we are not doing.

The Conservatives voted against our tough-on-crime bill. They have no plans to support our budget, which Canadians sent us to the House to vote on. When it comes to dividing Canadians, they rise up.

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Why did the member vote for the bill in the last Parliament, which passed? Why did the Conservatives mislead Canadians to believe that they were going to do this? In the new Parliament, they now want to shift it. They want to use it as a political score point so they can send budget fundraising emails, to raise money.

Why are the Conservatives doing that to Canadians? Why are they misleading Canadians?

• (1250)

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, I will attempt to address the ridiculous question from the member opposite. She and other members of the Liberal Party have stood up on the bill and on other bills and said to us, before the amendments were presented in the House, to take it to committee and to come back with recommendations and amendments. Of course, we did that. We came back, but the Liberals voted down the amendments.

I have something to say to the Liberals: As hard as they try, and as eloquent as they are in their speeches in the House, there is one thing they have not mastered yet. They have not mastered how to suck and blow at the same time.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Earlier, a Conservative colleague stood on a point of order. I agreed with that point and I think the member also agreed with it. Even though he was not in the previous Parliament, he is an experienced member. I think he should retract those comments and apologize.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Yes, that was an out-of-place remark.

The hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for you and this House.

The Liberals cannot say one thing one day and say something different the next day. They cannot inhale and exhale at the same time. I hope those words are more appropriate.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Order. What causes disruption always translates into not being parliamentary.

It did cause disruption, and I accept that the hon. member substituted the words with “inhale” and “exhale”.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Shefford.

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech in which he talked about the complex immigration cases that are handled in constituency offices.

Since Granby, in my riding, is a welcoming place, this issue keeps city staff very busy. I want to acknowledge them and thank them for their hard work. What we are asking for is a reform, a review of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, which is very archaic and not very humane. That is what people are saying. It needs to be re-examined.

This is my question. The amendments we proposed were aimed at ensuring that there is an annual report to Parliament so that we can see the statistics, the number of people affected and the cost involved. It is said that this bill could affect 150,000 people, but no one knows the numbers. It is therefore important that there be an annual report to Parliament.

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, the Liberals continue to disrespect other parliamentarians. That is very clear.

They rejected all of the committee's recommendations and they are not respecting the democratic process. I agree with what my colleague said in her question.

• (1255)

[*English*]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is definitely legislation that, in the riding of Waterloo, has garnered some fruitful conversation. There are examples constituents have shared with me of hard-working, tax-paying Canadians, who often speak both official languages. In one case in my office, the parents worked for an international company abroad. They were born abroad but had been in Canada for decades. Then the wife went to a conference abroad and was not able to travel because she was pregnant. There was a risk of causing damage to her unborn child, so she ended up delivering her baby abroad prior to returning to Canada. That child does not have Canadian citizenship. I would like to hear the member's comments on that.

Also, we are trying to grow our economy, with more international companies helping more global citizens. Is this something we might need to consider, as Canadians might be working and contributing to Canada while perhaps having to be abroad to contribute in meaningful ways?

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, I do not know if the member opposite has had an opportunity to read the amendments, but clearly this issue was addressed at committee. The Conservatives put forth some very meaningful amendments that would have addressed the case she mentioned of the constituent in her riding. Unfortunately, she and the rest of her colleagues in the Liberal Party voted those amendments down.

Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-3, an act to amend the Citizenship Act. I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Ponoka—Didsbury.

Being a Canadian should mean something. Citizenship is not merely a passport or an identifier. It should mean pride, belonging and responsibility, but Bill C-3 risks turning Canadian citizenship into little more than a slogan and a check box, and in doing so, it cheapens the value of Canadian citizenship. When we start treating citizenship like a formality instead of the privilege that it is, we weaken the pride and unity that make our country strong. This bill cheapens what it truly means to be Canadian.

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Canadian citizenship is more than a passport. It is a promise, a bond of loyalty and shared values. It is a commitment to the nation in which one lives. It means saying yes to the social contract that binds us.

As citizens, we contribute to the society in which we live. We contribute in exchange for rights and privileges. These rights and privileges have been fought for, died over and earned over hundreds of years. Citizenship is about taking an active role in our towns, cities and neighbourhoods, helping one another, building community and taking pride in this incredible country we call home. This bill would turn that privilege of citizenship into a mere piece of paper.

Under Bill C-3, some people living outside of Canada could automatically become Canadian citizens even if they have never set foot here, if they were born or adopted abroad and if their parents spent only about three years in Canada, just enough to meet the bare minimum requirement of 1,095 days that Bill C-3 sets out. This requirement does not even have to be consecutive days spent here.

The individual would not need to know our culture and may never even visit Canada, yet they would receive the same rights and privileges as someone who was born and raised here, or someone who chose to immigrate to Canada lawfully and build their life here. There would be no application process, no citizenship test and no background or security check. A person born with few ties to Canada would be granted full privileges, like those contributing.

A consequence of this may begin to arise in Canada's health care system. Already as it stands today, over 6.5 million Canadians are without a family doctor. Wait times in hospitals have skyrocketed. There are over 80,000 foreign-trained medical professionals in this country who are not working in health care. Canada is paying more into health care today than ever before and outcomes continue to worsen. In 2024, the median wait time for health care was 30 weeks, the longest wait times ever recorded in this country.

We have also had record population increases over the past 10 years. This is not a coincidence. Adding more people to any system that has not grown to keep up will result in worse outcomes, be it in health care, housing or societal cohesion.

Imagine a Canada where citizens who have never set foot on Canadian soil come into this country and begin receiving health care. They benefit from a system that working Canadians have contributed their hard-earned dollars to. This would only further the strain and demand we are already seeing in a health care system that is barely afloat.

Bill C-3 would give out citizenship automatically, with no screening for criminal history, no review for national security and no check for any real connection to Canada. At a time when many countries are working to keep their citizenship processes strong and secure, the Liberal government is lowering the bar.

Under Bill C-3, a person could live here on occasion, spend most of their life abroad and have a child overseas, and that child would still become a Canadian citizen automatically, without any review and without any ties to this country. That cheapens what it means to be Canadian.

• (1300)

For generations, becoming a citizen has meant something real. It has meant putting down roots, working hard, learning our history and contributing to our communities. It has meant earning the right call ourselves Canadian and being proud of it. However, the bill would open the door to citizens of convenience, people who can enjoy the benefits of being Canadian without sharing in the responsibilities that come with it.

This is part of a large pattern. After 10 years of the Liberal government, Canada's immigration system is broken. It is not the fault of newcomers who were promised a better life, but it is the fault of a government that has brought people into Canada under false pretenses, mismanaged our immigration programs, failed to plan for housing and ignored the strain on health care and social services.

The Conservatives support restoring citizenship to lost Canadians and ensuring that adopted children are treated equally, but the bill would go far beyond that. The Conservatives tried to fix these problems in committee. We proposed common-sense amendments that would have protected the values of Canadian citizenship. We asked that parents passing on citizenship by descent or adoption show a real residency in Canada for consecutive years, just as any naturalized citizen must do. We proposed language and knowledge requirements so that new citizens by descent understood Canada's history, laws and responsibilities. We required security screening for adults so that anyone gaining citizenship would be vetted and would pose no threat to national safety. We also called for the minister to report annually to Parliament on how many automatic citizenships are granted abroad and to disclose any cases where security screening was waived.

These were reasonable, balanced and responsible changes. They would have restored integrity while still addressing the unfair treatment of lost Canadians.

Due to the hard work of Conservatives at committee, with the help of our colleagues in the Bloc, these amendments were successfully carried, but just yesterday, the government caved to the radical NDP and rolled back these common-sense amendments, once again proving that they do not value what it means to be Canadian and that the bill is nothing more than a vote-buying ploy.

The government says that it wants fairness, yet it refuses to protect the value of Canadian citizenship. The Minister of Immigration has an opportunity to fulfill her promise to help lost Canadians while ensuring citizenship is not given to those with no real connection to Canada.

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This is about fairness, but it is also about integrity. It is not fair to the millions of immigrants who came here, learned our language, passed their citizenship test, paid taxes and built lives here to see others receive the same citizenship automatically from abroad. That creates a two-tiered system where some earn their place and others inherit it with no effort.

For decades, immigrants came to Canada under harsh conditions. Many came with nothing and worked to earn their place in Canada. They came with barely any money let alone the privilege of citizenship.

We can fix this. The Conservatives believe citizenship should be based on loyalty, service and contribution, not on loopholes and paperwork. We can restore pride in Canadian citizenship and give newcomers a system that is strong, fair and consistent. However, Bill C-3 would not strengthen citizenship; it would weaken it. It would trade commitment for convenience and a genuine connection for technical calculation. Canadians deserve better.

We must reject the watering down of our citizenship and the broken immigration system the Liberal government caused over the past 10 years. We must return to a society where our values are championed, not spat on.

Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law, where everyone has the fundamental freedoms of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association; where every citizen has the right to vote; where every citizen has the right to enter, remain in and leave Canada; where everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person; and where every individual is equal before and under the law.

I came here to this House to defend these principles, and I along—

• (1305)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Unfortunately, the hon. member is way over time.

Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the reality is that the Conservatives are actually saying no to grandchildren. They are saying no to individuals who are Canadians, who live in Canada, and saying that their grandchildren should not be considered Canadians. That is what they are saying no to. I wonder if the member truly believes that is fair given the ruling of the superior court of Ontario.

When we talk about the amendments, as the Conservatives often do, we need to know there are 169 Liberal MPs. When we combine the Bloc and Conservative members, there are 166. The majority of the House agrees with the government with respect to grandchildren. I wonder if the member might want to reconsider his position on the bill itself.

Burton Bailey: Madam Speaker, a decade of the Liberals has harmed the reputation of Canadian citizenship, either because of the neglect and mismanagement of the Canadian immigration system

or because of the policies that have weakened the value of Canadian citizenship.

Canada is one of the only countries in the world that allows descendants of visitors and temporary residents born on Canada's soil to automatically become citizens. With over three million temporary residents and a half a million undocumented persons now living in Canada, continuing to allow temporary residents' descendants to automatically claim citizenship will have a deep impact on Canada's immigration system, housing, jobs and social services.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, what the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is not saying is that the government took amendments that were duly adopted in committee meetings and threw them out.

Right now, my colleague is talking about the government's majority in the House. That is one thing. However, committees serve a purpose. Otherwise, we would not have them. We would vote on bills here in the House and that would be it.

Perhaps my Conservative colleague can comment on the fact that the government behaved very inappropriately by completely rejecting amendments that were duly adopted in meetings of a committee of the House of Commons, which must serve a purpose. What does my colleague think about that?

[*English*]

Burton Bailey: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague and the Bloc for the support we received at committee.

Immigrants are not to blame for wanting better lives; it is the Liberals' fault for breaking our system and allowing people into Canada too fast for housing, health care and jobs to keep up.

Only Conservatives will restore the value of Canadian citizenship and the immigration consensus the Liberals broke by fixing our broken immigration system and setting clear rules.

• (1310)

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am thankful to the hon. member for his great speech on the topic. I wonder if he has any other examples of how the immigration system has been wrecked. I know that for as long as I have been here, we have been concerned about the Roxham Road crossing. I wonder if he has any other examples he would like to share with us.

Burton Bailey: Madam Speaker, Conservatives believe that Canadian citizenship matters. It is more than a designation on an ID card or a passport to travel the world; it is a shared responsibility that takes every single one of us to adhere to. There once was a time when being Canadian meant something.

It is appropriate that we are entering Veterans' Week, a week when we remember our heroes who fought and died so that we can stand here today. By watering down our citizenship and reducing it to a check box, the Liberal government takes for granted their sacrifices by erasing what they fought and died for.

May we never forget their sacrifices.

[*Translation*]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives are saying that the government is granting Canadian citizenship too freely to people who do not have sufficient ties to Canada. However, this bill requires a parent to reside in the country for at least three years before they can pass on their citizenship to a child born abroad. That is a clear and real requirement.

Can my colleague explain why he feels this requirement, which many experts found to be reasonable, does not respond to his concerns regarding a substantial connection to Canada?

[*English*]

Burton Bailey: Madam Speaker, again, with over three million temporary residents and half a million undocumented persons now living in Canada, continuing to allow temporary residents' descendants to automatically claim citizenship will have a deep impact on Canada's immigration system, housing, jobs and—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for York—Durham.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have been waiting for an opportunity when you are in the chair and the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas is in the chamber.

I am rising on a point of order to follow up on the point of order I raised on September 26. You will recall, as you were in the chair, that following question period, I raised a point of order that the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas accused the member for Lanark—Frontenac of being a Russian asset. At that time, you suggested that the language might be unparliamentary and that you would review the transcript and come back to the House.

Madam Speaker, I have reviewed the transcript and, if you will review the transcript, you will see that an hon. member is quoted in the Hansard as saying, “Are you a Russian asset?” I am sure that the hon. member will not shy away from his comments and will, of course, take ownership of them.

I am wondering if you will rule on that now; agree that calling another member “a Russian asset”, or accusing them of being a Russian asset, is unparliamentary; and ask the member to withdraw those comments.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, on the same point of order.

Points of Order

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would be concerned about setting a precedent. When a Speaker indicates that they are going to take something as notice, as a courtesy to the Speaker's chair, members have to provide the Speaker the opportunity to report back to the House.

We would not want to see MPs standing up every time the Speaker decides to take something as a notice to express that the Speaker has not yet ruled.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Indeed, we have not had the opportunity to come back to the House with a proper ruling. We will come to the House when said ruling is done.

The hon. member for Waterloo, on the same point of order.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the only comment I was going to make is—

An hon. member: Point of order.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I have someone on a point of order. There can be one at a time.

The hon. member for Waterloo.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I was just going to say that, in the spirit of maintaining decorum and following the rules, at the beginning of the member's comments he referenced the presence and absence of a member in the chamber, including who is in the chair. I think that we should refrain from doing that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It is well noted.

The hon. member for York—Durham is rising on the same point of order.

Jacob Mantle: Madam Speaker, it is very well noted from the member for Waterloo. I appreciate that. As a new member, I am still learning the rules.

I am happy to take the Chair's direction on this. I would have hoped that, after over a month of time, the Speaker's office would have reviewed the transcript to confirm what has been said. I am wondering now that you are in the chair again, if you would ask the member to withdraw those comments because they are unparliamentary.

● (1315)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Please do not refer to who is present in the Chair. Saying “you are in the chair again” refers to precisely that: my presence or not in the Chair.

Beyond the debate, we will come back to the member on the ruling by the Speaker when said review is finished.

*Government Orders***CITIZENSHIP ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025), be read the third time and passed.

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Madam Speaker, I was really enjoying the debate; it is lots of fun. I want to thank my colleague who split his time with me, my friend from Red Deer, for his excellent speech. I am happy to rise again and talk about the bill. I spoke to it at second reading, and I am happy to offer my thoughts again at third reading, although I have some suspicion about what actually happened. I have been in this place a long time, and the fact that we are not debating the bill the committee actually adopted at third reading is interesting, to say the least.

I rise today to deal with Bill C-3, which claims to redress the lost Canadians issue but, of course, goes far beyond that goal and scope in its intent. Lost Canadians are those with strong ties to Canada who have been denied the privilege of being conferred our citizenship because of complexities or outdated provisions in our laws. Conservatives believe those who have been arbitrarily or unfairly denied this privilege should have this error corrected, yet the bill that is currently before Parliament remains a bad one, notwithstanding that issue.

Instead of merely remediating the most egregious cases of lost citizenship, the Liberals took the liberty of creating a system that would completely gut and undervalue the value of Canadian citizenship. While most immigrants to Canada must work hard to acquire their citizenship, something they are immensely proud of, the bill would create a system in which citizenship is not awarded in a merit-based manner. It introduces an extremely weak substantial connection test to gain citizenship.

An individual's parents need only to spend 1,095 nonconsecutive days in Canada at any point to gain citizenship. No criminal background check would be required. This was something Conservatives proposed as an amendment at committee and had passed, but, suspiciously, it has now been removed from the bill at third reading. This is the point I would like to expand on, and it should not be ignored.

In the last few days, I received a response to an Order Paper question in which I asked how many non-Canadians are incarcerated in federal prisons in Canada. That number would not even include the ones incarcerated in provincial institutions, which are for people serving sentences of up to two years less a day. It showed that there are nearly 1,000 non-Canadians in federal institutions in Canada.

If one is serving a federal sentence, the average sentence for a federal penitentiary is 1,787 days. When those 1,000 people get out, they will have now met the arbitrary 1,095 nonconsecutive days test. They can go anywhere they want in the world after they are released from a federal prison in Canada, and, because they have spent that time in Canada, any children they might have could now be conferred Canadian citizenship. Should the children of these people who have spent time in a prison who might be the—

An hon. member: No, because they are not Canadians.

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I would say to the member for Winnipeg North that it is very simple: If they are the children of Canadian citizens, but not citizens themselves, and are in a federal prison, they can confer citizenship to the second generation, and that is exactly the point the legislation has.

Essentially, Bill C-3 would allow foreign-born individuals who have never lived in Canada to bypass the immigration system and gain citizenship just because a parent spent a few months in Canada years or even decades ago. It would create a plethora of citizens born outside the country with no meaningful connection to Canada whatsoever. That is what grandchildren are.

That is why our party worked collaboratively at committee to improve the bill. Our amendments would have solved the lost Canadians issue but limit potential abuses. These were common-sense proposals, such as requiring knowledge of Canada's official languages and undergoing a security assessment. However, the government has teamed up with the NDP to gut these changes. This is happening despite the NDP not even having a seat at the committee table. Not only is this underhanded, but it also violates the spirit of the democratic process we have in this place.

• (1320)

They even removed our changes that would allow Canadians working overseas in the service of our government to pass on their citizenship. This goes to show that we may have a new Prime Minister, but this is the same old Liberal government.

It should be noted that Bill C-3 is the successor to Bill C-71 in the previous Parliament. The government has basically tried to re-pass the same failed policies as the last government.

This whole debacle arose because the last prime minister refused to challenge a 2009 court decision in Ontario that struck down the previous Harper-era provisions that protected our citizenship system from abuses. Conservatives have always understood that citizenship has an inherent value. After all, a Canadian passport is one of the most valued in the world, offering visa-free travel to 184 countries.

For years, Canadian citizenship was the envy of the world, attracting the best newcomers wishing to better their lives, but years of mismanagement under the Liberal government has harmed the reputation of our citizenship. Where does this value lie? Aristotle defined this concept of citizenship roughly as the right “to rule and be ruled in turn”, being closely associated with the ideas of civic participation in the polis. His ideas of citizenship were still primitive compared with today.

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Rome would expand on these ideas by defining the rights of citizens as being tied to certain responsibilities, namely the protection of the state through military service. Later, Rousseau and Locke expanded on these ideas to include a more robust system of rights and responsibilities, often referred to as the social contract that defines the obligations that both citizen and state have with each other. While the franchise of citizens has expanded since then, no one disputes these ancient ideas that rights cannot exist without responsibilities.

How does this tie into the current debate on Bill C-3 and on citizenship? Citizenship is the culmination of these ideas. It is the pinnacle of proof of belonging to a certain group of people, these being people who share the same rights and obligations; who have similar underlying values, and in Canada this includes things like the rule of law, a respect for democracy and a tolerance for those with differing views or opinions; and who share similar historical, linguistic and cultural links to each other.

In our system, those who wish to attain this level of belonging are diligent and work hard to attain it. This is not given to them; they earn it. They are the best fits for our system, including their participation in our economic and social fabric. That is why it is disheartening to see the current government say our citizenship basically has no value. If we do not treat our citizenship carefully, why would any other country do so? Will other countries retaliate and reduce our visa-free access?

Citizenship is not a commodity. It should not be bought, and it certainly should not be given away cheaply by way of Bill C-3. To hold Canadian citizenship is to belong to one of the greatest nations on the planet, and that should not be forgotten.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there is a lack of understanding of the legislation.

The member indicated he made an inquiry and found out there are 1,000 people who are not Canadians in our jails. He says that, somehow, their grandchildren are not going to be able to come to Canada, unless this legislation passes. If someone is a permanent resident who goes to jail for two or more years, they cannot become a Canadian citizen. In order for the whole process to kick in, a person has to be rooted to a Canadian citizen.

Would the member, at the very least, acknowledge that the information he has provided is actually wrong?

At the end of the day, you have to be careful because the way you expressed it, many would say, comes across as being anti-immigrant.

• (1325)

Andrew Lawton: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the member for Winnipeg North is an experienced member. He knows better than to speak directly to my hon. colleague rather than through you. He was accusing you of doing something, which I am sure you will be the first to admit you were not actually doing.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member was somewhat speaking through me, but I take the hon. member's point.

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I think my "friend", and I use that term sparingly, the member for Winnipeg North, missed the point.

If someone who is not a citizen has their child here, and that person commits a crime, they may go to a federal prison, and I have just explained that the average sentence length is 1,787 days. They may then leave prison and go back to another country, where they were originally from or their parents might have been originally from.

Millions upon millions of Canadians have moved here from elsewhere, my wife included. I am not anti-immigrant at all. Thanks for the accusation, though.

Notwithstanding that, if that person's parents are Canadian citizens or have those rights, that means the grandchildren of those parents, through this person who has been incarcerated in Canada, meet that threshold and will now be entitled to Canadian citizenship. I think that is ridiculous.

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I was just wondering if my hon. colleague has any other examples. The last one was great. I was wondering if he has any other examples of how the Liberals have cheapened Canadian citizenship over the last 10 years.

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Alberta for bringing this up. I have been here a long time. I was here in 2006, when the Lebanon crisis broke out. We found that there were not only a few hundred or a few thousand but some 60,000 Canadians living abroad in just that particular case, which I think inspired some of the conversations about whether we have citizens of convenience.

I mentioned in my speech that our passport has visa-free access in over 184 countries around the world. There are a lot of people who want to have access to Canadian privileges, want to have access to the Canadian passport and want to have access to Canadian programs and services but might not be contributing much, when it comes to the prosperity of our nation, for example, and I think a 1,095-day tour of Canada is not substantial enough in any way, shape or form.

It makes me wonder if perhaps this is being done to advance the interests of just one particular party in this House, instead of advancing the interests of our country writ large.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is a debate that constituents in the riding of Waterloo have been actively participating in, and there is definitely a range of views and perspectives. I hear the member's comments in regard to having a commitment to advancing the prosperity of the country and being a great Canadian.

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In the riding of Waterloo, I have a couple of circumstances or situations. One includes a Canadian whose parents were working abroad. This individual has lived her entire life in Canada; speaks both official languages; is a contributing, hard-working, taxpaying citizen; and was born abroad. She went abroad to a conference and was not able to come home because it was suggested, because she was pregnant, that she not travel. She ended up having her baby abroad, and that child is not entitled to Canadian citizenship.

In circumstances such as this, where the family is very committed to Canada and speaks both official languages, does the member agree that the child should have Canadian citizenship?

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I am not familiar with the case my friend from Waterloo has brought up, but I will simply suggest this: I have been an MP for 20 years. I have had numerous cases of people who have been in this country paying taxes for years and years, and their children, born even in this country, and they speak the language, are being sent back to the country of origin of their parents. However, that is a first-generation decision, and Conservatives always stood up for that first-generation commitment. It is the second-generation one that is most problematic.

• (1330)

Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Niagara South.

The Liberals drafted flawed legislation in Bill C-3. It was too loose in the requirements that would confer Canadian citizenship. The Conservatives and the Bloc members therefore worked together to tighten up Bill C-3. Our proposed amendments were guardrails that would prevent second-order abuses. These amendments were voted on and approved at the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. However, the NDP members and the Liberals united yesterday to undo the positive changes that we so carefully crafted at committee and that would harmonize the pathways to citizenship across descent and naturalization. As such, Conservatives will not be able to support this legislation.

Today I stand baffled at the complete disregard for the committee process that was shown yesterday. As such, I want to hold my Liberal colleagues accountable to the promises they made on June 19 about sending Bill C-3 to committee and receiving amendments. The Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship said the following: “I very much look forward to members discussing and debating this and receiving any amendments or constructive advice.” In response to the minister, I would define our amendments as constructive. We built upon what was presented in Bill C-3 and merely added guardrails.

The deputy House leader of the government said, “we are happy to bring in amendments that make sense, in committee, and work together with all parties”. In response to the deputy government House leader, I want to emphasize that the amendments were crafted by both Bloc members and Conservatives. If by “all parties”, the member is referring to recognized parties, it seems that everyone was accounted for in these amendments.

The member of Parliament for Ottawa Centre stated, “That is exactly what the committee process is for. We know that bills go to committee and get amended. If Conservative members feel this

does not allow for a substantial connection, then let us have that conversation at committee. That is exactly what we should do.”

The member further stated, “Of course, all bills need improvement. Let us get it to committee. Let us work fast at committee, make the improvements necessary, bring it back for third reading and pass it.”

In response to the member, all I can say is that I wholeheartedly agree. We worked through the committee process to have our important conversations and to improve the bill. We crafted the proposed amendments with care, yet the New Democrats and Liberals have shown, through their actions, that they do not respect the committee process.

Finally, not to belabour these points, please let me end with a question by the hon. member of Parliament for Waterloo: “Does the member agree that the right way to provide suggestions and amendments to the legislation would be at committee?” In response to the hon. member, my reply is yes, amendments are to be made at committee. I must ask, then, why have we undone all of these carefully crafted committee amendments?

At this juncture with Bill C-3, I do not even see why there is a Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. Why did I spend several afternoons at the committee working with my Conservative and Bloc colleagues to improve this legislation when all of this work done by recognized opposition parties can be undone by a party that the Canadian voters chose to punish with only seven seats?

With the remaining time, I want to briefly give an overview of the common-sense amendments that the Conservatives and the Bloc members passed in committee. With every amendment, let us examine whether, in any way, they would infringe on a group we know as lost Canadians.

First, we proposed amending the three-year presence in Canada, to be achieved within a five-year time frame. This is not a high bar. Certainly any lost Canadian would want to spend 36 months in Canada within a 60-month time frame. That is only a high bar for Canadians of convenience who want Canada to remain open to them as an insurance policy if geopolitical affairs go south in their current country of residence.

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• (1335)

Second, we proposed adding requirements around language proficiencies, citizenship knowledge and security checks. That is not a high bar. Certainly, any lost Canadian should already know how to speak one of our official languages, should already know about the duties of citizenship and should already have a clean criminal record. It is a high bar only for Canadians of convenience who struggle to speak our official languages well and who struggle to understand the values of our nation. These are the people who want to enjoy the privileges of a Canadian passport without the duties of contribution to our society.

Third, we proposed adding two reporting requirements for the Minister of Immigration, where the first would be on the number of citizenships granted by the enactment of Bill C-3, and the second would be on the number of security screening exemptions. Again, that is not a high bar. Certainly, every lost Canadian would like a living record of their ranks' regaining citizenship. Certainly lost Canadians would want the Canadian public to be made aware of exemptions made for people in their ranks with criminal records. This is a high bar only for Liberals who do not want a living record of all Canadians of convenience to whom they granted citizenship.

If Canada as a whole were a municipal community, the Conservative and Bloc members would be councillors who merely wish to put speed bumps on our residential roads. Functionally, all our proposed amendments were speed bumps that would have made it harder to drive 80 kilometres per hour in a residential zone. Lost Canadians already know how to drive in Canadian residential zones; they would simply endure a few speed bumps and be on their merry way to regaining their driver's licence, which is a good metaphor for Canadian citizenship.

Canadians of convenience want to drive at highway speeds in our residential zones and then head immediately back to where they came from, with our official driver's licence in hand. The speed bumps do not bother someone who intends to live as a resident here in our Canadian community; they are a bother only for tourists who want to zip in and out of Canada, acquiring our status symbols without contributing to the society that gave those symbols status.

Conservatives will not support the current Bill C-3, which the old NDP-Liberal coalition stripped of the amendments so carefully crafted in committee. We Conservatives stand with all proud Canadians and lost Canadians against the mutilated Bill C-3 that the NDP-Liberal coalition cut up to serve Canadians of convenience.

When the next geopolitical flashpoint emerges, how much will the NDP-Liberal coalition take from the pockets of hard-working Canadian taxpayers to fund a vacation bailout for Canadians of convenience?

Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade and to the Secretary of State (International Development), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just want to quickly remind the member that we are here at this moment debating this bill because the bill the Harper government brought into law was found by the courts to be unconstitutional under the charter. They have given the House until November 20 to pass a law to remedy that circumstance. As a result of the illegal law, there are many Canadians who are disenfranchised.

For example, a very good friend of mine was born of two Canadian parents who were working abroad. She was born outside Canada. Of course, she returned to Canada, is a Canadian citizen, lived here her whole life, got her education and now is working in France, where she had two children of her own. She is unable to pass Canadian citizenship to them. Under the law, even though she is a Canadian citizen, she could not, because she was born outside the country. These are the real-life circumstances we are trying to remedy with the proposed law.

Does the member oppose ensuring that Canadians remain Canadians by making sure their children also get Canadian citizenship?

Michael Ma: Madam Speaker, let me remind the Liberal government again that when the law was struck down by the Ontario courts, the Liberal government had every opportunity and all the time it needed to repeal that decision, but it never did. It has done nothing about it. Now that the deadline is coming, the government just all a the sudden wakes up and says it needs to do this. It is rushing this through without due consideration for all Canadians.

• (1340)

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, in his speech, my colleague addressed the rather worrisome issue of these lost Canadians. We are aware that there is a court ruling, and the amendments we proposed respond to the court's ruling. We want to determine what constitutes a substantial connection to Canada. As a matter of fact, we copied the naturalization requirements for second-generation children born abroad so that there would be one set of rules for everyone.

What does my colleague think about that?

[*English*]

Michael Ma: Madam Speaker, we truly worked together and considered the value of Canadian citizenship and what it means for Canadians. The amendments we put together would have addressed, as the member mentioned, the naturalization process. People should have a clean criminal record, understand Canadian culture and, most importantly, speak English or French.

That is not too much to ask, so we do not understand why the Liberal government and the NDP are trying to rip this away from us so the bill would create another class of Canadian citizens who know nothing about Canada and who do not necessarily value Canadian citizenship.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member for Markham—Unionville is the embodiment of what the Conservatives have been trying to say, which is that to be a Canadian citizen requires, or should require, a commitment to and an investment in Canada.

Government Orders

Can the member, as someone who was not born in Canada, speak to the value of Canadian citizenship and what that should mean for people?

Michael Ma: Madam Speaker, truly we are talking about the values of being a Canadian citizen. My grandfather came to Canada when he was 15 years old, but because of the law of the day, my grandmother could not come here. My mother was born in China, and later I was born in Hong Kong. Therefore, by definition, I am a lost Canadian.

However, we went through the proper immigration channels, the residency requirements and all the various citizenship tests. That proves to me that it is valuable to go through the process so people can integrate into Canadian society and be positive role models for the country.

Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is fortuitous, or even perhaps unfortunate, that I may be the last speaker on the Conservative side to speak to the legislation before the House. I am sure the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader will have another question for me, because he always does, and I appreciate his interjections.

I am a new member of Parliament. I came from the business community. I am probably, I think, the oldest rookie in the House of Commons, and I am perplexed by the process the legislation came through. I spoke at second reading, and the parliamentary secretary asked me a pointed question after my speech, which was why we were holding the bill up at second reading and why we would not let the Liberals take it to committee, where we could make concrete and substantial amendments to it. He said that committee was where we could make a better bill, and he asked why we were filibustering on the floor of the House of Commons.

I wish we were still at second reading, because the committee members, including the member for Markham—Unionville, spent hours and hours talking about substantial and reasonable amendments to the legislation. With the support of our colleagues from the Bloc Québécois, we were successful in making proposals to make the bill a much better piece of legislation.

The original legislation was fundamentally bad, and now that the amendments that the Conservatives and the Bloc managed to get through at committee have been reversed, as my colleague said, what a waste of time this has been. We have wasted weeks and weeks on the legislation, only to come back today to where we started. I am very disappointed.

The government members asked us at the beginning of the session to collaborate and co-operate with them. They asked us to give them things they could work with to help them build better legislation. We did that, and we see today at third reading that it was all for naught.

I want to tell a bit of story. Three of my grandparents were born in the U.K., so my father and, I think, a couple of my uncles were born in the U.K. My father was entitled to citizenship, and his was the last generation that would have automatically been entitled to citizenship in the U.K.

Canada and the U.K. share a sovereign. Canada is a parliamentary democracy in the British tradition. My roots go back to Eng-

land and Wales, yet I am not entitled to British citizenship. In addition to that, I did my graduate work in the U.K., in England; I studied there. That did not entitle me to U.K. citizenship.

Under this legislation, those two factors would provide me with citizenship, if I were outside Canada studying for three or four years, or spending 1,095 days in the country. Countries across the world are limiting these opportunities. The legislation is nothing more than chain migration. It is the postnational mentality, where there is no more value to citizenship. It does not seem that the government puts a highly regarded value on citizenship now.

Most of the Liberals who have been talking today have been giving examples about first and second generations. The legislation would provide access in perpetuity to Canadian citizenship. Someone would not need to speak the language, go through a security check or have a substantial knowledge of Canada. They would not go through the normal citizenship process that people who want to come here through normal citizenship applications do.

I do not think it is unreasonable, in the amendments we proposed to the legislation, to suggest that pegging a value on citizenship should be based on having a substantial connection to Canada, not just 1,095 days or a five-year period, or just that someone went to school here to get a degree or spent the summers at somebody's cottage. In the bill, this is exactly what would give someone the access to Canadian citizenship, and that, to me, is wrong.

It is also not unreasonable to suggest that people who want to get citizenship but who are multiple generations down the line should go through a security and background check. We want people with good records, not criminal records, to be part of our country. We also believe it is not unreasonable for these people to speak one of our two official languages, and that, in the legislation, would also not have to be the case.

● (1345)

There have been several iterations of this legislation from previous parliaments. Those iterations also failed on the floor of the House of Commons before the last election, but this new piece of legislation today, which has now gone back to its original form, is severely flawed. The Conservatives would have supported a bill that had the substantial and reasonable amendments that we proposed, with the support of our Bloc colleagues. They would have made this bill a lot better.

We are now faced with a budget coming in a few hours that will provide a generational impact, as noted by the government. It is a "generational" budget, but it is also going to be a generational budget of debt. With this legislation, Bill C-3, the generational impact of access to citizenship would undermine the value of that citizenship and saddle other generations with the debt we are imposing on them today. That is unfair.

We on this side of the House believe the value of Canadian citizenship should mean something more than just having a loose connection to this country. It would undermine the fabric and history of our country. When we see the flag beside the Speaker, we need to understand the roots of it, what it means to be a Canadian and what it means to understand the history of our country and the education, knowledge, language and security of that flag as a meaningful representation of citizenship.

I am disappointed that this legislation is now reverting back to a very bad piece of legislation simply because the government feels it has been pressed into doing something by the end of November. The government had the option to appeal the decision of the superior court; it did not. There were several layers of judicial applications that could have been proceeded with that would have given the government more time. Early in this session of Parliament, we had an opportunity to get the bill right. Despite the arbitrary deadline the government believes is there, there were options to have it extended again.

In conclusion, I am saddened to say as a new member of Parliament, having gone through this whole process and understanding the legislative process, that I believed the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader was being sincere when he said to me that the bill should go to committee, where we can make solid amendments to benefit it and make it better. We did that, and we are back to where we are now. That process seems to me to have been a waste of time. For that, I am sorry to see we are back to where we started.

• (1350)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first and foremost, I would say to the new member that there are plenty of opportunities at the committee stage for amendments to pass, but we have to look at the circumstances surrounding the amendments that were being proposed and supported by two entities of the House. It is the government that is ultimately responsible for getting legislation through.

The essence of this legislation is to enable a grandparent, as a Canadian, to see a grandchild ultimately receive Canadian citizenship. That is the principle, the essence, of the legislation. I do not believe the Conservatives as a whole really appreciate the value of having a birthright for that grandchild.

Does the member not recognize the true value of a grandchild having birthright citizenship? The Ontario Superior Court, by the way, happens to agree.

Fred Davies: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comment from the parliamentary secretary because that is exactly the problem with this legislation. We are not talking about the grandchild. We are talking about the grandchild's children and their children, who may have never had a substantial connection to Canada and who will have access to Canadian citizenship.

An hon. member: No.

Fred Davies: Yes, they will.

Government Orders

Madam Speaker, we need a substantial connection test, one that does not mean some distant relative three or four generations down the road will automatically be entitled to Canadian citizenship. This is someone who does not speak the language, perhaps has a criminal record and has not gone through a security check.

None of that makes sense to me. For that reason, we will vote against this legislation.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I really appreciated my colleague's speech. In committee, he and I worked hard, responsibly and collaboratively on amending the bill.

The party in power tells us every day how important committee work is. It tells us that we have to work together to conduct thorough studies or to examine bills. That is exactly what we did at the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. We proposed amendments and the majority of committee members voted in favour of those amendments. Today, we are in a situation where the Liberals are not respecting the work of the committee.

I would like my colleague's thoughts on this. What does this say about the Liberals' view of democratic institutions and the parliamentary tools we have at our disposal to do our job as parliamentarians?

• (1355)

[*English*]

Fred Davies: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member for Lac-Saint-Jean. We worked well together on the committee, and I always appreciated that we had an opportunity to talk substantially about the amendments we wanted to bring forward to make this piece of legislation better.

I said earlier in my speech that my education as a new MP was unfortunate. The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader said to bring amendments to the committee; that is when we will make the bill better. Well, we did that. We made amendments and made the legislation better. Perhaps we would have had an opportunity to make it the law of the land, but all that time was wasted. Now we are back to where we started, and we will not vote in favour of the legislation as a result.

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, we have a bill before us, Bill C-14, that takes into account a number of policies on bail reform. Included in Bill C-14 are parts of Bill S-233, or my private member's bill, Bill C-321, which would have made it an aggravating factor in sentencing if the victim of violence was a firefighter, health care worker or first responder.

Would it not send a message to the firefighters on the Hill, the nurses watching and the first responders who put their uniforms on every day to serve our country and community to pass unanimously, at all levels, Bill S-233 today?

Statements by Members

Fred Davies: Madam Speaker, the answer is, yes, it makes sense. My son is a firefighter, and I am grateful for his contribution to our community every day. Let us get that piece of legislation through the House.

Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I know that all members appreciate the sacrifice that firefighters, first responders and nurses have—

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I am sorry, but there is no unanimous consent.

The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with one of my colleagues.

It is unbelievable that I am here before the House, just before question period and before the budget is tabled, to once again talk about Bill C-3. I would remind members that we also discussed Bill S-245 and Bill C-71 in a previous Parliament. I have probably given 25 speeches on exactly this issue, which is discussed in Bill C-3 in particular. As my Conservative colleague just said, we did a thorough and responsible job in committee. We did our job, we listened to the experts and we even heard from the Parliamentary Budget Officer in committee.

[*English*]

The Speaker: We have a point of order from the member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions behind the scenes, and I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent—

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: Apparently there is not.

The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Mr. Speaker, I will continue with my speech.

I do not even need my notes to talk about this bill anymore. As I was saying, we worked hard in committee. We did our job as parliamentarians. Our work was thorough and amendments were adopted by the majority of committee members. Those amendments made this bill better than it was when it was referred to the committee.

The party currently in power has formed a minority government, yet it is behaving like a majority government. The government keeps telling us that it received a strong mandate from the people. It received a minority mandate. Perhaps it should be aware of that. Today the government is presenting the budget, and it should be doubly aware of that fact.

I assume that I will continue my speech after question period, since I have not finished yet.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

SOURIS LIONS CLUB

Kent MacDonald (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Souris Lions Club on celebrating its 70th anniversary. It is a remarkable milestone for one of Prince Edward Island's most dedicated service clubs.

Since 1955, the Souris Lions have shown dedication and community pride. From supporting local families and improving accessibility to organizing blood donor clinics and youth programs, its impact can be felt right across the riding. Each Christmas, the Lions lead their hallmark initiative, the Christmas box program, led by Liron Peter Boertien, with support from day cares, schools, seniors clubs, Girl Guides and countless community donors, over 130 families receive boxes filled with all the fixings for a turkey dinner, including gifts for the children. Under the leadership of President Arie Hoogerbrugge, Secretary Allan Campbell, Treasurer Brian Deveau and with special recognition to Elwood Ching for over 50 years of service, their motto, “we serve”, is a way of life for this club.

I thank every member, past and present, for 70 years of community service.

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ADVOCACY LUNCHEON

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to invite all members to a luncheon tomorrow at noon in 8-053, 131 Queen Street, to mark 11 years since royal assent for PCEPA, the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act. This lunch will be hosted by Andrea and Kathy, long-time anti-exploitation advocates. Through PCEPA, Canada's Parliament recognized that prostitution is a form of sexual exploitation and affirmed that no one ever needs to be bought, sold or exploited for sex in Canada.

Andrea and Kathy will provide a copy of their book *When Men Buy Sex: Who Really Pays?* to every single parliamentarian. This book elevates the voices of the survivors. Andrea and Kathy are also joined this week by the National Council of Women of Canada, CEASE Trafficking, Persons Against Non-State Torture, BridgeNorth, EmpowerMen and Men Ending Trafficking. Together, all these groups are saying that we will not turn away from exploitation. They will not remain silent and neither will we.

I want to thank Andrea and Kathy for their relentless work to end sexual exploitation.

IRANIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to denounce the heartbreaking case of Ms. Zahra Shahbaz Tabari, a 67-year-old Iranian electrical engineer and human rights advocate who has been sentenced to death by the Iranian regime. Her so-called trial lasted 10 minutes and was conducted via video conference. She was prohibited from retaining a lawyer and sentenced to death based on ridiculous evidence: a piece of cloth bearing the words “woman, resistance, freedom” and an unpublished voice message. This is not justice. It is a cruel and calculated act of repression by a regime that continues to persecute its own people, especially women, for daring to speak out. Hers is just one of a multitude of similar cases this year alone in Iran.

We stand in solidarity with all in the Iranian community who continue to suffer under the brutality of the mullah regime, and call for freedom and democracy.

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MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES

Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a good government has a moral and legal duty to safeguard children from all harms. The Supreme Court of Canada has failed to uphold that duty. Its decision to strike down a one-year mandatory minimum sentence for child sexual abuse material offences is sickening.

Let us examine how the scales of justice balance out in this case. On one side of the equation, two individuals made conscious decisions to contribute to and benefit from the torment and torture of hundreds of children. Instead of receiving a punishment that fits their crimes, they may very well walk free after less than a year in prison. On the other side, their innocent child victims are burdened for life with the scars of violent sexual abuse. They will never recover.

Through its silence, this government says that it cares more about the charter rights of perverts and pedophiles than those of precious children. A Conservative government would use the notwithstanding clause to overturn the Supreme Court's ruling. We would fight for the strongest laws against child exploitation. Our children deserve nothing less.

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[Translation]

SUSTAINABLE HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRE

Steve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoilou, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to draw the House's attention to an absolute scientific treasure located in the riding of Beauport—Limoilou: the VITAM research centre, a sustainable health centre of excellence.

VITAM's vision is both simple and inspiring: Healthy minds and bodies living in healthy environments on a healthy planet.

Under the leadership of professor and researcher Jean-Pierre Després, VITAM is expanding the boundaries of our understanding of health by integrating human, social and environmental dimensions.

VITAM represents the best of what Beauport—Limoilou has to offer: a community dedicated to innovation, compassion and knowledge, where science truly serves the people.

Statements by Members

I am deeply grateful to VITAM's researchers and its whole team for their essential contribution to Canadians' health and to the advancement of scientific knowledge in Quebec and Canada.

* * *

● (1405)

[English]

ANDREW MOOR

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Andrew Moor was a warrior for more competition in the financial services sector and the most respected and passionate advocate for open banking. Under his leadership, Equitable Bank grew from \$3 billion in assets to \$125 billion. It was deemed Canada's challenger bank.

Andrew and EQ Bank challenged more than their competitors. They challenged the system, they challenged bureaucracy and they challenged the rules. His persistence on open banking always focused on benefits to consumers, increasing access, enhanced service and, of course, lower costs.

A few months ago, Andrew unexpectedly passed away. It is regrettable that the system here moved too slowly for him to see it to fruition, but the road to open banking has been paved with the stones that Andrew laid. While the business community grieves a remarkable leader, we cannot help but think of the family that Andrew cared for deeply and treasured enormously.

Andrew will be missed, but his legacy will endure.

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STEEL INDUSTRY

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have lived in Hamilton my whole life. I am incredibly proud of our city's heritage as Canada's industrial centre and the heart of steelmaking. That spirit of hard work and resilience defines Hamilton.

Illegal and unnecessary U.S. tariffs on steel threaten our industry and the livelihoods of hard-working Hamilton families. How we respond is not about politics. It is about people. It is about workers. It is about the future of Hamilton and all Canadian industry. We need every political party and all levels of government working together, united to defend Canadian workers and build new opportunities.

Statements by Members

That is why our government is forging new markets for Canadian steel and investing in good jobs right here at home, ensuring Hamilton remains at the heart of Canada's industrial future. We cannot control an unpredictable U.S. government, but we can control how we respond, as we always have, with unity, determination and pride.

* * *

AFFORDABILITY

Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal rule, Canadians can no longer afford life in their own country. Under the Prime Minister, we are seeing empty bank accounts, fridges and stomachs. Food bank use in Toronto has doubled since 2023, and the situation is just as dire in B.C. Instead of the fastest-growing economy in the G7, we have the slowest. The Liberals have given us skyrocketing deficits and debt, factory shutdowns and vanishing jobs. Canadians are working harder but getting poorer. Every dollar this government spends raises taxes, inflation and the cost of living.

Conservatives demand a budget that makes life affordable again, one that eliminates hidden taxes on food, work, homebuilding and investments, and that gets our deficit under control. We have had enough empty words and broken promises. It is time to strengthen Canada. It is time to make life affordable for all.

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[*Translation*]**POPPY CAMPAIGN**

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, every year, on November 11, we have a duty to remember those who served in uniform and those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the armed conflicts Canada has been involved in over the decades.

This year is a very special one for me. I was asked to serve as the poppy campaign's honorary chair for Branch 51 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Drummondville.

I proudly accepted because, as MP for Drummond, I am well aware of how much our veterans need the support of their legion. I accepted the offer because I believe that we collectively owe our veterans recognition and respect for their service.

Poppies are available everywhere until November 11. Look for them in grocery stores, shopping malls and stores of all kinds. They cost very little for the good that they do. A small donation, given at the discretion of each person according to their means, no more, is all that is asked. Most importantly, the poppy is worn over the heart, where we guard the precious memory of the thousands of men and women who stood as a bulwark to defend our values and our democracy.

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● (1410)

[*English*]**ANDREW MOOR**

Leslie Church (Toronto—St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this historic day, I rise to recognize the life and work of the late Andrew

Moore, who served 18 years as CEO of EQ Bank and who was a long-time resident of Toronto—St. Paul's. We lost him suddenly this summer. Our thoughts are with his wife, Mags, and his three children, Dan, Cat and Sarah.

Andrew was a true Canadian pioneer driven by an unwavering belief that banks should, above all else, serve their clients and serve Canadians. He was an innovator who advocated for greater competition in the financial industry in order to give Canadians more options and more control over their finances.

At this moment of profound economic disruption and opportunity, let us follow the example Andrew set. Canadian innovation and Canadian ingenuity can help us navigate this moment and create a stronger and more resilient economy for all Canadians.

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AFFORDABILITY

John Williamson (Saint John—St. Croix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberals measure success by how many tax dollars are spent. They say that the number in today's budget is what matters, yet Canadians know why more debt financing is being offered. Liberal policies have failed to build, empower or protect our country.

Conservatives are calling for an affordable budget for affordable lives. We want affordable lives for the one in five Canadian food bank users who work hard but cannot afford to feed themselves. We want affordable lives for seniors who are being crushed by higher prices because of the industrial carbon tax and the food packaging tax. We want affordable lives for parents who are forced to spend \$800 more this year on food, compared to last year.

The Prime Minister said to judge him by the prices at the grocery store. Canadians have judged. They want no more of the same. They want change.

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[*Translation*]**MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS**

Claude Guay (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all municipalities in Quebec have just completed their municipal elections, and although the results are not yet official, I would like to warmly congratulate the new mayor of Montreal, Soraya Martínez Ferrada, the newly elected borough mayors Nancy Blanchet, Véronique Fournier and Céline-Audrey Beauregard, as well as all the newly elected officials in LaSalle, Verdun and Sud-Ouest.

[English]

I am excited to work with everyone for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun's benefit.

[Translation]

I also want to thank all the candidates who ran.

Our democracy is based on the diversity of choices and ideas that guide our various levels of government. Our constituents are lucky to be able to count on such dedicated and courageous people to represent them.

[English]

Finally, I thank all the voters who participated. Our democracy triumphs when we all engage. Know that I am looking forward to working with our newly elected municipal representative.

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MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our justice system hit absolute rock bottom this past Friday when the Supreme Court ruled that there would be no mandatory minimums for monsters who access and possess child sexual abuse content. This comes after 10 years of soft-on-crime Liberal policies. Let me be clear. We are talking about two monsters who were in possession of hundreds of images and videos that were made by torturing innocent children.

Conservatives immediately announced that we would use the notwithstanding clause to overturn this very dangerous ruling. Monsters who possess child sexual abuse content are not victims. They are criminals. We should lock them up and throw away the key. As a father and a parent, I find this disgusting. The innocence of our children should be protected at all costs. If we cannot protect our children, who are we?

The Prime Minister has remained silent on this issue. Canadians want to know why.

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[Translation]

NATIONAL SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM

Tatiana Auguste (Terrebonne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a life-changing program for our children: the national school food program.

Every day, this program provides healthy, free, nutritious meals to more than 711,000 children in 2,232 schools across the country. This is not just a social program. It is a real investment in academic success, health and equal opportunities. It is an investment in the future of our young people, because when young people eat well, they do better. I am proud of this program, which reflects our values of justice, dignity and inclusion. It helps build a society where every child can learn on a full stomach.

I would like to commend the exceptional work of the schools, community organizations and volunteers who make this program possible, such as the Breakfast Club and La Table des chefs,

Statements by Members

which operate in Quebec. Through their commitment, we can collectively say that eating well at school is a right, not a privilege.

* * *

● (1415)

[English]

PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians want an affordable budget and an affordable life, not a prime minister who profits in secret while people line up at food banks in record numbers, since \$6.5 billion is how much experts say the Prime Minister's former company, Brookfield, sheltered in offshore tax havens over the last five years. The Prime Minister helped set up three multi-billion dollar investment funds in Bermuda and the Cayman Islands, funds he stands to benefit directly from through bonus pay.

Canadians deserve to know that the Prime Minister is making decisions in the public interest, not his own financial interest. Liberals can keep protecting their boss. Conservatives will stand with taxpayers. We will expose the abuse. We will defend hard-working Canadians. We will hold the Prime Minister accountable for putting his profit ahead of their lives.

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BURNABY FIREFIGHTERS

Wade Chang (Burnaby Central, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week, we are honoured to welcome members of Burnaby Firefighters IAFF Local 323 to Ottawa, these brave women and men on the front lines of public safety.

[Translation]

I welcome them to Ottawa.

[English]

I remember visiting Fire Station 8 in Burnaby, a modern, purpose-built facility where our firefighters have the best tools to return home safely after every call. Day after day, they face danger with courage and compassion, often at great personal risk. Beyond facing emergencies, they are pillars of our community, supporting families in need and volunteering for local charities. I want to recognize president Doug Petti for his years of service and for leading by example through every challenge.

On behalf of the people of Burnaby Central, I honour these women and men, whose courage turns fear into hope and duty into commitment. Let us stand together and applaud our true heroes, and let us make sure they are well protected by the law of our country.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***FINANCE**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberal government spends comes out of the pockets of hard-working Canadians in either inflation or tax hikes.

Today, we will find out just how many dollars the government is going to take out of the pockets of Canadians. There will be one difference. After today, every tax rate, every piece of red tape, every rule, every regulation and every bit of wasteful spending will be exactly how the Prime Minister wants it. Conservatives have been clear: We will not support a costly budget that makes life more expensive for Canadians.

Instead of asking Canadians to pay more for big, bloated bureaucracy, why not bring in an affordable budget that lowers prices for everyone?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a great day for the official opposition because we are going to have an affordable budget. We are going to have a historic budget that creates opportunity for young people and Canadians from coast to coast to coast, so we can build this country and make sure that government works for people and invests in their communities.

We look forward to having the Conservatives support this great budget.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that would be an eleventh-hour change because the government has been telling young Canadians they are going to have to sacrifice more so that the government can get bigger and bigger. The government even tried to deny that its hidden taxes on food make life more expensive. It called those hidden taxes “imaginary”.

Let me tell everyone that the farmer who has to pay the industrial carbon tax on his new equipment or on the fertilizer he buys has to pass those costs on to Canadians, and food prices go up as a result. He does not have the option to not pay the industrial carbon tax on farm equipment and fertilizer. A concrete measure to help bring prices down would be to scrap the industrial carbon tax.

Will the Liberals do that today?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Here we go again, Mr. Speaker, with these imaginary taxes. There is no tax on food. There will never be a tax on groceries.

I have great news for the opposition. Today's budget will not have any of these imaginary taxes in it either. The budget will have historic investments in young people, in building this country, in building communities and in making this country stronger.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, maybe farmers can call up CRA and say the carbon tax on

farm equipment and fertilizer is imaginary, or maybe they can write imaginary cheques to pay for them.

It is not just the industrial carbon tax that is driving up food prices; it is also the Liberal fuel standard. When truckers take the food from farms to factories to grocery stores, they cannot tell the Canada Revenue Agency that those taxes are imaginary. They have to pay that extra 17¢ a litre.

To help bring prices down for working Canadians, why not scrap the fuel standards that are driving up food costs?

● (1420)

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is more about the talk of imaginary taxes coming from the other side. If members want to talk about clean fuel regulations, they do not even have to take my word for the fact that they are not taxed. They can check the Canola Digest, because it points out that this provides opportunities for farmers. When we are talking about biofuels, this is important. It is an opportunity for canola farmers.

I hope the Conservatives support it, and I hope they support our budget.

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*[Translation]***THE ECONOMY**

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in less than two hours, the Liberals will table their 10th budget with their 10th colossal deficit. I would remind the House that those folks got elected in 2015 on a promise to run three small deficits and then balance the budget in 2019.

The reality is that the debt has doubled under the Liberals. Housing costs have doubled under the Liberals. What did the Prime Minister say to young people? He told them they would have to make more sacrifices.

Instead of asking young people to make sacrifices, instead of triggering a costly election on a costly budget, why do the Liberals not present an affordable budget for an affordable life for all Canadians?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is a great day for the member opposite because we will have an affordable budget that protects the most vulnerable, invests in our young people, invests in all Canadians, invests in communities and regions across the country, builds the country and creates employment and investment opportunities in Canada, all to build the strongest economy in the G7.

I invite the member to support us today.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every Canadian wants a budget that will curb the cost of living, which is very high for everyone. The grocery store is where it hurts the most. Food inflation is twice as high as other areas, and there are now 2,200,000 Canadians who use food banks. Do not forget what the Prime Minister said in order to get elected. He got elected by saying that he would be judged by the price of food.

What is the result of 10 years of Liberal governance? Professor Sylvain Charlebois explained that we are currently the only country in the G7 to have had four consecutive months of rising food inflation. That is the Liberal record.

Will Canadians get an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the affordable budget includes historic investments to strengthen Canada, strengthen families and help Canadians across the country. These investments will create quality jobs and careers for young people, build more affordable housing for young Canadians and protect the supports that help families get ahead.

Our government will present a budget that aims to build, protect and strengthen Canada. I expect the members opposite to support this budget.

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CARBON PRICING

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for months now, we have been suggesting something that will help bring down food prices: Axe the industrial carbon tax. Yes, it directly affects food. Food does not fall from the sky. It has to be produced, processed, transported and packaged. That is the reality. The Liberal industrial carbon tax applies to all that.

In fact, Professor Charlebois told a parliamentary committee yesterday that “the gap between food wholesale prices in Canada versus the U.S. have actually increased. We believe that one factor driving this is the carbon tax”.

The Liberals should give Canadians a gift and axe the industrial carbon tax—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I would like to say is that there are always those who talk about imaginary taxes, and that is exactly what they are—imaginary. Let us talk about reality. Our government will present a responsible budget that will focus on affordability to help Canadians.

We support Canadians. We are ready to work hard for Canadians and to build our country. I hope that the Conservatives will support us.

Oral Questions

CLIMATE CHANGE

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have announced that they are scrapping their plan to plant two billion trees. This proves once again that they have completely missed the point. Everyone laughed at them over this program, not because it was a bad program that needed to be scrapped, but because the Liberals were simply incapable of planting the trees. Everyone laughed at them because, year after year, they missed their target.

Today, we learned that they are scrapping the program. Instead of changing tack when they mess up, they prefer to give up. Is that really the Liberal approach?

• (1425)

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our budget today will seize a generational opportunity to transform our economy through ambitious investments and rigorous discipline, ensuring every dollar goes to help build the strongest economy in the G7. We look forward to sharing that with the member opposite.

[Translation]

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister is looking at the wrong paper. The Liberals are cutting their program to plant two billion trees. That is what I asked about. They also reduced carbon pricing, and they are also using Bill C-5 to bypass their own environmental assessments.

All the environmental measures introduced under Justin Trudeau, as feeble and inadequate as they were, are being abandoned one by one. The government is taking no steps forward and two steps back. They could actually pass for Conservatives.

Therefore, the question is: Do the Liberals believe in climate change?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my esteemed colleague will have to wait for the budget, but I can confirm that we will maintain Canada's climate change leadership on the world stage. I can confirm that Canada will not go backward, but will march relentlessly forward.

I am sure the member would not want us to avoid undertaking major projects in Quebec and the rest of Canada. I can assure the member that we will invest. We will invest in our young people and our communities. We will invest to move the country forward.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals announced today that they are scrapping their program to plant two billion trees. This decision to abandon this strategy is a big deal. It was one of the only green measures left over from the Trudeau era, and this is happening on the same day as a budget full of bad news for the environment. The budget will provide details about the new federal strategy, known as climate competitiveness.

If climate competitiveness means abolishing carbon pricing, EV quotas and tree planting and instead encouraging the expansion of oil and gas, should we not call it climate capitulation?

Oral Questions

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite is well aware considering how often we have discussed it, our government will keep fighting climate change. Our government is also going to keep building this country because that is what Canadians want to see. They want to see that we have major projects on the go that will create good jobs for young people and make our country strong.

We will continue to do just that. I hope they will support our budget.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberal government spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians through higher taxes and higher inflation.

Today, at four o'clock, we are going to find out just how much more the Liberals are going to take out of the pockets of Canadians. Canadians could be paying \$300 to \$400 more in grocery costs because of the food packaging tax.

Canadians are looking for an affordable budget for an affordable life, so will the Prime Minister scrap his food packaging tax instead of trying to engineer a costly election with his costly budget?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a historic day for our country. Today, our government will table a generational, disciplined budget. We will transform our economy from reliance to resilience to build our economy into the strongest in the G7. We will spend less on government operation, invest more in capital projects and build our economy into the strongest economy in the G7.

I hope the party opposite cuts the rhetoric and will support us and vote for our budget.

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have heard this same tune from the Liberals before, and the result is that 2.2 million Canadians are visiting food banks. Their industrial carbon tax is another example of driving up costs for everyday Canadians. They are paying more, and they are getting less.

We want to know why the Liberals continue with these taxes, like their food packaging tax. We know they love consultants. DeLoitte is saying it is raising the price of produce by 30%.

Will the Prime Minister, while he still has a chance, commit to having an affordable budget for the affordable lives of Canadians instead of having a costly election?

• (1430)

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no food packaging tax. The party opposite is obsessed with imaginary taxes.

Let us talk affordability. Let us talk about cutting taxes for 22 million Canadians. There are no comments on that. Let us talk

about cutting taxes for first-time homebuyers. There are no comments on that. Let us talk about cutting the consumer carbon tax. There are no comments on that.

On this side of the House, we are focused on affordability for Canadians. Canadians made a choice in the last election. They chose our side. They chose our Prime Minister. They rejected that leader.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberals spend, as we know, comes from the pockets of Canadians, which drives up taxes and inflation. Now they are making it worse with their hidden food taxes. For example, the Liberal plastic packaging ban will add \$5.6 billion to food prices, because, of course, it forces producers to use more costly packaging that does not preserve food as well. This means a shorter shelf life, more waste and higher food prices.

Will the Prime Minister stop trying to engineer a costly election with his costly budget, and instead scrap this \$5.6-billion hidden food tax?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues have said, there is no tax. It is an imaginary tax. There is no tax on food packaging in Canada.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the experts are telling us that the food packaging tax will add \$5.6 billion, and that is just one of them. The Liberals are also forcing the food industry to redesign food labels, of all things, which will add an additional \$8 billion to the cost of food.

Canadians are not asking the Liberals to redesign food labels; they are asking for more affordable food, so will they scrap this hidden food tax and save Canadians some money?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no food packaging tax. There is no food labelling tax. There is no tax on groceries. These are imaginary taxes, and repeating these same lines is not going to make them real.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberals spend comes straight out of the pockets of Canadians through higher taxes and the skyrocketing cost of living. The Liberals can gaslight and call the fuel regulations tax imaginary all they want, but my neighbours in Oshawa will feel the hit of up to 17¢ per litre more for gas.

Will the Prime Minister stop trying to engineer a costly election with a costly budget and finally scrap the fuel regulations tax?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is what we are going to do. We are going to stand up for Canadians every single day. We are going to invest in their futures. We are going to invest in the jobs that Canadians are talking about that they want to take up.

This is a time when Canadians have pulled together to build Canada strong, and that is exactly what our budget is going to do. We are going to make sure the tools are there for every Canadian who is protecting this country.

I hope these guys get on board.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every time the Liberal government spends \$1, \$1 comes out of a Canadian's pocket because of higher taxes and Liberal inflation. Piling hidden taxes on families who are struggling to put food on the table is the height of Liberal hypocrisy. Yes, it is a hidden tax. Canadians are forking over \$5.6 billion because of a change to food packaging rules.

Instead of tabling a costly budget this afternoon, will the Prime Minister abolish the packaging tax and give \$5 billion back to families in an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that there is no tax on packaging, that the taxes described by the member do not exist. There are no taxes on food at the grocery store. There are no taxes. The Conservatives are talking about imaginary taxes. They do not exist, and Canadians know it. It is time for the Conservatives to realize that as well.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing imaginary about mothers not having enough money to buy the milk, cheese and meat they need to feed their children. For example, the industrial carbon tax costs them up to \$1,000 a year of very real money. While they wonder how they are going to pay for their groceries, the Prime Minister is trying to engineer a costly election with a costly budget.

Why does he not think of the families and simply cancel this industrial carbon tax, which is going to make life even more unaffordable?

• (1435)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just because my colleague keeps asking the same question does not mean that he expects to keep getting the same answer.

Our point is that he is not only talking about imaginary taxes, but he is also failing to mention that we have lowered taxes. We have lowered taxes for the middle class. What is more, the budget being

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tabled later today in the House will help protect our jobs, our economy and our communities. It will help build our country and our economy with major projects and major investments in defence. Also, our budget will be there to strengthen—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister returns from a mission to Asia, let us not forget that China trades heavily in products made using forced labour, including child labour. Canada's economic diversification must never be achieved through modern-day slavery and by violating human rights. The Bloc Québécois introduced Bill C-251 to block imports from regions suspected of using modern slavery, unless the seller can prove that they do not profit from forced labour or child labour.

Will the government support our bill?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

Of course, our government does not support forced labour in any way. We will continue to stand up for human rights around the world, especially within multilateral organizations.

We will also continue to invest in our economy and maintain the bilateral relationships that are necessary for our country throughout the world.

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Chinese regime is guilty of genocide against the Uyghurs and Turkic peoples in Xinjiang. This genocide includes forced labour and child labour to make products such as cotton. Their blood is on our hands. This House has formally recognized the genocide, but that has not stopped the Prime Minister from courting China. The Bloc Québécois bill is simple: It follows in the footsteps of the United States, which is banning the import of products made with forced labour.

My question is simple: Will you support the Bloc's bill, yes or no?

The Speaker: Unfortunately, I do not have the right to vote on this matter.

The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is extremely concerned about the treatment of Uyghurs in China. The report was an essential step and revealed an alarming pattern.

China has yet to take meaningful action in response. Canada will continue to work with its international partners to address this situation.

Oral Questions

Canada remains committed to defending human rights in international organizations. This is a priority for us.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, young Canadians are asking a simple question: What is left for them to sacrifice after a decade of failed Liberal policies? They are saying they cannot find a job, they are delaying starting a family, they cannot buy a home and they are living in their parents' basement. What is left to sacrifice? What is the Liberal government's response? It is going to mortgage their future with more generational debt.

Will the Prime Minister stop breaking his promises, rein in his reckless spending and finally deliver an affordable budget that gives young Canadians a fighting chance at an affordable life?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today's budget will deliver historic investments to build Canada strong. This means strong families and strong communities from coast to coast to coast, and investments that will create good-quality jobs and careers for young Canadians, that will build infrastructure, that will put more affordable homes within reach for young Canadians and that will protect the supports that help families get ahead.

Our new government is putting forward a budget to build, protect and empower Canadians and Canada. I hope the members opposite will join us and support the budget.

● (1440)

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have been saying those same words for over a decade, but life has only gotten harder. They call it an investment, but it is not. It is a mortgage on our youth's future.

A 19-year-old girl from Halifax was on national news saying she cannot afford groceries and she cannot find work. That is the reality behind their so-called investments. Youth unemployment is at 15%, not because young people have given up but because the Liberal government has given up on them.

Will the Prime Minister stop asking young Canadians to sacrifice even more and deliver an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is taking action to make life more affordable for young Canadians. We are delivering on housing. If we look across the country right now, average rents are down, mortgage rates are down and home prices are going down. That is benefiting young Canadians, and we are not stopping there. We are doubling up on housing for young Canadians, making sure the first-time homebuyer tax benefits go up to \$50,000, and we are going to deliver with Build Canada Homes.

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Prime Minister told young Canadians that they must make some sacrifices. They have already had to sacrifice good-paying jobs and the dream of home ownership, and they have already paid

the price as food costs keep going up. Liberal inflationary deficits throw fuel on the fire.

A 19-year-old girl from Halifax said it best on the national news: Food insecurity is not good; finding a job is even harder. Youth unemployment is now approaching 15%, the highest rate since 2010 coming out of the great recession.

Will the Liberals stop asking young Canadians to make more sacrifices and finally keep their promises so young Canadians can have an affordable budget for an affordable home?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have travelled across this country and met with union leaders and workers, and they are excited about our plan to build big, build bold, build infrastructure projects and build Canada homes because of the opportunities it creates, opportunities to bring in high school students, opportunities to bring in apprentices and opportunities to invest in the next generation of skilled workers.

If the Conservatives want an affordable budget for an affordable life, they have the opportunity to vote for one today. Will they join us?

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only thing generational with Liberal deficits is the debt the next generation must pay.

Liberal inflationary deficits are driving up the cost of everything. Young Canadians cannot find jobs, they cannot afford homes and they cannot even afford food. Twenty-five per cent of Canadians face food insecurity. They are sacrificing by cutting back on nutritious food. It has gotten so bad that recipes for "poverty potlucks" and "struggle meals", like those using Hamburger Helper and instant ramen, are now trending on social media.

When will the Liberals finally stop breaking their promises, get spending under control and deliver what young Canadians actually need: an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing those words from the Conservatives, but the reality of the situation is that every time there is an opportunity to vote for measures that help Canadians, they vote against them. They voted against dental care. They voted against the national school food program, which they called "garbage". They said no to the increase to the Canada child benefit and no to a tax cut that helps 22 million Canadians.

While they keep saying no, our government is investing to help families. It is yes to lowering costs for Canadians and yes to building a stronger future for Canadians.

Today, the Conservatives will get another chance to vote for a budget that is affordable for Canadians. Will they join us?

Jonathan Rowe (Terra Nova—The Peninsulas, CPC): Mr. Speaker, A 19-year-old from Atlantic Canada has said that food insecurity is not good and that finding a job is even harder.

Youth unemployment is skyrocketing, at nearly 15%, and the Prime Minister told Canadians that they needed to make more sacrifices; however, they have already sacrificed enough. Young people are having to sacrifice working in their hometown; they have to go away for work. This means that our kids will be sacrificing dinners with grandma.

When will the Liberals get over their overspending and get spending under control so Canadians can have an affordable life and not get stuck with the bill?

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to stand today, in reference to the question from the opposition member from Newfoundland and Labrador, and talk about the measures we are putting in place for young workers to train in construction, welding and the other work we need in order to build Canada strong. This is happening in my province, and I was so proud to make that announcement last week. That is just one of the many measures, not to mention the programs for children and families.

I really hope the member votes for the budget.

* * *

• (1445)

FINANCE

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the world economy is shifting, and Canada must rise to meet this unprecedented moment. Global trade is in disarray, tariffs are reshaping markets and our largest trading partner is increasingly unreliable. Budget 2025 is our chance to act.

Can the Secretary of State for the Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions explain how Canada will meet this moment with a historic investment budget?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member's question is a great one.

This is a transformational moment. We will pivot from an era of reliance to resilience. With budget 2025, we are laying the groundwork for some of the biggest investments this country has seen since the Second World War. We will spend less on government operations. We will invest more in Canadians and invest more in Canada.

This is our moment: our time to build big, build bold and build now. It is time to build Canada strong.

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THE ECONOMY

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, food inflation is up another 4% because of the Liberals' hidden industrial carbon tax and tax on food packaging. The Liberals would like to say that

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these are just imaginary taxes, but experts at the agriculture committee yesterday confirmed that not only are these taxes not imaginary but that they are also in fact driving up the price of groceries. Dr. Sylvain Charlebois said that wholesale food prices have increased, and that one of the factors driving this is the carbon tax. He said that he is very concerned and that he expects food inflation to be a problem moving forward.

Will the Prime Minister stop his inflationary budget and scrap his taxes on food so Canadians can afford to feed their families?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I will say that there is no tax on plastic food packaging. The Conservatives can keep saying it if they want, but it does not make it true.

Do members know what is true? We are going to be tabling a budget today. It is going to support Canadians. It is an important and big moment for our country; as we build our country and build it well, I hope the Conservatives will support us.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, well, Deloitte and Dr. Sylvain Charlebois have already confirmed what Canadians know: The taxes are not imaginary. Canadians are struggling to pay these taxes every single day at the grocery store. The food professor said that as a result of the industrial carbon tax and taxes on food packaging, Canada is the only G7 country where food inflation has increased for four straight months and that it is only going to get worse, which is scary, when 2.2 million Canadians are being forced to use a food bank.

Will the Prime Minister scrap his taxes on food so Canadians can afford to feed themselves?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, these are imaginary taxes; they do not exist. There is no tax on food packaging. The member can cite all the imaginary people he wants to, but there are no taxes on food packaging. Good news is that the budget will not include any either.

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberal government spends comes straight from the pockets of hard-working Canadians. More government deficits means higher taxes and more inflation, jacking up the cost of living already.

Canadians are struggling. Nicole, a single mom from Oxford, works two jobs, 70 hours a week, barely sees her kids and still cannot make ends meet. Stories like this from Nicole and others are now becoming the norm thanks to Liberal deficits.

Oral Questions

Instead of trying to cause a costly election on their costly budget, why will the Liberals not table an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Mandy Gull-Masty (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight today that the opposition can offer Nicole and single-parent households the support of a future that is based on today's budget that will be presented. My colleagues today have the chance to protect the very futures they speak about, including those of the young indigenous children, the fastest-growing population, who need us and depend on the programs we have put in place.

Canadians chose a Prime Minister with a vision they trust. We hope the opposition will prioritize protecting the Canadians' budget, which they need at this critical time. We know that we all—

• (1450)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Oxford has the floor.

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have seen this nightmare before. Empty Liberal promises cannot feed empty stomachs. When Liberals recklessly spend, it is Canadians who pay the price with higher grocery prices, higher rents and more money on gas. The only thing that is growing in the Liberal economy are the lines at food banks, with over two million folks now visiting food banks in a single month.

Liberal deficits mean higher taxes and higher inflation, meaning that life is more expensive for Canadians.

I will ask again, instead of trying to cause a costly election on their costly budget, why will the Liberals not table an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again the opposition is talking about imaginary taxes.

I will tell members something that is not imaginary, because I get to be the House leader and actually see things that are not imaginary. We are debating Bill C-4, which would do three things: cut income taxes for every single person who pays income tax, cut the GST for first-time homebuyers, and, guess what, get rid of the carbon tax.

The Conservatives play games, use procedures and talk around things to delay and delay affordability measures that are quite real, not imaginary, for Canadians. They should—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauce has the floor.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FINANCE

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberals spend comes directly out of the pockets of Canadians in the form of higher taxes and inflation. With the record-setting deficit in this budget, the Liberal government is mortgaging our children's future. That is unacceptable. With the record-setting deficit in this budget, the government is shattering our children's dreams. That is unacceptable.

The Liberals are engineering a costly election with a costly budget.

Why not put forward an affordable budget so Canadians can have an affordable life?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to use one of the Conservatives' lines, every word a Conservative member recites obviously comes straight from the office of the Leader of the Opposition. My colleague recites them very well.

He wants to talk about the future. They do not take question period very seriously, so it is no wonder that Canadians chose a serious and ambitious government that gives the middle class more buying power, gives young people more opportunities, and gives us all more major projects so that we can build our country from coast to coast to coast.

I encourage them to be ever so slightly ambitious for Canada for once and to support our 2025 budget.

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think we are entitled to be a little nervous. For the Liberals, one plus one equals 10. That leaves us feeling a little on edge.

The Liberals are presenting us with a record deficit. We were expecting \$42 billion, and it is going to be a lot worse. This government is spending recklessly and has lost all touch with reality. It is completely disconnected. Every dollar that the Liberals spend comes directly out of the pockets of the people of Beauce.

Why not introduce an affordable budget so that the people of Beauce can have an affordable life?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it may not be written in the notes that the Leader of the Opposition just passed him, but the member should talk to his colleagues, the ones who are delaying the passage of Bill C-4, since it reduces taxes for everyone who pays income tax in Canada, lowers the GST on homes for first-time buyers and eliminates the carbon tax.

The member opposite should rise and stop delaying a bill that offers affordability to all of Canada.

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[*English*]

JUSTICE

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I spent much of my legal career prosecuting Internet offences against children. This included possession of child sexual abuse material. Let us be clear: Victims often serve a psychological life sentence.

Last week the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the mandatory one year in jail for possession of child sexual abuse and exploitation material. The minister said today that he will not use the notwithstanding clause on this ruling.

The question is this: Why are the rights of victims second and the rights of sex offenders first?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through actions, we are standing up for victims of crime. It is plain and simple: Child abusers should face the toughest penalties under Canadian law. That is why we introduced the—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: These are obviously important issues, and therefore we deserve important debate.

The secretary of state may start from the top.

• (1455)

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Mr. Speaker, the rights of victims are very important to the government. That is why we have been taking action. Let me make it very plain and simple for the Conservatives: Child abusers should face the toughest penalties under Canadian law. That is why we introduced Bill C-14. We are making sweeping reforms that would make bail stricter, that would make sentences tougher and that would make sure child abusers stay behind bars.

We also introduced the lawful access provision so we can catch child predators and give law enforcement agencies the tools that are needed, but the Conservatives are against it.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-14 has nothing to do with mandatory minimum sentences for people who possess and produce child sexual abuse and exploitation material.

I have looked far too many victims in the eye to feel comfortable giving the answer that the secretary of state just gave. Victims do not want excuses; they want action. We often hear about charter rights for accused individuals, including pedophiles, but we do not hear about rights for the victims.

If the minister has ruled out using the notwithstanding clause, what is his plan to take sex offenders off our streets?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been taking action on the issue since day one. We introduced legislation, Bill C-63, with respect to sexual offences online, but the Conservatives did not support it. We brought the lawful access provision so that pedophiles could be caught, but the Conservatives did not support it.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am interested in hearing the answer.

The secretary of state may continue.

Hon. Ruby Sahota: Mr. Speaker, child abusers are among the most reprehensible people in our society. That is why we have taken many measures like Bill C-63, Bill C-14 and the lawful access provision so they can be caught in the first place. We are also going to be bringing forward new—

Oral Questions

The Speaker: The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles has the floor.

[*Translation*]

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the recent Supreme Court ruling, which determined that a one-year prison sentence for accessing and possessing child pornography constitutes cruel and unusual punishment, is a devastating insult to the victims of crimes like this.

It was a Conservative government that established tougher mandatory minimum sentences for child pornography back in the day. Today, however, the Liberals have confirmed that they were unwilling to use the notwithstanding clause.

Why is this government more inclined to protect the charter rights of pedophiles than the charter rights of children?

[*English*]

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are all about protecting the rights of children. That is why we want to give law enforcement the tools that are needed to catch predators online. We brought forward tougher sentences for child offenders. Child abusers should be put behind bars, and that is exactly where we intend to keep them, through Bill C-14 and the new legislation that we are going to be tabling in the House this fall.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the global economy is at a historic turning point. The international trading system is in turmoil, and new tariffs now seem to be the norm. Our country is suffering the consequences: a trade slowdown, job losses and growing uncertainty. Our main trading partner is not as reliable as it once was, which is weakening our economy.

As we look forward to budget 2025, can the Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. trade explain to the House how this investment budget measures up to this historic challenge?

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 thank our colleague from Bourassa for his question. We are living in a time of transformation. We are laying the groundwork for some of the most significant investments made in Canada since the Second World War.

Oral Questions

Canadians elected an ambitious government, a government that would take action to build a strong and resilient economy. In just a few moments, the House of Commons will be hearing all of the good news. I know all parliamentarians are looking forward to it.

• (1500)

[English]

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberal government spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians in the form of higher taxes and inflation. The Prime Minister tells young Canadians to sacrifice, yet Liberal insiders are thriving. Case in point: as Canadians give up on home ownership, the government handed out over \$30 million in bonuses to 99% of housing agency executives, averaging \$43,000 per bonus.

Instead of trying to cause a costly election on a costly budget, why not an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the new government has a very credible plan for building affordable housing. We are focused on delivering that affordable housing, with \$13 billion being committed to it in the new budget.

We hope the Conservatives will support this, if they care about affordable housing. However, they have voted against every affordable housing measure for 10 years now. I do not expect a lot from them, but they are raising it in the House here. Young Canadians need affordable housing. We expect their support on this budget.

Amanpreet Gill (Calgary Skyview, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years, Liberal insiders have never had it so good. Canadians line up at food banks while the government let a \$50-million IBM contract at the CRA blow past \$190 million, and it is on track for \$214 million. Young Canadians are told to sacrifice so that Liberal-linked consultants can get rich. Canadians are stuck paying the bill.

Instead of a costly election on a costly budget, why not an affordable budget for an affordable life by cancelling those consultants?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have great news for the party opposite. We have an affordability measure that its members may be interested in. It is automatic federal benefits, giving benefits to 5.5 million Canadians who need them the most: the Canada child benefit, the disability tax credit and the GST credit.

On this side of the House, we are laser focused on affordability for Canadians. The other side continues with the rhetoric and same old slogans.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberal government spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians in the form of higher taxes and inflation. The Prime Minister told young Canadians they need to sacrifice. While more families than ever are lining up at food banks, the Liberal government is using Canadian tax dollars to fund a whopping \$25 billion a year on outside consultants.

Instead of trying to cause a costly election on a costly budget, why not an affordable budget for an affordable life?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a historic day for our House. I thought we would all be together. This is a historic day for our country.

On this side of the House, we are delivering affordability for Canadians, cutting taxes for 22 million Canadians. We cut the tax, the GST, for first-time homebuyers. We are focused on affordability. We will deliver for Canadians. We got a mandate on April 28 to deliver affordability. The other side has handed one sheet of paper around all question period using the same old rhetoric.

Giovanna Mingarelli (Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the world faces unprecedented uncertainty as the norms and institutions that underpinned global security and prosperity over the last half-century have been tossed aside as a new era of protectionism has begun. I will be blunt: voters in my riding of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland are anxious about what this new world order means for Canada.

Can the secretary of state for financial institutions and the CRA let those people know how budget 2025 will meet this unique and historical moment?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for giving me the opportunity to inform the House that today we will table a historic budget that will spend less on operations and invest more in Canada.

The member opposite may not believe it, but we will build the strongest economy in the G7. This is the largest investment in our country since the Second World War. We will build big, we will build bold, and we will build Canada strong.

Routine Proceedings

• (1505)

JUSTICE

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first responders, nurses and health care workers serve and protect our communities every day. They put their uniforms on every day knowing that their lives will be on the line. They run toward danger. They mend our broken bones. They hold our hands as we take our last breaths.

What we have just seen from this Liberal government is shameful. Just before QP, I rose and asked for unanimous consent to pass a law that would protect firefighters, nurses and paramedics today, immediately, right now. The Liberals are using our frontline heroes as pawns in their political games.

The minister has the power. Will he give unanimous consent to pass Bill S-233 today?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I see I have been missed by my friends opposite.

I have good news on the subject that grounds the member's question. This is one where I think we can collaborate in a non-partisan way. The government has just tabled legislation, Bill C-14, that includes protections for first responders by adding aggravating factors to the sentences, which would result in harder penalties for those who commit assaults against our first responders.

If we are going to count on first responders to keep our communities safe, the least we can do is offer the protection of Canada's criminal law. I will work across party lines with that member and with Conservatives in the Senate to adopt measures that would protect first responders as soon as possible.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians do not want coal mines destroying our cherished Rocky Mountains. Four years ago, the minister promised new coal mine selenium regulations that would protect our rivers and lakes from toxic pollution. Now we discover that instead of providing protection, the Liberals are allowing a dramatic increase in the pollutants going into rivers and lakes.

The government is betraying its promise to Canadians. When will the government finally put the health of Canadians and the environment ahead of foreign interests?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear that we are going to continue to fight for clean air and clean waters for our next generations to come. As we continue to build Canada, we are going to build it well, and we will continue to make sure that we are protecting the environment at the same moment that we are building an economy with good jobs for the future. My job as Minister of Environment is to make sure we continue to fight for the environment, and I will do it.

TAXATION

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are being bled dry at the pump, at the grocery till, on their credit cards and mortgages, and by cellphone bills that just keep climbing while corporate giants post record profits. Last year, RBC made \$16 billion; Rogers, \$1.7 billion; Loblaws, over \$2 billion; and Imperial Oil, almost \$1 billion in the last quarter alone.

How much profit is enough, and will this Liberal government include a corporate excess profit tax in this budget to finally protect Canadians from runaway corporate greed?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague. We need to make sure that we work together on making the lives of Canadians more affordable, and that is why we believe in competition. That is why we also took a bold decision when it comes to telecommunications fees and upheld the CRTC's decision to make sure there is more competition and therefore lower fees for Canadians, but we will do more. The member just needs to read the budget regarding what is going to happen when it comes to our competition across the country.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:09 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the first report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Call in the members.

• (1520)

[Translation]

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

*(Division No. 46)***YEAS**

Members

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Aboultaif | Acan |
| Aitchison | Al Soud |
| Albas | Ali |
| Allison | Alty |
| Anand | Anandasangaree |
| Anderson | Anstey |

Routine Proceedings

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|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Arnold | Au | Hodgson | Hogan |
| Auguste | Baber | Holman | Housefather |
| Bailey | Bains | Hussen | Iacono |
| Baker | Baldinelli | Idlout | Jackson |
| Bardeesy | Barlow | Jaczek | Jansen |
| Barrett | Barsalou-Duval | Jeneroux | Jivani |
| Battiste | Beaulieu | Johns | Joly |
| Beech | Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River) | Joseph | Kayabaga |
| Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt) | Bendayan | Kelloway | Kelly |
| Berthold | Bexte | Khalid | Khanna |
| Bezan | Bittle | Kibble | Kirkland |
| Blair | Blanchet | Klassen | Kmiec |
| Blanchette-Joncas | Block | Konanz | Koutrakis |
| Blois | Bonin | Kram | Kramp-Neuman |
| Bonk | Borrelli | Kronis | Kuruc |
| Boulerice | Bragdon | Kusie | Kwan |
| Brassard | Brière | Lake | Lalonde |
| Brock | Brunelle-Duceppe | Lambropoulos | Lamoureux |
| Calkins | Caputo | Lantsman | Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles) |
| Carney | Carr | Lapointe (Sudbury) | Larouche |
| Casey | Chagger | Lattanzio | Lauzon |
| Chambers | Champagne | Lavack | Lavoie |
| Champoux | Chang | Lawrence | Lawton |
| Chartrand | Chatel | LeBlanc | Lefebvre |
| Chen | Chenette | Leitão | Lemire |
| Chi | Chong | Leslie | Lewis (Essex) |
| Church | Clark | Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Lightbound |
| Cobena | Cody | Lloyd | Lobb |
| Connors | Cooper | Long | Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga) |
| Cormier | Coteau | Ma | MacDonald (Malpeque) |
| Dabrusin | Dalton | MacDonald (Cardigan) | MacKinnon (Gatineau) |
| Dancho | Dandurand | Mahal | Majumdar |
| Danko | Davidson | Malette (Bay of Quinte) | Malette (Kapusking—Timmins—Mushkegowuk) |
| Davies (Niagara South) | Dawson | Maloney | Mantle |
| DeBellefeuille | DeTell | Martel | Mazier |
| d'Entremont | DeRidder | McCauley | McGuinty |
| Deschênes | Deschênes-Thériault | McKelvie | McKenzie |
| Desrochers | Dhaliwal | McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam) | McKnight |
| Dhillon | Diab | McLean (Calgary Centre) | McLean (Esquimalt—Saainich—Sooke) |
| Diotte | Doherty | McPherson | Melillo |
| Dowdall | Duclos | Ménard | Mendès |
| Duguid | Duncan | Menegakis | Michel |
| Dzerowicz | Earle | Miedema | Miller |
| Ehsassi | El-Khoury | Mingarelli | Moore |
| Epp | Erskine-Smith | Morin | Morrison |
| Eyolfson | Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake) | Morrissey | Motz |
| Falk (Provencher) | Fancy | Muys | Myles |
| Fanjoy | Fergus | Naqvi | Nater |
| Fisher | Fonseca | Nathan | Nguyen |
| Fortier | Fortin | Noormohamed | Normandin |
| Fragiskatos | Fraser | Ntumba | Oliphant |
| Freeland | Fry | Olszewski | O'Rourke |
| Fuhr | Gaheer | Osborne | Patzer |
| Gainey | Gallant | Paul-Hus | Perron |
| Garon | Gasparro | Petitpas Taylor | Plamondon |
| Gaudreau | Gazan | Poilievre | Powlowski |
| Généreux | Genuis | Provost | Ramsay |
| Gerretsen | Gill (Calgary Skyview) | Rana | Redekopp |
| Gill (Brampton West) | Gill (Calgary McKnight) | Reid | Rempel Garner |
| Gill (Windsor West) | Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan) | Reynolds | Richards |
| Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley) | Gladu | Roberts | Robertson |
| Godin | Gould | Rocheffort | Romanado |
| Gourde | Grant | Rood | Ross |
| Greaves | Groleau | Rowe | Royer |
| Guay | Guglielmin | Ruff | Sahota |
| Guilbeault | Gull-Masty | Saini | Sarai |
| Gunn | Hajdu | Sari | Savard-Tremblay |
| Hallan | Hanley | Sawatzky | Scheer |
| Hardy | Harrison | Schiefke | Schmale |
| Hepfner | Hirtle | Seebach | Sgro |
| Ho | Hoback | Sheehan | Shiple |
| | | Sidhu (Brampton East) | Sidhu (Brampton South) |

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| Simard | Small |
| Sodhi | Solomon |
| Sousa | Steinley |
| Ste-Marie | Stevenson |
| St-Pierre | Strahl |
| Strauss | Sudds |
| Tesser Derksen | Thériault |
| Thomas | Thompson |
| Tochor | Tolmie |
| Turnbull | Uppal |
| Valdez | van Koeverden |
| Van Popta | Vandenbeld |
| Vien | Viersen |
| Villeneuve | Vis |
| Wagantall | Warkentin |
| Watchorn | Waugh |
| Weiler | Wilkinson |
| Williamson | Yip |
| Zahid | Zerucelli |
| Zimmer | Zuberi — 338 |

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025), be read the third time and passed.

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I understand that the speech I am giving today is probably the most anticipated one of the day.

As I was saying, I must have spoken to this bill or another version of it at least 45 times. For that reason, I really have no need of notes. There was Bill S-245 in the previous Parliament and Bill C-71, which was almost identical to Bill C-3.

That said, when we invited experts to appear before the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration when it was studying Bill C-3, the Parliamentary Budget Officer came and set the record straight. Basically, when we were presented with such a bill, we were told that it would affect about 800 to 1,000 people at most. However, the Parliamentary Budget Officer told us that, depending on the algorithms he used, it could affect between 115,000 and 300,000 people. That is a huge difference compared to what we were told before.

We did our job. We brought in experts and tried to understand how this bill should move forward, given the injustices done to the people known as “lost Canadians”. At the same time, we must do our work rigorously. When changes are made to the Citizenship Act like this, we need to be serious, and this is coming from a Quebec separatist. We were serious, we brought in experts and we worked very hard in committee. All members of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration from all parties contributed to that

Government Orders

effort. The Conservatives came up with amendments that were very well drafted. The majority of committee members voted in favour of these amendments.

Today, we find ourselves in a situation where the House has blatantly used a parliamentary tool, one that is not used very often, to undo everything that was done in committee. Every day, I hear the Liberals say that committee work is important, that amendments need to be proposed and that the parties will work together. That is exactly what we did. We worked together and we proposed amendments. We then voted on them, and the majority of committee members voted in favour of these amendments, but the procedure that was used in the House completely wiped out the work done in committee.

I find that hard to accept. Once again, a Bloc Québécois member is standing up to defend Canadian institutions. It is quite remarkable that we have reached this point. Once again, we respect democratic institutions. These democratic institutions exist to serve the people we represent. If, unfortunately, the government is once again undermining the work being done in these important forums, particularly the one I am talking about, the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, what message does that send to the public? How can the public have confidence in democratic institutions if all the work being done is undermined?

By the way, committee work is not free. It costs the public money to run committees. We are talking about astronomical costs to run committee meetings. We did the work, but in the end, we find out that our work will not be respected.

The amendments that were proposed were very interesting. That is why we supported them. Take, for example, the idea of 1,095 days to establish a substantial connection with Canada, which the government decided to include in the bill as a way to demonstrate that a person has strong ties to Canada. The individual must have spent 1,095 days in Canada over an unspecified period of time. Those 1,095 days are not a new concept; they come from the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Under that act, if a permanent resident wants to become a naturalized Canadian citizen, they must have spent 1,095 days in Canada over a five-year period. That is the variable. The government is using the 1,095 days in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act as a reference, but it is removing one of the two variables, namely the five-year period. In Bill C-3, the 1,095 days could occur over an indefinite period. A person could be 65 years old, have spent 1,095 days in the country intermittently, not over a specific period, and still be considered to have a substantial connection to Canada.

We felt that this did not make sense. The Conservatives proposed an amendment to add the five-year period as a variable and we supported it.

Government Orders

● (1525)

The astounding thing is that today, with the help of independent MPs here in the House, the Liberals undid what we accomplished in committee, even though it made a lot of sense. Our work was based on provisions in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

We also thought people should have to be proficient in one of the two official languages in order to obtain Canadian citizenship. I am well aware that there is a former prime minister out there who wanted a postnational state, but the idea that people do not need to speak either English or French fluently to become Canadian citizens is quite bizarre. It is just odd. The Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois worked very hard together to, again, take the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act as a reference and slip this criterion into Bill C-3. These amendments were adopted in committee in a very reasonable and responsible manner. Once again, the government has undone what we accomplished. It is unacceptable to me when the government does not respect an institution such as a parliamentary committee, particularly when it lectures us day after day about the need to work together, to work in committee. It tells us that it will listen to the experts and encourages us to propose amendments.

Bill C-3 was one of the first bills introduced in this Parliament. As a matter of fact, it was the third one, hence the bill number. It is one of the first bills to come up for third reading in the House of Commons. However, everything that was done before has been gutted. There is no respect for the work of the committee. This is unacceptable. It tells us a bit about the Liberals' view of democracy and democratic institutions on Parliament Hill. That is very unfortunate. I believe this could set a dangerous precedent and lead us down a slippery slope. What is the point of committee work if this is the outcome?

We would have voted in favour of this bill if the government and independent members had respected the committee's work, but the outcome shows that nothing happened. We have a bill before us, but it is as if no work was done in the committee. All the work that was done has been thrown out. The Bloc Québécois will not be able to vote in favour of this bill in its present form.

I presume the government has struck a deal with the NDP, but this is an unfortunate situation. I think it is appalling. It shows a lack of respect, not for parliamentarians, and not only for democratic institutions, but for the people we represent, who expect us to work in democratic institutions the right way. Above all, they expect us to do our work the way these institutions were designed to function.

That concludes what is probably my 44th speech on this topic.

● (1530)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to be sensitive to the argument the member put forward. When we think of the standing committee, a total of 169 Liberal MPs and a combined total of 166 Bloc members and Conservatives are represented at the committee. The committee ultimately

made changes, but it did not get support from the New Democrat members. If it had gotten their support, the Liberals would have outnumbered.

It is a good thing to see the work that standing committees do. If members work with the government, they can often get amendments passed. We have seen numerous amendments pass previously.

I am wondering if the member could provide his support for the democratic principle that the largest number of MPs should ultimately prevail, in particular on this legislation.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe my ears. If my grandmother had wheels, she would have been a tractor. "If" can be used to preface any statement. The member opposite has just told me that if there had been New Democratic members on the committee, things might have been different. Yes, but if there had been 78 Bloc Québécois members from Quebec, things might also have been different. If Maxime Bernier had gotten 54 members elected to the House, things might also have been different.

The member is saying that if the NDP were a recognized party, things might have been different. Is that the way we do politics here? He is saying that if there had been more New Democratic members, things would have turned out differently.

[*English*]

Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean would comment on what the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader told us at second reading. He said to bring the legislation to committee and bring forward legislative changes and amendments that will make the bill better.

How many weeks did we spend on it? We spent two months debating the bill, refining it and bringing forward rational, reasonable and acceptable amendments, yet as the parliamentary secretary said, we did not get the NDP onside. The NDP does not sit in committee. It did not make a presentation. We have no idea what its point of view was. We now come back here, and the government has thrown out all that work and is saying we are going back to the beginning.

I wonder how the hon. member feels about that.

● (1535)

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: That is an excellent question, Mr. Speaker

I would remind members that that same colleague just told us that had there been more members, it would have been in the committee. He has a fascinating way of looking at politics. I would also remind members that that same colleague told us to bring amendments at second reading, that the committee would work on the bill, and that we would reach consensus on this piece of legislation.

That same colleague is now telling us to throw out all the work done at committee as well as all the amendments adopted by the majority of committee members because, as he put it, had there been more members from another party, things would not have turned out this way. It is such sheer madness that one can only laugh.

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on an excellent speech and for all the work he has been doing.

My understanding is that the final outcome will be that someone may have been a resident of Canada for five years, but over a very long period spanning many decades, and that their descendants will automatically gain Canadian citizenship without undergoing a security screening or passing a language and citizenship test.

Why does my colleague think the Liberals and New Democrats would want to have such lax requirements when admitting new citizens? Why are they also refusing to tell us the number of new citizens involved?

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question from the member for La Pointe-de-l'Île. First, the bill only calls for three years, not five. It was our idea to put that over a five-year period.

One part of the member's question is very relevant and very important. One of the amendments that was passed in committee was that the government report annually to Parliament on the number of people who become citizens through Bill C-3. Again, we were only asking for accountability. I think this government is rattled because they have to be accountable to Canadians.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion.

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

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 5, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe if you seek it, you will find consent to suspend until 4 p.m., at which time we will hear the much-anticipated budget being presented by the Minister of Finance.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Deputy Speaker: The House is suspended.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 3:39 p.m.)

The Budget

• (1600)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 4 p.m.)

The Speaker: It being 4 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Ways and Means Motion No. 2, concerning the budget presentation.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.) moved:

That this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

[English]

He said: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I would like to table, in both official languages, the budget documents for 2025, including the notices of ways of means motions. The details of the measures are contained in these documents.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I am requesting that an order of the day be designated for consideration of these motions.

[Translation]

The budget I present today comes at a time of profound change, a time to build.

[English]

The world is undergoing a series of fundamental shifts at a speed, scale and scope not seen since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The rules-based international order and the trading system that powered Canada's prosperity for decades are being reshaped, threatening our sovereignty, our prosperity and our values. Long-standing supply chains and trade relationships that once ensured stable growth in this country from coast to coast to coast, good jobs across our nation and affordable products are being disrupted.

[Translation]

The impact is profound—hurting Canadian companies, affecting workers, disrupting supply chains, and causing uncertainty that holds back investment.

The level of uncertainty is higher than what we have seen and felt for generations. In fact, it is not a transition but a true generational shift. The challenges are great, but the opportunities for Canada are even greater.

• (1605)

In this spirit, today I present to you budget 2025. As a former finance minister, also from Shawinigan, so eloquently put it:

[English]

“Let's accept this role with humility, but also, with confidence.” This is Canada.

The Budget

This budget must be generational in its ambition and serve to shape our economy and our nation's future.

[Translation]

There is no place for withdrawal, ambiguity or even standing still, only for bold and swift action.

[English]

Bold and swift action is needed. To weather the storm of uncertainty, we will not lower our sails. Quite the opposite, we will raise them to catch the winds of economic change, because we believe in Canada.

[Translation]

We will explore new markets and sell more of the best of what Canada has to offer.

[English]

We will build here at home, with stronger industries, nation-building infrastructure and millions of more homes for Canadians. We will protect what matters most: our people, our communities and our sovereignty. We will empower Canadians by making life more affordable, creating new career opportunities and ensuring every generation can get ahead.

This is how we win. This is how we keep winning.

[Translation]

When people look back on this budget, they will be able to judge the importance of the choices we have made. Greater autonomy is and continues to be the best approach to achieve real resilience. It is in this spirit that, with budget 2025, we are building Canada strong.

Around the world, tariffs have increased, growth is slowing, and trade relationships are being tested. All of these constraints are being felt across the country by Canadians in their daily lives. Families are seeing it every week when they do their groceries, as well as renters when they pay their rent. Young people are sending out their resumé's, but far too often, they are not receiving any offers as a result of their efforts.

In factories, in the fields, and in communities across the country, people feel the current economic challenges. Workers are facing fewer shifts, shorter hours and unfortunately, in some cases, layoffs.

[English]

Small business owners want to grow, but uncertainty is understandably making them wait. For many, it feels as though opportunity is slipping just a little further out of reach. This is why we need to act. These are the realities Canadian workers and their families are facing. They are doing everything they can to keep moving forward in uncertain times. Through it all, the Canadian economy has held steady. Forecasters now expect modest GDP growth of just above 1% in 2025.

[Translation]

The resilience of our people is earning us the respect of our foreign partners. It is this same resilience that gives me confidence in the future. It is this same resilience that gives Canadians confidence in the future.

• (1610)

[English]

When our largest trading partner fundamentally reshapes all its trading relationships, there are two responses. We can slash the deficit, hope for the best, wait for the uncertainty to unexpectedly disappear and see if the trickle-down ever comes. That approach, to balance the budget this year, would have meant eliminating vital social programs and all the capital investments needed for Canada's future.

We chose a different path, a path that believes in Canada, a path that invests in our country's future, a path that reinforces Canadian values, a path that makes us less reliant on our trading partner, a path that allows us to be masters in our own house. We chose Canada. We chose Canada, and I hope every member of the House will choose Canada as well. I hope they will all choose Canada.

[Translation]

We all want, first and foremost, to be masters in our own house. We all believe in Canada.

[English]

When our steel, aluminum, forestry, auto and agriculture industries were hit by U.S. tariffs and trade disruptions, we did not stand by and wait for the storm to pass; we stepped in with the most comprehensive set of trade resilience measures in Canadian history, because this is who we are as Canadians. This is who we are. When times get tough, we stand together because we are Canadian.

The government launched the strategic response fund my colleagues have been leading, allocating \$5 billion to help sectors impacted by tariffs to adapt, to diversify and to grow. Businesses can use the fund to invest in the design of new products, retool plants to boost productivity or offset the costs of accessing new markets. We want our industries to succeed. We want them to be able to make this pivot, because we believe in our workers. We believe in our industries. We believe in our future. We believe in Canada.

[Translation]

We have also introduced a \$1-billion liquidity relief package to help small and medium-sized businesses adapt. They drive growth in this great country and employ millions of Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

The Budget

We are also implementing a new skills retraining program that will benefit 50,000 workers, because we believe that Canadian workers are at the heart of our economic strategy, and we will work with them.

[*English*]

To our steelworkers, who are probably wondering, I say that we will be there to help them increase their competitiveness within the Canadian market.

[*Translation*]

To our aluminum workers, I say that we will be there to help them modernize their smelters and open up new markets.

[*English*]

To our auto workers, I say that we will fight alongside them to keep our auto plants in Canada.

To our lumber and canola producers, I say that we know times are hard. We are working not only to restore their market access but to expand it. The recent trip of the Prime Minister to Asia was one way that we are going to work tirelessly to expand the market. We believe in them. We believe in their industry. We will do what it takes to make sure that they can sell their products around the world.

[*Translation*]

These strategic sectors are at the forefront of this truly generational change. We will ensure they are strong, resilient and ready to lead our economic transition, from dependence to resilience.

• (1615)

[*English*]

We are going to move this economy to make it more resilient. We are going to move from reliance to resilience, because we want Canada to succeed not only today but for generations to come. We are going to move from uncertainty to prosperity, because we understand that investing in Canada is the best way to ensure prosperity for generations to come.

[*Translation*]

Budget 2025 offers all Canadians a response. It is a plan for resilience. It is rooted in confidence, focused on results and designed to ensure that Canada not only weathers this storm, but emerges stronger from it.

[*English*]

I am reminded of the words of a previous finance minister when, in 1995, he presented his budget. He said at the time, “our very way of life as Canadians [is] being tested.” He also said, “there are times in the progress of a people when...fundamental choices must be made, and a new course charted. For Canada, this is one of those times.”

[*Translation*]

I would say that today we are also facing a unique moment in the history of our great country. The Prime Minister has called on our country to look beyond the challenges of today and to embark on a path that will redefine Canada for generations to come, because we

believe in Canada. He has asked us all to focus on what we can control and to take bold, ambitious action.

[*English*]

I have confidence in the strength of Canadians. I have confidence in our ability as a nation to meet the moment. I have confidence that together we can build Canada, protect our way of life and empower Canadians as never before, because we believe in Canada.

It is interesting to note, as all Canadians who are watching and those with us today would know, that Canada has what the world needs and what the world increasingly wants, from our products to our technology and our values. Canada is inspiring the world. We are an energy superpower in both clean and conventional energy.

[*Translation*]

We are among the top producers of critical minerals and a world leader in artificial intelligence. We have unmatched market access, as the only country in the G7 with free trade agreements with every other G7 nation.

We have the people, the resources and the stability necessary to prosper and compete in the new economy before us, so Canada enters this period of transformation from a position of strength.

[*English*]

Yes, the world is changing, but Canada is strong. We are going to build Canada strong together. We are going to empower Canadians and defend our sovereignty. Canadians have done it before, and we will do it again.

Canada has the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, and the federal debt-to-GDP ratio will remain stable over the budget horizon. We also have one of the lowest deficits in the G7 and one of the strongest fiscal positions in the world. Yes, we have a strong fiscal position, a strong base to work from, a strong base for investing, and we must use this fiscal power to make generational investment, because we believe in Canada.

As the managing director of the International Monetary Fund recently said, “Both Germany and Canada recognize that in this very testing time, they need to use their fiscal space.... In the case of Canada, the Canadian authorities have been very decisive to take action in the context of changing relations with their main trading partner.” Canada is recognized on the world stage as a country with the fiscal capacity to invest and grow its economy, to invest in its people and to protect its sovereignty. That recognition matters because it affirms something fundamental about this country: When times are difficult, we do not retreat; we advance and we invest. That is what budget 2025 is all about.

The Budget

Budget 2025 is a plan to catalyze investments from provinces, territories, municipalities, indigenous communities and the private sector. With this plan, in five years, we will enable \$1 trillion in total investments in this country. I know that although the Conservatives are silent, they support that in their hearts. I know they will take the break week to tell their constituents how great this country will be and all the investments we are going to see. I can see it in their hearts.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

Canada is one of the best places in the world to invest, and we are going to make it even better. This fiscal strength allows us to make historic investment not only today but also for future generations.

[*English*]

To Canadians who feel the strain of these times, our message is clear. We will not back down. We will be there for them now and for as long as it takes. We will do what Canadians do best in times of need: look after one another and help each other. That is the Canadian way and that is our way.

[*Translation*]

Meeting this tremendous challenge requires both ambition and discipline. We need to be ambitious in our investments and rigorous in our spending. That is why this budget charts a new course for Canada's public finances. Canadians expect their government to achieve results. To get there, we must spend less on operations so we can invest more in Canada's future.

First, a new capital budgeting framework will separate our day-to-day spending from the investments that build our future. This reform will allow Canadians to better understand where their money goes and will ensure that each dollar helps strengthen our productivity.

[*English*]

In short, we will make capital investment a national priority.

[*Translation*]

Better budgeting also means presenting the budget at the best time.

From now on, the budget will be presented in the fall, aligning with the construction season, and better supporting provinces, municipalities as well as contractors in the delivery of their projects.

[*English*]

We want to build the country. We have a lot to do and we are going to do it together. What we see in the budget and in the Prime Minister is a road map to build Canada strong. We understand that there are things we need to do on our side to make sure we can build like never before. This is the plan to do it.

Second, it is all about discipline. The Prime Minister has been clear. Canada's new government will spend less so we can invest more. Our budget puts forward \$60 billion in savings over five years. Canadians have been tightening their belts for quite some time. It is only natural that we put our house in order as well, and

we are going to make sure we do. Through the exercise we did, we found these savings. We did the hard work. We made the tough decisions. That is what Canadians expect from us. We have a strong mandate. They told us to do what must be done. That is what we did. It is what we are going to continue to do.

Let me be very clear for all Canadians watching at home: We are protecting the vital services they rely on, including child care, dental care and pharmacare, because those are essential for families across our nation. This is who we are as Canadians. We are going to remain true to our values.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

We are making responsible and pragmatic choices to reduce inefficiencies and focus government initiatives on our core priorities.

[*English*]

Through what we call the government's comprehensive expenditure review, we are focusing investments on initiatives that meet objectives and complement, rather than duplicate, services delivered by other levels of government. We have looked at how we can streamline programs, how we can rightsize, how we can use technology and how we can use AI with one goal in mind: to provide better service to Canadians and to be more efficient. Canadians deserve the best service from their government, and we will deliver. We will cut red tape, digitize services and make them faster, simpler and easier to access.

[*Translation*]

We are encouraging the adoption of new technologies across government, including made-in-Canada AI tools, through a new digital transformation office.

We understand the potential of the digital transformation. Canada will be a global leader in digital transformation and in delivering services to Canadians.

[*English*]

This will create a more effective government, one that can deliver smarter, faster and more effective services to Canadians.

Since 2019, the federal public service population has grown at a rate far greater than the Canadian population. We must get the size of our public service back to a sustainable level, in keeping with best practices. We will do that with fairness and compassion because we appreciate the work of every single public servant in the country. We appreciate their service. We appreciate their work. We value their contribution to our country.

The Budget

While we do that, we will make our tax system fairer.

Third, we need clear fiscal anchors to provide predictability and clarity to the world and to Canadians. We will balance day-to-day operating spending with revenues by 2028-29, shifting the budget toward investments that grow the economy. This is a pivotal moment in Canada's history. We are going to make sure that the dollars people entrust to us will be invested to grow Canada. We will maintain a declining deficit-to-GDP ratio, ensuring discipline today while investing in our collective future.

[*Translation*]

The measures proposed in budget 2025 put us on the right path to achieving our investment goals.

We will create a business environment that attracts an unprecedented flow of private capital into the energy, infrastructure, housing, and defence sectors. This is an investment budget. It is a generational investment budget. It is a budget for this generation and future generations. It is a budget because we believe in Canada.

Our investments will focus our efforts on our economic success and on boosting productivity—doing more with less—because that is the best way to raise Canadians' standard of living. Budget 2025 will accelerate construction in housing and infrastructure across the country. It will also strengthen Canada's position as a fiscally competitive jurisdiction and one of the best places in the world to invest.

[*English*]

Canada is a great place to invest. With budget 2025, we are going to make it even greater. In short, Canada is the place to be, Canada is a place to invest and Canada is a place to grow. We are proud to serve Canadians.

● (1630)

[*Translation*]

Budgets are not about doing everything. They are about doing what is necessary and doing it well. We are putting forward a firm, fair and results-driven plan, the kind of reform Canadians are asking for and the kind that has always served our country well.

[*English*]

This generational investment plan will invest \$280 billion in capital over five years to strengthen Canada's productivity, competitiveness and resilience. On a cash basis, this is a historic investment of \$450 billion in Canada. We are going to do all of that because we believe in Canada, we believe in Canadians, we believe in our workers and we believe in our future.

[*Translation*]

These generational investments will drive growth in every region and create good, middle-class jobs, the kind of careers that allow young people and families to plan for the future with confidence.

[*English*]

Our generational investment will focus on four key priorities: housing, to restore affordability and opportunity; infrastructure, to connect Canadians and accelerate growth; defence and security, to protect our sovereignty and our communities; and productivity and

competitiveness, to make Canada a leader and the innovation powerhouse of the 21st century.

[*Translation*]

These are not abstract priorities. They are the foundations of a stronger, more independent and more competitive Canada, because we believe in Canada. Our task now is to turn fiscal strength into national purpose. For generations, together Canadians have undertaken major projects that have connected our regions, energized our industries and defined our identity over the course of more than a century.

[*English*]

The One Canadian Economy Act adopted last June continues that tradition, a very proud tradition. It removes barriers to internal trade, accelerates approvals for major projects and strengthens the economic union that binds our provinces and territories together. We are completing the unfinished work of Confederation, ensuring that wherever a product is made in Canada, it can be sold in Canada so that trade and opportunity flow freely across provincial lines. This is about Canada. If we build something in one part of the country, we ought to be able to sell it across the country, because we believe in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Good news: Our government will not stop there. We will launch the next generation of nation-building projects: the highways, airstrips, ports, electrical grids and digital corridors that will define the next century of Canadian growth.

Thanks to these investments, we will connect regions, strengthen supply chains across the country, and create hundreds of thousands of high-paying jobs in every region of our great country.

[*English*]

Our Arctic infrastructure fund will expand possibilities and opportunities like never before in Canada's north. We should all be proud, as Canadians. We are going to make historic investments in Canada's north. This is a great moment for the country.

We will build infrastructure in communities all across Canada with the new build communities strong fund. As we build a million more homes, we will need infrastructure like roads to build new neighbourhoods. This fund will help build them. New neighbourhoods will lead to new communities across our country that will want recreation and athletic centres. This fund will help build them. New communities will need new hospitals. This fund will help build them. This fund will build Canada strong. This fund will build our communities strong. It is something I am very proud of, and I think the Prime Minister joins me in being proud of this.

The Budget

We will do all this by being our own best customers for the new buy Canadian policy. It is about time we put Canadian suppliers first.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

When the government buys, Canadian suppliers will be our first choice wherever possible, full stop, because we believe in Canada.

[*English*]

We will be using steel made by our workers in Hamilton and Sault Ste. Marie.

[*Translation*]

We will use aluminum cast in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, Bécancour and Kitimat and softwood lumber cut in Thunder Bay, Prince George and even La Tuque, in my riding, as well as in every community in the country.

[*English*]

We will support our workers. We will support our country. We will support our industries.

[*Translation*]

I will give one example. Yesterday, in Saint-Tite, a small rural city in my riding known to many in Canada, I visited Boulet Boots, a family business that has made boots since 1933.

I even had the opportunity to build part of the shoes I am wearing today, with the help of many skilled workers. This is a reminder of the craftsmanship and pride that make the Canadian manufacturing industry strong.

The shoes I am so proud to wear today are the same shoes worn by Canada's RCMP officers.

[*English*]

I know Conservative members wish they had a pair too. These shoes were made in Canada by Canadians and for Canadians. That is the way to go. That is how we build Canada strong.

[*Translation*]

That is what buy Canadian is all about: good jobs, resilient communities, and pride in what we build together.

[*English*]

That is what buy Canadian is all about. It is all about good jobs. It is all about resilient communities in our cities and rural communities across our nation, and this is about pride in what we build, pride in Canada and pride in our workers; that is how we build a strong country.

Canada has a legacy of builders. We are a nation of builders. That same spirit of building at home has defined Canada for generations. We have done this before. Back in 1945, just after the war, Canada had to do big things. As so-called minister of everything at the time, the great C.D. Howe banked on the boundless potential of Canada to make big, big changes in our country. He was not afraid to bet big on Canadians, and neither are we, because we believe in Canada.

This budget is guided by the strong conviction that Canada must remain a nation of builders of infrastructure and innovation, of trust in public institutions and of hope for generations to come.

This nation knows how to build. We built the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885, allowing our country to be connected from coast to coast and supporting trade across the Prairies. We built the St. Lawrence Seaway more recently, in 1959, creating a deep-water route from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

More recently, we built the James Bay hydroelectric facility in 1985, providing abundant clean energy to power Canadian industries and enabling Canada to become one of the world's top producers of renewable hydroelectric energy.

[*English*]

That is why I am so proud of Canada. That is why we want to build Canada strong together. Each generation has taken on its share of the work and has left the next generation stronger for it. We will do it again because we believe in Canada.

With planned investments of \$115 billion in infrastructure over five years, we will meet the moment. That is what Canadians expect from their government. They know what is going on. They want us to meet the moment, and we will meet that moment and will build the backbone of Canada's next economy.

Our task is simple, but it is profound: to turn plans into projects, to turn projects into careers and to turn careers into prosperity. That is what we are committed to doing, and that is what we will do with Canadians across the nation.

We will do so in a way that protects our future and also protects our nature and our core values, building in true partnership with indigenous peoples, whose stewardship and knowledge of the land continue to guide us today, because we build not just for ourselves; we build also for those who will follow us. I am often reminded of the seven-generation principle. Rooted in indigenous teachings, it is a reminder that every decision we take must consider its impact on future generations.

We will build Canada strong, but we will build with Canadian values.

[*Translation*]

A strong country invests not only in its economy, but also in its identity. Over the past year, Canadians have shown what Canada is really made of.

The Budget

When global uncertainty tested us, we looked to each other. People asked where their food was grown and chose to buy from local farmers and producers.

Families travelled across the country and rediscovered its beauty, from coast to coast to coast. Communities rallied around Canadian businesses, creators and workers. That is what it means to be Canadian: to stand up for one another, to build together, and to take pride in what we make, grow and create here at home. That is what it means to be Canadian, and that is why we are here to stand up for Canada.

We are a bilingual, diverse and compassionate country, shaped by reconciliation, equality and respect. We believe in a strong Canada. Our new government is investing heavily to help Canadians get ahead.

[*English*]

On the housing front, I think this is something that speaks to everyone: each young person in the country, each family in the country and everyone listening today. Canada faces a steep housing supply gap that has threatened affordability. Our minister has been doing great work to make sure we have more supply and to continue that. We need to make sure Canadians across the nation can find a home because finding a home is the best way to build their lives. We want to be there for them.

Budget 2025 is the most ambitious housing plan since the Second World War. This is what we are delivering for Canadians. The moment calls for it and we are meeting the moment. The Prime Minister has been clear: We need to build in this country. We need to build faster. We need to build bigger. We need to build now. We need to build Canada strong.

We have put in this budget record investments of \$13 billion over five years in our flagship homebuilding initiative, Build Canada Homes. I am sure Canadians across the country understand that, because this will ensure we build at a speed and scale that we have not seen in generations. We will double the pace of housing construction over the next decade while we create a new industry, one that will be using Canadian technology, Canadian workers and Canadian lumber. We will use Canadian workers to build Canada with Canadian material. This is what we are going to do because we believe in Canada.

We will improve affordability and create careers in the skilled trades, because as we build this country, young people will see the dream they have of home ownership come within reach again. That is what we want to do for future generations. Every home built is a step toward a more affordable and more confident Canada.

• (1645)

[*Translation*]

Affordability is not only about housing. It is about making life easier for Canadians and reducing everyday costs, while protecting the programs that families right across our great country depend on. Canadians elected us to take bold action to help them improve their quality of life quickly.

[*English*]

That is what we did, and we will continue to do it. The very first thing the Prime Minister did for Canadians was to cut taxes for 22 million Canadians. That is the first thing we did. Then we brought down gas prices by 18¢ per litre when we cancelled the consumer carbon price.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, even the Conservatives are cheering.

They should be cheering about this as well: We made permanent the national school food program, helping 400,000 children each year. I know in their hearts, they support it.

[*Translation*]

We have launched automatic federal benefits, reaching 5.5 million low-income Canadians, to ensure no one gets left behind. We will strengthen competition in the telecommunications and banking sectors in order to drive down costs.

[*English*]

These are practical measures that make life more affordable today and build confidence in tomorrow, because when Canadians can afford a home, when Canadians can raise a family and when Canadians can plan for the future, our entire country grows stronger.

[*Translation*]

Prosperity is only meaningful when it is shared and when all Canadians can see themselves in the promise of this country.

[*English*]

With this budget, every Canadian should feel there is something for them. It is not only about today; it is about future generations and building for them. It is about making sure that we have a very strong country for generations to come.

As the Prime Minister has said, there can be no prosperity without security. In that vein, I am sure, as I look across the aisle in the eyes of every member in this House, that every member would agree that we need to protect our people, our communities and our country. Every Canadian expects every member of this House to be there for them.

When it comes to our security and sovereignty, we should all be rising to defend what we are proposing. A confident nation protects its sovereignty at home and its interests abroad, through strength, stability and partnership with allies who share our values. This is what we are doing.

[*Translation*]

With \$30 billion over five years, budget 2025 represents the largest defence investment in decades.

The Budget

● (1650)

[English]

I have even more good news. We will meet our 2% NATO commitment this year. We will modernize NORAD. We will reinforce our Arctic defence, and we will equip our brave men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces with the infrastructure and technology they need to safeguard our nation. We will do that because we believe in Canada.

With our new Defence Investment Agency and defence industrial strategy, we will build up Canada's defence industry, strengthening Canadian businesses, supporting Canadian workers and creating good union jobs across our country. Our work on defence will strengthen the Canadian research centres. It will strengthen Canadian communities in the north, working with our Inuit and first nations partners across the country, by building dual-use infrastructure like ports and runways to make sure that every community can benefit when we invest.

[Translation]

Our plan will create new jobs for our engineers, technicians and scientists in sectors such as aerospace, shipbuilding, cybersecurity and AI. We will hire 1,000 new border services officers and 1,000 new RCMP personnel to secure our borders and keep our communities safe.

Finally, by investing in law enforcement and justice reform, we will tackle organized crime, gun violence and auto theft. We will also invest and we will continue, with passion and determination, as my colleague, the Minister of Women and Gender Equality, is doing, the important work with the provinces and territories to end gender-based violence. My colleague is doing an outstanding job, and we will continue to support her.

[English]

Every Canadian should feel safe, and I want to commend the leadership of my colleague. She is extraordinary. She has been there leading the way to make sure we invest and continue this important work across our nation.

[Translation]

As we strengthen our security partnerships, it is essential that we continue deepening our economic partnerships. In order to build a stronger future, we must increase trade, innovate faster and play a leading role in clean and conventional energy.

Trade has always been one of Canada's strengths, connecting our population, our resources and our industries to the rest of the world, but too much of that trade depends on a single partner.

[English]

Through budget 2025, we are launching a trade diversification strategy supported by a trade diversification corridors fund to expand Canada's reach and double our overseas exports within a decade, which will unlock \$300 billion in new opportunities for Canadian businesses and workers. This is good news for small and medium-sized businesses. This is good news for exporters. This is good news because now they see we are going to expand our markets. We are going to bring what Canada has to offer to the world.

[Translation]

We will strengthen ports, railways and ports of entry, we will reduce bottlenecks, and we will open faster routes to global markets, because when Canadian businesses are competitive and successful abroad, Canadian workers and communities prosper right here at home.

● (1655)

[English]

I think all of us can agree that Canada is the best place to live. It is the reason top talent from around the world want to come here. They see opportunities and possibilities to contribute to cutting-edge research in our country.

With our flagship international talent attraction strategy of more than \$1.7 billion, we will make sure that the best and brightest continue to choose Canada to innovate, invent and grow our industry. The best and brightest will come to Canada.

This is how we build a Canada strong: by making a generational investment of \$115 billion over five years in measures that will drive productivity and competitiveness. We will supercharge growth in Canada and become the strongest economy in the G7 because we believe in Canada.

Let me be clear to all Canadians watching at home tonight. Productivity is not about working harder. It is about working smarter. It is about how well we mobilize ideas, workers, investment and innovation to generate growth. It is what drives up wages in our country, improves living standards and strengthens public services.

[Translation]

For too long, Canada's productivity has been lagging—a challenge we can and must overcome.

[English]

Artificial intelligence will be the defining technology of our time, just as electricity was in the last century.

[Translation]

AI will play a key role, along with quantum and other advanced technologies, to put Canada on a path of sustained growth.

*The Budget**[English]*

Remember, Canada was the very first country in the world to have an AI national strategy and an AI quantum strategy. We have some of the best researchers, and some of them have even won the Nobel Prize. We have the brains, we have the capacity and we have the will. We will lead because we believe in Canada.

We will become a productivity and innovation powerhouse through a number of measures. The first is our productivity super-reduction to create the right climate for businesses to invest in new machinery, equipment and technologies. There will be a bold expansion of projects of national interest in artificial intelligence, clean technology and advanced manufacturing. We will turn Canadian innovation into industrial strength, and we will enhance tax incentives for Canadian builders to conduct research and development in this country and make it seamless for them to apply to these essential tax credits that will drive innovation and productivity.

Budget 2025 is about productivity and competitiveness. It is about a road map for Canada to be the place to invest. It is already great; we are going to make it greater together.

Obviously the numbers in a budget can seem a bit abstract for people watching and wondering what they mean to them, so let me make them very concrete.

As I said earlier, this budget will unleash \$1 trillion in total investment over the next five years. That would boost the average wage in Canada by some \$3,000 per year. That is what the budget means for workers. That is what it means for families. That is what it means for Canadians.

It would add \$15 billion to federal revenues that can support health care, lower taxes and pay down Canada's debt.

We choose Canada. We will make Canada strong because we believe in Canada.

Throughout our history, we have opened our doors to the world. We have always welcomed people fleeing the most difficult situations, people seeking to study at our world-class universities and people willing to share their expertise and drive innovation in Canada, people wanting to contribute to Canada.

We are taking back control of the immigration system and putting Canada on a trajectory to bring immigration back to sustainable levels, allowing us to fulfill the promise of Canada to the people who call it home. Our plan will restore control and will provide clarity and consistency to the immigration system while maintaining compassion in our choices and driving competitiveness in our economy.

- (1700)

[Translation]

Our plan will allow us to ensure better control of our immigration system while maintaining our approach based on our Canadian values.

Climate action is not only a moral obligation, it is an economic necessity. The key to competitiveness and growth is also to be a leader in a low-carbon economy.

Our climate competitiveness strategy turns Canada's natural wealth—critical minerals, clean power—into lasting prosperity. Reducing our emissions is essential to protecting the competitiveness of Canada's energy sectors. We are introducing a comprehensive suite of clean economy investment tax credits—measures that are already generating billions of dollars in private capital for projects in hydrogen, carbon capture, and clean electricity.

[English]

Canada is the place to invest, and we understand also that this is not only the right thing to do but also the smart thing to do. I want to commend the work of my colleagues who have been leading the effort on that, because these investments would allow us to modernize our networks. They will allow us to have projects of national interest, and they will also make sure we connect Canada with our electricity network.

[Translation]

By becoming a global leader in clean technology and clean energy, Canada can strengthen its competitive advantage and help our industries thrive in the global economy.

[English]

Let me talk about our youth, because our youth are the future of this nation.

[Translation]

In Canada, we have the most skilled and talented workers, as well as the most educated workforce in the world. We can all be very proud of that.

[English]

Every time, and I know my colleagues join me in this, we know it is because of the talent, the expertise and the dedication of our workers that Canada wins. They are the best workers in the world. That is why we see investment. Every day they go to work, and obviously it is thanks to their service to our nation and their talent that we can succeed. We will continue to work with them to make Canada the place to invest.

[Translation]

Budget 2025 expands learning, training and growth opportunities for young people. It creates new pathways for careers in construction, clean energy and manufacturing. It is essential that we give the next generation the confidence and skills needed to succeed.

*The Budget**[English]*

When we talk about youth and future generations, I think every member of this House should pay attention, because they are the future of our country.

Through a suite of new measures, we will extend union training, extend the tax credit to personal support workers, who, in doing their work, are always there for our people, and enhance labour mobility. Canadian workers will drive Canada's economic transformation with new skills and training, and they will seize the exciting, high-paying careers and good union jobs that it will create.

In the words of the Canadian Labour Congress, "These measures signal a shift toward putting workers at the heart of Canada's economic strategy." We should all be proud. Workers will always be at the heart of our economic strategy.

This is how we give Canadians the tools they need to shape the future. This is how we build Canada strong.

[Translation]

To conclude, the budget I am tabling today is our framework for Canada's future and a road map to prosperity and resilience.

● (1705)

[English]

It all comes down to a choice between two visions: one vision of resignation, a vision that would scale back the vital support Canadians rely on, make it harder for families to find a home and leave our country more vulnerable, poorer and dependent; and another vision, one rooted in confidence in Canadians and in the belief that by making generational investments today, we can build lasting prosperity for tomorrow by putting more money in people's pockets, by ensuring every Canadian can retire with dignity, by making the dream of home ownership a reality once again, by building the infrastructure our cities need to grow and by keeping our communities safe for our children and our parents.

That is the path we choose. That is the path of budget 2025. I even see smiles on the other side. That is a good sign.

Budget 2025 makes our choice clear. We choose confidence over resignation. We choose to empower Canadians, to build this country together and to protect what we hold dear.

[Translation]

It is about confidence in ourselves, in our capacity to adapt and in this country's promise.

[English]

It is about a Canada that builds, protects and empowers. It is about moving from reliance to resilience, and from uncertainty to prosperity.

Let us seize the moment. Let us build Canada strong, because we are, and will always be, the true north, strong and free.

[Translation]

Long live Canada.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Finance for his speech, which was as long as a Fidel Castro speech.

The minister says this is a generational budget. When we read it, we see that it mentions \$115 billion for infrastructure. When we look at the numbers, we see only \$9 billion in new money over five years. That is not even \$2 billion a year in new money for all infrastructure, despite the massive deficit.

Is that what he considers a generational budget?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague, but yes, it is a generational investment budget. I can tell him that we were innovative with this budget. He should be very pleased.

I know that the Quebeckers watching us are happy because for the first time, in our infrastructure fund, there will also be funding for health infrastructure, an issue raised by Quebec. Quebec has asked us to invest alongside it in health care, in clinics and hospitals, to ensure that everyone has access to modern infrastructure.

We answered Quebec's call. We answered the call of Quebeckers. We answered the call of Canadians. Our infrastructure investment plan is generational. It will make our communities stronger, and we should all be very proud of that.

● (1710)

[English]

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the numbers do not lie. The Liberals have sacrificed the future of young Canadians. The deficit is a massive \$80 billion this year, with more inflation and higher costs.

The Prime Minister promised he would spend less and again broke his promise and is spending more. He is forcing young Canadians to sacrifice more so he can spend more.

After 10 years of the Liberal government, housing costs have doubled, food bank usage has doubled and youth employment is the lowest it has been in 25 years. The cost on the interest of the government's debt is more than GST revenues or what goes to the provinces in health care transfers.

Today, the finance minister had a choice to make. Food prices could have come down. They could have been cheaper, but again, he refused to do this.

The Liberals kept in place their industrial carbon tax, their food packaging tax and the clean fuel standard and added \$80 billion of inflationary fuel to the fire.

The Budget

Why did the finance minister leave in place Liberal hidden food taxes and force higher food costs on single mothers, seniors and young Canadians?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, we made a clear choice. We chose Canadians.

I know the budget has many pages. Maybe my colleague missed a chapter, but let me help him because we have a bit of time.

We made the choice to invest in Canadians. We made the choice to protect and build our communities. We made the choice to invest in our young people. We made the choice to invest in our workers. We made the choice to invest in housing. We made the choice to invest in infrastructure. We made the choice to invest in productivity and competitiveness. We made the choice to invest in our defence.

I hope the Conservatives see that and that their constituents will be watching. Will they make the choice to invest in Canadians as well?

On this side of the House, the answer is clear. We will take no lessons from the Conservatives. We will take lessons from history.

[*Translation*]

Eric Lefebvre (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, even the rating agencies are sounding the alarm. For the first time in 30 years, Quebec's credit rating has been downgraded. It is all because investment spending exceeds what Quebeckers can afford.

This Liberal government is doing exactly the same thing with investment spending that exceeds what Canadians can afford. It has already maxed out our children's credit cards, our grandchildren's credit cards and now it is maxing out our great-grandchildren's credit cards.

After 10 years of Liberal deficits, the government has mortgaged the future of an entire generation. Canadians have had enough, and young people have lost hope.

How much longer will the government keep going into debt on the backs of our children to finance its inflationary spending?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should start over and give him another chance.

There is a difference between spending and investing. The member should be happy because the people in his riding will see investments in infrastructure. They may even see investments in health care infrastructure. The plan we are proposing today is an investment plan, a generational budget of generational investments.

People at home understand that we need to invest in our prosperity. We need to invest in our young people. We need to invest in our workers. We need to invest in our industries. We need to invest in Canada.

On this side of the House, we believe in Canada.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since this government came to power, the fight against climate change has experienced a lot of setbacks. Carbon pricing is gone and there is no money for electric vehicles. There are pipelines and LNG projects. We were told that we would see a climate competitiveness strategy.

Looking at this budget, we see a \$589-million investment in this strategy until 2030. Of the \$589 million, \$585 million is going to critical minerals. That leaves \$4 million over five years for their climate competitiveness strategy.

Are the Liberals literally giving up the fight against climate change?

• (1715)

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I understand that my colleague has had a lot of reading to get through today, but there is an entire chapter on climate competitiveness. We understand that it is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do.

My colleague will be pleased to see what is in the budget. I will give him this evening to read the budget, but he will see the many investment tax credits it provides for clean technologies. On this side of the House, we know that we can build a strong, low-carbon economy. This budget addresses that issue.

We are going to be there for this generation and future generations. We are going to invest in Canadian industry.

Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Quebeckers and Canadians are facing an employment crisis with unemployment rates at a 10-year high, especially among young people. Yet the government wants to cut 40,000 public service jobs. These are good union jobs that support families, and the Liberals want to eliminate them.

Every one of these employees is providing services to Quebeckers and Canadians, and they need them. The Prime Minister told Canadians during the election that he would cap the number of employees within the public service, not cut their positions.

Why is this Liberal government breaking its promise by cutting good jobs and services at a time when people need them the most?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

We are in Ottawa. I would like to reassure all public service employees, who do exceptional work. I think everyone in the House can applaud them. These are men and women who are there to serve Canadians. We thank them for their work. We value their work.

In our plan, we are saying that we will bring the public service back to a more sustainable size. We will do so in a compassionate and judicious manner. Most of these measures will be implemented through attrition. I think families here in Ottawa can sleep soundly tonight. We will be there for them.

*The Budget**[English]*

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the last budget, of two years ago, had a fiscal anchor of a deficit of less than 1% of GDP in future years and constantly declining debt-to-GDP ratios in subsequent years. This budget has a fiscal anchor of deficits averaging 2% of GDP over the next number of years and a rising debt-to GDP ratio.

Will the finance minister confirm that his fiscal anchor is weaker than the last finance minister's fiscal anchor?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my colleague, but he might have noticed that the world has changed, and this is a new government, and—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. Minister of Finance has the floor.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that, because I know they like to hear it: Canada has the strongest fiscal position in the G7. We are not the only ones who have said it; the director of the International Monetary Fund has said that Canada and Germany stand out.

We have the fiscal capacity to invest. We are going to build this country and we are going to protect this nation. We are going to build Canada strong together.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the minister on his first budget speech. It was a very long speech, and given that this Liberal government is adding about \$10 million to our national debt every hour, it must be the most expensive speech in the history of this Parliament.

[English]

I think we can say that while talk is cheap, it is very expensive when a Liberal finance minister speaks.

[Translation]

Every dollar the government spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians. The more the government spends, the more things cost. That is how the Liberals managed to double the cost of housing and double the lineups at food banks. That is why Conservatives want an affordable budget for a more affordable Canada.

• (1720)

[English]

The current government is the most expensive in Canadian history. Every dollar the Prime Minister spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians. The more the Liberals spend, the more things cost. That is why Conservatives were calling for an affordable budget for an affordable life, after the Liberals doubled the cost of housing and doubled the lineups at food banks.

[Translation]

Today, the Liberals have introduced the largest and most costly deficit in the history of our country, outside of the COVID-19 crisis. It will drive up the cost of food, housing and many other things.

[English]

The cost of this Liberal budget will drive up the cost of food, housing and everything else that Canadians buy.

The Prime Minister has broken every single promise he made just seven short months ago. He promised a \$62-billion deficit; he delivered a nearly \$80-billion deficit, \$16 billion bigger than he promised and twice the size of the one his predecessor left behind. He promised to lower the debt-to-GDP ratio; he raised it and inflation along with it. He promised to spend less; he is spending \$90 billion more, costing \$5,400 per family in Canada, and that \$90 billion is above and beyond the promised \$16 billion that he says he will one day find.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, if he does not find it, it will be over \$100 billion in brand new spending, to respond to the Prime Minister's heckles.

He also promised that he would invest more. His own budget document lays out a graph showing that every quarter of this year will see private sector business investment collapse. This costly budget forces Canadians to spend more on debt interest than on health care transfers and more than the government collects in GST. This means that every dollar that Canadians pay in GST would go to bankers and bondholders instead of to doctors and nurses. That is all while he raises the industrial carbon tax on farm equipment and fertilizer and therefore food, as well as on steel, concrete and other industrial projects needed to build homes: a big tax increase on homes and food.

Instead, our party wanted an affordable budget for an affordable life. On behalf of all the Canadians who can no longer afford to eat, heat or house themselves because of Liberal inflation, we Conservatives cannot support this costly Liberal budget.

However, there is still time for the Prime Minister to do the right thing. We will put forward an amendment that would transform this policy by making Canada affordable again. It would get rid of the industrial carbon tax and cut the wasteful spending to bring down debt, inflation and taxes. It would open our country up to opportunity by developing our prodigious resources and clear away bureaucracy to build affordable homes.

[Translation]

We are asking the Prime Minister to accept our amendment to make life more affordable, deliver more powerful paycheques for Canadians and make our economy more independent.

The Budget

That is the approach we are proposing. We are proposing an economy that is affordable for young people, that provides security for seniors, and that protects Canada's promise to anyone who works hard.

[*English*]

We want a hopeful future. For our young people, we want homes, jobs and hope. For our seniors, we want affordability. We want, for all Canadians who work hard, to bring back the promise of Canada.

With that, I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

(Motion agreed to)

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), the motion is deemed adopted and the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 5:24 p.m.)

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