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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, November 17, 2025

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*English*]

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC) moved that Bill C-224, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (natural health products), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure for me to rise for the second Parliament in a row to present a bill to restore the traditional definition of natural health products.

Canadians watching at home might recall that back in the last Parliament, in 2023, the Trudeau government of the day introduced Bill C-47, the budget implementation act, which redefined natural health products. Basically, they had a stand-alone regulatory body that had its own regulations and legislation. The government of the day changed that to make natural health products regulated the same way as therapeutic drugs, which has meant that all the processes Health Canada uses to pre-approve sites and pre-approve natural health products are now the same as those for therapeutic drugs.

This has meant that getting something as simple as a vitamin B complex to the marketplace is just as complicated and potentially as convoluted as getting a new cancer treatment drug to the marketplace. Of course, the government's intention through Bill C-47's change to the definition was to do cost recovery on the natural health product industry the same way that it is done in the pharmaceutical industry. Given that big pharmaceutical industries have billions of dollars of research and development funds and have a completely regulated allopathic health care system, natural health products cannot compete in that space.

We will talk more about that red tape, but I just want to be clear with Canadians that there was no consultation at the time that Bill C-47 was brought in. As a matter of fact, there was no debate. I could not find anything the government said at the time about natural health products. They were just tucked into the massive omnibus budget implementation act. The Natural Health Products Pro-

tection Association had no idea. The Canadian Health Food Association had no idea. The Direct Sellers Association of Canada had no idea. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business did not know. This plan was hatched in a back room, where Health Canada officials, I am assuming, basically duped the minister of the day, Mark Holland, into putting this into the budget implementation act.

It created a firestorm of activity. Parliamentarians who were here in the last Parliament will remember the various campaigns that were initiated by Canadians across the country, whether it is the Natural Health Products Protection Association's campaign or the Canadian Health Food Association's "Save Our Supplements" campaign. I have a stack of cards from concerned Canadians in my office, as I think the Speaker does as well, that is at least two feet high.

Canada's Parliament is supreme in this matter, and that should not be overlooked by Health Canada officials who want to have their way all the time when Canadians are concerned. Our job as parliamentarians is to make sure that the laws and regulations thereunder reflect what Canadians' wishes are. Overwhelmingly, Parliament has been told time and time again by Canadians, whether they are involved in the business directly or are consumers, that they do not want their government to treat natural health products like they are therapeutic drugs. They want the traditional definition restored.

If we go back to 1998, there were 53 recommendations in the health committee report suggesting that natural health products be regulated, classified and categorized on their own. There was opposition when an attempt was made to change the law in 2014 by the creation of Vanessa's Law. The thought was that Health Canada could sneak health products in under the Vanessa's Law rubric.

There was push-back on that at that particular point in time, which led to massive industry consultation with Canadians. Of course, natural health products have been regulated on their own since that time in 2014-15. This actually created an opportunity, because of the consultations of the previous Harper government, for the natural health products industry to flourish and become the gold standard, or at least it was the gold standard for a number of years, until Bill C-47 was passed.

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The bill in the previous Parliament was Bill C-368. It is now Bill C-224. I just want to say how important it is that Canadians understand that if the bill does not pass, Health Canada will have the power to regulate natural health products as if they are therapeutic drugs. We need to undo that. It is a cash grab by Health Canada, to basically charge the fees that it wants to charge. It was called the self-care framework for a time. This would massively increase the cost of creating a site licence and it would also massively increase the cost of getting a product to market.

• (1105)

Prior to Bill C-47, Canada was an icon and had the highest standard of regulations for natural health products globally. The International Alliance of Dietary/Food Supplement Associations, IADSA, in its written submission to committee on Bill C-368 in the previous Parliament, said:

Up to now, Canada has been a world leader in the regulation of dietary supplements. We fear that the proposed changes to Canada's regulatory framework for natural health products risk creating an environment that could stifle the industry and limit Canadians' access to high-quality supplements.

IADSA has always promoted the Canadian model as a global reference point for governments across the world who are creating or redeveloping their regulatory systems. This Canadian model is recognized as providing consumers access to products which are safe and beneficial while fostering innovation and supporting investment in the sector.

That is the same shape the Harper administration left the natural health products industry in. There are precisely the same challenges with the changes proposed in Bill C-47. It has undone all of that good work and created uncertainty in this environment.

Our brand is very reputable, or at least it was. For products, manufacturers and distributors across the world, if a product had a natural product number and the made-in-Canada symbol on the label, it was trusted pretty much globally. A natural health product sold around the world that was developed, processed and regulated in Canada was trusted to be safe. The contents in the bottle matched the contents on the label or matched the labelling requirements. That was our reputation, but that is not the case anymore.

The changes that have been proposed under Bill C-47 and the self-care framework are basically going to create licence fees that would stop or wipe out a lot of manufacturers. This is for traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurveda medicine, homeopathy and so on. This is very concerning because 80% of Canadians use these products.

The cost-recovery framework that was proposed would have new product fees of up to \$4,000 per product. If we look at traditional Chinese medicine, the ingredients are combined to get a very select remedy for clients. If a fee had to be paid every time the ingredients were combined to make a traditional Chinese medicine product, that would make it virtually impossible for traditional Chinese medicine practitioners to be effective and sell their products at a price point that users of traditional Chinese medicine could afford. It would wipe out traditional Chinese medicine.

• (1110)

This would have a huge impact on our economy at a time when job numbers are not necessarily great. There are 54,000 direct employees in Canada who are working in this space. If we were to lose a wide swath of traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine

and all of these things, it would be a tremendous loss to our economy.

I want to be clear that this was done under the previous Trudeau administration. Gender-based analysis was a big issue for the previous administration, but when this change was imposed, there was no gender-based analysis done on the impacts of changing the traditional definition of therapeutic products in Bill C-47.

Over 80% of natural health products consumers are women, while 90% of practitioners are women. Over 50% of the micro-businesses are female- or women-owned, and 84% of direct sellers are women. That is what the impact would be on the Canadian economy if we continue down this road of making the natural health products space uncompetitive. We would lose businesses in Canada.

Let me remind people where the starting point was. We were already the best regulated environment in the world. We did not need to do any of this in Bill C-47. We were the safest already. Over 80% of Canadians use natural health products. There were several audits done by the industry, by Deloitte and so on, that basically debunked all of the claims that Health Canada was making to justify what it was doing. It claimed it was for consumer protection, but the reality is that very few people, in any way, shape or form, are harmed by natural health products.

Where are we? We have more red tape, more costs and less choice for consumers. We are also in an environment right now where, south of the border, there are several states, such as Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, South Carolina and Nevada, that are actively using tax incentives to draw health businesses into their areas of responsibility. In Canada, we have a 90-day personal use import system where anybody can order online and have their natural health products brought in from a non-Canadian jurisdiction with the same level of regulatory framework. Regulatory checks and pre-market approvals for sites and products all happen in Canada. That is why we have the gold standard when it comes to regulations.

That is not what our main competitor in the United States does at all. It has a post-market regulatory framework, which means that anybody who has a business in Canada and who is looking at the uncompetitive environment, and most of these business people are women, would be looking at the United States, saying that they could move their business down there, start manufacturing, have a tax incentive to do so and still ship to Canada. They would not have to deal with any of the burdens and red tape of pre-market approvals for a site or a product, and simply have some post-market regulations in the United States, but still ship to Canada without even any tariffs on those personal-use imports.

Private Members' Business

This is the environment we are facing here in Canada. It is one we should be very concerned about. We should be making sure that we do not overburden the Canadian space, because this market is worth \$5.5 billion in products every year. That is over \$200 million just in GST alone, and the cost of the natural health products directorate is only \$50 million a year. This industry pays for itself in spades, and we are not even talking about the health benefits for Canadians, which keep them out of the allopathic health care system, or the regulated health care system, that we have here in Canada.

Really, it comes down to choice. Consumers want to be able to take care of themselves. Mothers want to take care of their families and their children. People are looking for alternative health care measures all of the time when the regular health care system is not providing them any relief.

Anybody who says that Health Canada does not have enough power right now is simply missing the point. As a matter of fact, the Auditor General has said that Health Canada was not already using the powers it had pre-Bill C-47. With its current powers, it can stop the sale of any natural health product it wants.

Health Canada has border powers for personal-use imports. If it chooses to change the regulations or do more to keep Canadians safe from health products that are coming in from offshore, it can do so. It can seize any product any time it wants. It can revoke a site licence from a manufacturer, a packager, a labeller or an importer any time it wants. It can mandate a label change, for example, to add a warning, to any of the manufacturers here in Canada. It can inspect any place that has a site licence any time it wants. It has already done so. It is called good manufacturing practices. It has that ability to do so. It can inspect any product off the shelf by sending it to a lab, doing an analysis and making sure the contents in the bottle match the contents on the label. It can revoke a natural product number.

● (1115)

These are the massive, sweeping powers that Health Canada already had prior to Bill C-47, so the arguments that Health Canada is using, that it needs massive new powers to keep Canadians safe, simply do not hold water.

I also want to expand on the fact that health products are now being regulated as therapeutic products, so the fine structures for therapeutic products now apply to health products. Some of these fines can be up to \$5 million a day for non-compliance. This makes sense for a large global therapeutic or biomedical company, but it does not make sense for a mom-and-pop shop that is trying to create some new natural remedies or a practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine.

This is a ridiculous change that simply did not need to happen. It puts a chill in the industry and a chill in investment. Nobody wants to operate or take any risks in that particular structure.

In closing, I want to thank Canadians from coast to coast who have written to parliamentarians and who have put pressure on their MPs. I will just advise them that they need to continue to do that because there will be a vote on this. I know that we need to make the changes to get natural health products back to their traditional

definition and classification. We need colleagues to get this bill to committee so that we can go through it again.

I urge everybody to listen to Canadians. It is time to have some true consultation on this process. I want to thank all of the industry association reps, Natural Health Product Protection Association, the Canadian Health Food Association and everybody else who has lobbied so hard to protect these vital, important businesses and this vital, important space for Canadians.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am a little disappointed in the member opposite because I do not think he is being fully transparent about the issue.

There are many Canadians who have a genuine concern about the issue of contamination. Does the member believe that there are no concerns related to contamination and that Canadians have nothing to be concerned about with this issue? After all, we have seen Health Canada issue recalls in certain situations. Does the member believe Health Canada plays no role in this? To what degree does the member see the value of providing Canadians assurances through Health Canada that the products they are consuming are safe?

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I guess I reject the premise of the question. I never said that Health Canada did not have a role to play.

As a matter of fact, had the member been listening to my speech, he would have heard me say that Health Canada, prior to Bill C-47, had the power to stop any sale of any natural health product that is regulated in this country. That product cannot be sold as a natural health product until it has a natural product number, which means that natural health products have to be pre-approved. Nothing can happen post-market access. Everything is approved before it even gets to the market.

Health Canada has border powers for personal-use imports. It has seizure powers to seize a product that it thinks might be unsafe. It can revoke a site licence for a manufacturer, a packager, a labeller or an importer. It can mandate any label change if it is concerned about the contents inside the bottle not matching what is on the label. It can inspect any site to look for contamination issues all it wants. It can even stop that site from continuing to produce things.

The hon. member's question seems to indicate that there are no authorities and powers right now, but nothing could be further from the truth.

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[Translation]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, I wish I could say that Bill C-224 is basically the same as Bill C-368, which was scrapped when the election was called. The Bloc Québécois had made amendments to Bill C-368 to strike a balance between people's concern for their safety and the need to avoid destroying an industry.

Could my colleague give me a clear answer this morning about whether he will support our amendments, like he did the last time when all the parties agreed to our amendments?

• (1120)

[English]

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his support of the bill in the last Parliament and for his thoughtful analysis. The member was very thoughtful in his deliberations and his approach to dealing with Bill C-368. He will note that the bill is not exactly the same. One of the amendments that was put forward at the committee stage the last time dealt with exempting nicotine, so I included that through the definition in this particular bill, but there are other amendments that my colleague would likely bring back to the committee.

The member does not need my permission to do that, so I would encourage my colleague to actually talk to the industry associations and Canadians who might have had some concerns with the amendments that he brought forward, and make sure he gets them on side.

At this particular point, the bill that I have tabled before the House belongs to the House. I want to get it passed here at second reading, and the place for those amendments to be proposed is at committee, but the member does not need my permission to do it. He should ask Canadians and the industry associations that represent them whether they agree with the wording and the nuances of the wording that were in those amendments. In principle, I support the amendments that he put forward in the last Parliament.

Rob Morrison (Columbia—Kootenay—Southern Rockies, CPC): Madam Speaker, I presented petition e-4474 on this matter, with 15,000 signatures from across Canada of individuals who were concerned with the new changes to natural health products. These changes would really impact a lot of our small and medium-sized businesses that provide natural health products. In Columbia—Kootenay—Southern Rockies, we have areas where a lot of people are proactive with their health care and are using natural health products.

The member gave an awesome presentation of the bill. I think we are going to have success with this across Canada.

Blaine Calkins: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments from my colleague, and I thank him and all my colleagues here in the Conservative benches for the support of the bill. I want to thank my colleagues from the NDP, Green Party and the Bloc Québécois who supported the bill in the last Parliament, and I look forward to their continued support and their constructive feedback.

I am also looking forward to making sure that we get back to the traditional definition of natural health products. That is what Canadians want. That is what they elected us to do. Let us do it.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, before I get to the debate on Bill C-224, I just want to make quick reference to something that embodies a great deal of national pride from coast to coast to coast here in Canada: the Grey Cup.

We had a wonderful celebration in the city of Winnipeg, hosting the Montreal Alouettes along with the Saskatchewan Roughriders. Canadians were entertained by a first-class football game. I know that my colleague and good friend from northern Saskatchewan is a big Riders fan and was very pleased with the outcome, but I think it is safe to say that all football fans got to be entertained with a first-class Canadian football game.

We congratulate the city of Winnipeg, the residents and the organizers, from the commissioner all the way down to the volunteers, on having a very successful 112th Grey Cup, and we look forward to Grey Cup 2026, which I think will stay in the Prairies. I believe it will go to Calgary, followed by Regina.

I just wanted to acknowledge that right at the get-go.

I appreciate what the member is trying to bring forward in the form of a private member's bill. When I think of natural health products, I think of two aspects. One is the consumer, and there is absolutely no doubt that Canadians all over our country actually participate in the consumption of natural health products. They are very widely used. I have visited stores to look at ways I can improve my health. At age 63, maybe it is more of an interest; I am not 100% sure, but I do see the value of natural health products, and I also recognize the size and magnitude of the industry.

It is an industry that has provided jobs for Canadians. It has provided all sorts of opportunities for Canadians. I do not question the value of that industry, and hopefully it will continue to grow. I do not think there is anyone within the Liberal caucus who wants to prevent the industry from growing. The more growth we see within that industry, quite frankly, the better it is, but I also believe at the same time that the Conservatives need to take into consideration the well-being, health and safety of Canadians in general, because not all items they are referencing are actually produced here in Canada.

I take a great sense of pride in the work that Health Canada does for our nation. On a wide variety of products, it plays an incredibly important role. In some areas, I do believe there is an opportunity and in fact a need for us to actually look at ways in which Health Canada might even be able to strengthen our industry. Having more oversight is ultimately good for the industry, and when I reflect on Bill C-47, what I see is legislation that ensured that there would be more oversight of an industry that is really important to Canada.

When we talk about how we can grow our economy, we often talk about the benefits of being able to export. The member made reference to the importance of the maple leaf, and I agree with him on that part. A government-sanctioned maple leaf on a product carries a great deal of weight, not only here in Canada but also beyond our borders, and that is something we collectively should want to protect to ensure that its value is always held to the nth degree.

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● (1125)

Among the industries around the world, we find the pharmaceutical and natural health product industries. The potential for growth in those industries is tremendous, and that is why I understand that there is some resistance even from within, in terms of Health Canada and the oversight issue. However, I truly believe that Health Canada's providing additional oversight, which was enabled through Bill C-47, puts Canada once again on a higher platform for us to be able to export products, and I am very much interested in exports because I believe that the market potential is great.

About a year ago, I was in the Philippines at a grocery store that was unique in that it was profiling Canadian products. It was quite encouraging to see the number of Canadian products being sold in Manila at a grocery store. When I was talking with the manager of the grocery store, he indicated that they could not get enough of the products coming from Canada, because the products from Canada were being so well received.

This is the type of thing that, I believe, we undersell, and I think there is so much more potential, and that is the reason the Prime Minister of Canada is today looking to the export markets of Asia and Europe, going beyond the United States border, which I see as a positive thing. When we think in terms of the natural health products and the industry we have here in Canada, there is a great deal of merit in asking whether there is a role that Health Canada plays, through the branding of our maple leaf, to actually advance the industry. I believe the answer to that is yes, which is why Bill C-47 had an important role.

I pose this question to the member opposite: What about the consumer? We know for a fact that Health Canada has issued recalls on some items that have been tainted. To what degree would the member be prepared to answer on that specific issue? I would argue that with the additional oversight, ultimately issues of recall, or contamination, if I can put it that way, would not happen, and we would be able to provide the consumer with much more of a guarantee for the product they are consuming.

More and more what I have found, especially in our younger generation, is that people are looking at ways to stay healthy. They are looking at options, which is something that again speaks positively about an industry we are all concerned about. If we can reinforce confidence by having Health Canada provide extra oversight, I see that as a positive thing, and it is what we should be looking at in the legislation. How would the legislation reinforce confidence in natural health products? If anything, I would argue, it would take away from the level of confidence.

There is a responsibility for the official opposition to be more transparent. Yes, of course there are some things Health Canada can do, just like the Canada Border Services Agency can do some things. We recognize that, but I would suggest that members opposite also need to recognize that this is a very real issue and that the opportunities within the industry can in fact be enhanced by having more oversight.

● (1130)

[Translation]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, rarely have I heard a speech showing such ignorance about an issue and a bill.

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: It is embarrassing.

Luc Thériault: Madam Speaker, it is really embarrassing. Obviously, the member has not read the natural health products regulations. The member said that Bill C-47 gives more powers, when all of that is already set out in the regulations, which are quite lengthy. I read them all so that I could introduce the amendments that I mentioned earlier.

The member clearly also did not read the Food and Drugs Act or Vanessa's Law. Had he read those pieces of legislation, he would not have given the speech that he just gave. He made sweeping generalizations about how we want to promote an irresponsible industry.

Will the member apologize for not being able to give a speech that addresses the problem? He should have remained seated rather than standing up and spouting nonsense.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): This is not a question and comment period. We have resumed debate.

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, that is the second time that has happened to me.

I know I need to calm down, but speeches like that make no sense. I worked full-time for over two weeks with legal experts to come up with three small amendments. The member for Ponoka—Didsbury made it clear that the first amendment has been incorporated into Bill C-224, but there were two others. These two other amendments addressed the concerns raised by some stakeholders, particularly Health Canada.

Do members know what the Auditor General's report revealed? It revealed that, since 2014, Health Canada has been unable to enforce its natural health products regulations. That is what it revealed. The Auditor General analyzed 75 of the industry's 91,000 natural health products. The Auditor General knew that these 75 products were already problematic and wanted to be able to tell Health Canada to do its job. In a panic, Health Canada decided to use an omnibus bill to introduce Bill C-47 in an appendix. This bill purportedly championed consumer safety, but it threatened to kill an industry.

Consumers must be able to make free and informed choices, but there must be products available for them to make free and informed choices about. When we talk about natural health products, we are not talking about large multinationals. We are talking about small and medium-sized businesses.

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Having cost-recovery provisions that allow the work to get done properly is not a problem. The problem is that Health Canada went for the simplest solution possible. It took the cost recovery and penalties model that it uses for pharmaceuticals and applied it to natural health products. Need I remind the House that the pharmaceutical industry has 20-year patents? The same cannot be said of the natural health products industry. Need I also remind the House that there are no taxes on pharmaceutical products, unlike natural health products? The government takes in enough money to pay for a proper oversight system.

This is what shocks me the most. I did my job, and I have kept in touch with all the groups. The industry is not at all resistant to change. What it wants is a system that allows it to survive over the long term. However, it also wants to rid its system of bad actors. The natural health products regulations were supposed to be iron-clad.

We decided that we needed to go a step further. First, nicotine must be kept within the therapeutic products category. All nicotine-based products are therapies for quitting smoking. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. That is what we did with the first amendment. That was also what the government and the minister at the time wanted. We presented that.

In the second Bloc Québécois amendment, we ensured that the minister would have the power to order a recall, even though he has all the powers under the regulations. Need I remind members that recalls were voluntary? There have never been any alarming cases of people being resistant to recalls. We protected the minister's right to order recalls, which was already provided for under the regulations.

● (1135)

Mario Beaulieu: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would ask members on the other side to please take their conversations to the lobby.

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I would like to ask hon. members not to have conversations while someone else is giving a speech.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Montcalm may continue his speech.

Luc Thériault: In line with what I was saying earlier, the third amendment sought to prevent a model involving fines from being inappropriately applied to small and medium-sized businesses.

We wanted to ensure the industry was safe while guaranteeing its long-term survival and preserving consumers' freedom to choose between a natural health product and a pharmaceutical product, or sometimes both. Just because Health Canada was not able to do its job, that does not mean that an entire industry should be destroyed. That is the crux of the issue.

When Bill C-368 was being studied at committee, we managed to come to an agreement. The Liberals were reluctant at first, but they eventually came around. Many of them supported the opposition parties' approach. The NDP members completely agreed, and so did the Liberals, to some extent. When a member is part of the

government, it is hard for them to repudiate an initiative that comes from one of the most important government institutions, namely Health Canada, and its minister, who was probably misled.

It is worth noting that ministers come and go, but senior public servants stay. At some point, it will be important to examine who really holds power within the government. I think it is time to start thinking about the power of the administration, which is not accountable to anyone and is not sitting on an ejection seat.

Mistakes were made, things moved too quickly, an attempt was made to hide something that looked good on camera, namely tightening the rules. If Health Canada is unable to enforce the rules, then why did it go from saying that 91% of natural health product companies were compliant in 2015 to suddenly claiming that 88% are no longer compliant? Well, that 88% refers to the 75 companies that we knew were problematic and that had been flagged as examples so that Health Canada could be asked why it was not doing its job.

The industry wants criteria. What criteria will be used during visits and inspections? I have talked to everyone in the industry, and it is obvious that they want clear rules and enforcement of regulations. That is why I am not asking my colleague who introduced this bill for permission to table my amendments. I am just surprised that all the work done in committee, which everyone agreed on, was not included in Bill C-224. If it had been, we could have fast-tracked this bill rather than rehash all the meetings. It should be noted that, as a result of our work, Health Canada had already begun to make concessions, particularly on labelling and cost recovery.

However, the government seems to want to go backwards, claiming that Bill C-224 is no good and that Bill C-47 is the bill that matters. That is what the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons told us this morning. That is shameful.

* * *

● (1140)

[*English*]

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Randeep Sarai (Secretary of State (International Development), Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), on behalf of the Minister of Finance and National Revenue, I would like to table, in both official languages, a notice of a ways and means motion to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025, and other measures.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of this ways and means motion.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-224, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (natural health products), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, when hundreds of thousands speak out through petitions, letters and social media, it is clear they want action, and when so many speak with such clarity and consistency, we owe it to them to listen.

For months and years, Canadians from coast to coast to coast have been raising the alarm about the government's heavy-handed approach to natural health products. Whether vitamins, probiotics, protein powders or herbal supplements, these are products that millions of people use safely, responsibly and by choice every single day.

I am sure every member of Parliament in this chamber has heard about this issue. I know I have. I have read letters, answered emails and had conversations at the doorstep and grocery store. People across this country are deeply worried that their freedom to make their own health care choices is being eroded, and they are right to be concerned. At its core, this debate is not just about vitamins or supplements; it is about choice, practical solutions, balance and setting rules based on evidence.

People expect policies that protect them without punishing responsible decisions. Over-regulation does not make anyone safer; it just makes life harder. Without debate, Bill C-47 was introduced with no consideration for consumers. We need proportionate, evidence-based standards that keep products safe without burying businesses in red tape. It is about respecting personal responsibility and limiting unnecessary government interference.

This is why I am proud to stand today in full support of my colleague, the member for Ponoka—Didsbury, and to second his private member's bill, Bill C-224. He has shown real leadership in working with Canadians across the country to craft a thoughtful, practical response to the government's overreach.

Natural health products are not obscure or uncommon; they are a trusted part of everyday life for millions of Canadians. Seniors rely on vitamins and probiotics to maintain their energy and independence; parents give their children supplements to help support healthy growth and immune systems. Athletes and fitness enthusiasts depend on protein powders and electrolytes to train safely, and many Canadians who live with chronic conditions use natural products as part of an integrated, preventative approach to their well-being.

It does not stop there. These products are also at the heart of a thriving Canadian industry made up of small business owners, holistic practitioners, local health food stores, nutritionists and fitness professionals. These are people who pour their time, savings and passion into helping others live healthier lives. They also create jobs, keep money in our communities and strengthen the local economy, including in Cambridge and North Dumfries.

Let us not forget the ripple effect. When these businesses thrive, they support farmers, suppliers and manufacturers across Canada. They contribute to innovation in wellness and preventive care, areas that reduce strain on our public health system. Undermining

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them hurts not only small shops but also the Canadian economy. These are good people doing good work, and they deserve a government that treats them as partners in health, not as problems to be managed.

This is why the Liberal government's Bill C-47 was such a serious blow. Hidden deep in that omnibus legislation were new powers and new regulations that would effectively smother this industry under layers of red tape, with more bureaucracy, more fees and more Ottawa gatekeepers. It would have given Health Canada a sweeping new authority over how natural health products are manufactured, labelled and sold. This would drive small businesses into the ground and push safe, trusted products right off Canadian shelves. The result would be fewer choices for consumers, higher costs and a less competitive marketplace, all in the name of control.

Let us be honest: This was not an isolated decision. It fits a clear and troubling pattern from the government that sees it centralizing power, limiting choice and distrusting Canadians' making their own decisions. We saw it when, during the lockdown, the Liberals imposed unjustified, unscientific mandates that divided Canadians and punished people for making personal health decisions; when they forced charities and faith groups to sign on to ideological commitments, binding agreements, to access government programs that should have been open to all; and again when they tried to give themselves unchecked spending power while shutting down Parliament, leaving no mechanism for accountability or oversight. We see it today, as they continue to govern through bloated budgets and endless bureaucracies, concentrating decisions in Ottawa instead of trusting Canadians and their communities.

● (1145)

It is the same story every time: more power for the government, less freedom for the people. Well, Bill C-224 is about reversing that trend. It is about putting power back where it belongs: in the hands of Canadians. It is about respecting the right of individuals to make their own decisions on health and the right of small businesses to operate without being crushed by excessive regulation.

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The bill would restore a sensible framework that helps keep products safe and maintains consumer protections but gets the government out of the way of ordinary Canadians, who just want to live healthy, independent lives. It is not radical; it is reasonable and practical, and Canadians know it. I have heard from hundreds of them in my community alone.

Sophie from Cambridge wrote to me recently. She said, "How can it be that natural health manufacturers and practitioners can now be destroyed for providing Canadians with vital nutrients essential for health? Our laws are now adversarial against the citizen." She went on to say, "The severe fines in the therapeutic product provisions may be pocket change for large pharmaceutical companies, but they are excessive for natural health practitioners and natural health companies." She is right. These are not multinational corporations with billion-dollar legal departments; they are small, family-run businesses with razor-thin margins trying to do the right thing for their customers and their communities.

One local owner of a health food store shared this with me: "These new rules from Bill C-47 are burying small shops like mine in red tape and extra fees. It's getting so expensive that we may have to pull good products off our shelves, and some businesses might not survive it. Customers will end up buying from sketchy online markets because they won't find what they need here at home. That's why we helped gather signatures for the petition and why we support Bill C-224—it brings back the old system that worked, protects small businesses, and keeps natural health products affordable and available for Canadians."

Another neighbour from North Dumfries told me, "I use natural health products every day for my wellness, but the new rules are making them harder to access. Some of what I depend on is gone or too costly now. Bill C-224 would make sure Canadians like me can still afford the products that help us stay healthy."

These are not isolated voices. More than 135,000 Canadians have signed the charter of health freedom petition, and tens of thousands more have submitted official House of Commons petitions.

They are just asking us to listen. They are not asking for a hand-out. They are not asking for special treatment. They are asking for the right to make their own choices, to access the products they rely on and to be treated as responsible people capable of managing their own health. This is not too much to ask. In fact, it is the least a free country should expect, yet the government continues to ignore them, to ignore the evidence and the lived experience of millions of Canadians.

It has been said that if we do not have our health, we do not have anything. That is what this debate is about. It is about whether we trust Canadians to make choices for themselves, whether we believe in empowerment or control, whether we believe in freedom or bureaucracy. I know where I stand. I stand with the Canadians, from small business owners to parents, seniors and athletes, who rely on these supplements to stay healthy and independent.

Bill C-224 is a chance for Parliament to get this right, to fix what the government broke, to restore trust and to reaffirm that the people we serve know what is best for themselves. Let us do the right thing. Together, we can support the Canadians who have spoken

out, protect small businesses and defend the freedom to make personal health choices. This is not about partisanship; it is about principle. It is about whether or not we trust Canadians to make decisions for themselves.

Bill C-224 gives the House a chance to act for choice and fairness. Let us pass Bill C-224, and let us save our natural health products, protect our entrepreneurs and restore balance and practicality to Canadian health policy.

• (1150)

Hon. Terry Duguid (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-224 this morning.

This is an important bill that would impact millions of Canadians who rely on natural health products as part of their daily health and wellness routines and want to know that the products they are using and consuming are safe. Unfortunately, the bill as it is currently written would make it harder for Canadians to trust the safety and quality of their natural health products, and it would make it harder to make sure that harmful products could be taken off the shelf. However, even with those flaws, I think we can all agree that this bill has some ideas worth exploring.

One of our new government's top priorities was to remove burdensome red tape and regulations. We have seen this promise in action in the natural health products sector. Our government heard from natural health product companies that some of the regulatory burdens added by the previous government were too onerous or did not do what they set out to do, so we paused some of those regulations and limited the scope of others.

Canada's natural health products industry is a huge part of our economy, and we want to make sure that these companies can thrive. We also want to make sure that Canadians can trust that the natural health products they rely on are safe and that what is on the label is actually what is in them. After all, the term "natural health products" encompasses all sorts of things. It includes vitamins, minerals and supplements, but it can also include products like sunscreen, deodorant and toothpaste. It even includes products that contain addictive substances, like nicotine in the form of nicotine replacement therapies. In other words, there is a wide range of products.

We need only look at the Health Canada recall page to see that sometimes, mistakes are made. There can be mislabelled products or undeclared ingredients. In one extreme case last year, a range of multivitamins and supplements had to be recalled across Canada because they contained metal fibres. These recalls are rare, but they show that even seemingly safe products that are authorized and widely used can still have some risks.

Having this oversight in place, with food and drug safety regulations that ensure that the products on store shelves are safe, effective and of high quality, helps Canadian consumers and Canadian companies alike. These regulations build trust and confidence in the system. Consumers trust that the products on store shelves are what they say they are, while businesses get to operate on a level playing field. This oversight also makes Canada a more attractive destination for companies looking to expand, because they know we have a regulatory system in place that maintains some of the highest food and drug safety standards in the world.

It is important to note that in its current form, Bill C-224 would undo many of these regulations. In trying to lessen the regulatory burden on natural health product companies, it could open the door to companies that do not have the best interests of Canadians at heart.

Under the current laws and regulations, the Minister of Health has a number of important powers. They can order a product recall. They can require changes to labels or packaging. They can request additional information about a product when they suspect that it poses a serious risk to human health. They can also issue fines against companies that refuse to take unsafe products off the shelves. These are all important tools to protect consumers, and Bill C-224 would get rid of them.

I do not think that was the goal of Bill C-224. The bill's sponsor, the member for Ponoka—Didsbury, has been very passionate about this. He has been an advocate for natural health products going back to the previous Parliament, when he introduced the forerunner of this bill, Bill C-368, which had many of the same provisions. I will pause here to note that one important difference between Bill C-368 and Bill C-224 is that Bill C-224 does not exempt nicotine products from the Food and Drugs Act, which is a significant improvement.

• (1155)

Both bills are understandable attempts to help natural health product companies continue to grow and thrive. This is a goal that all of us in this House share. It is certainly a goal of our new government. It is why we have been working closely with natural health products industry stakeholders as part of our red tape review to streamline and reduce unnecessary regulatory burden. Thanks to the red tape review, Health Canada is shifting to a risk-based approach to oversight that will reduce premarket requirements for natural health products, while shifting direct oversight and resources to higher-risk areas. It has also put a pause on new labelling requirements and continues to work with natural health product companies to address their concerns.

We recognize that a key part of working with the natural health products industry is flexibility. We cannot apply a one-size-fits-all regulatory approach. One of the important pieces of legislation

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passed by the previous government was Bill C-69, which gave the Minister of Health the flexibility to respond to urgent and emerging regulatory challenges as they arise, with tailored solutions. In a world where both industry and the government are constantly facing evolving challenges, this kind of flexibility is essential. This important work needs to continue, and I think there is room within Bill C-224 to allow it to continue.

We also need to make sure that there are rules and regulations in place to protect Canadian consumers. When Canadians reach for products on store shelves, they need to have confidence in their safety and trust that the labels accurately represent the products. If they do not have that confidence and they cannot trust the products they are buying, it will hurt the entire natural health products industry and, by extension, our economy.

There is an important balance that we need to find. I have heard that word a lot in the debate today, and I hope we can find it in this bill at the committee stage. Let us make sure that it strikes the right balance to ensure that Canadians can have peace of mind when it comes to the products they buy and that Canadian natural health product companies have the tools they need to grow and thrive.

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to commend my colleague from Montcalm for all the extremely important work he has done for the health and safety of consumers, as well as for the time he has dedicated to this issue over the past few Parliaments.

We all know people who work in small and medium-sized businesses in the natural health care sector. In Val-David, in my riding, I visited the facilities of Clef des Champs, a company that has been around since 1978. The first thing the people from that organization told me was that they had imposed some criteria and that Health Canada was technically failing to do its job by not imposing the same criteria.

We hope that the bill will be amended so it can help all businesses continue their work.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle will have eight minutes and 50 seconds to continue her speech when the House resumes consideration of this bill.

[*English*]

The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

*The Budget***PRIVILEGE**

BUDGET DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am rising to respond to the question of privilege raised on November 5 by the member for Joliette—Manawan respecting the budget documents distributed during the budget lock-up and for the budget presentation in the House. The member alleges that the physical budget documents distributed in the lock-up and in the House did not contain all of the information contained in the budget that was tabled on November 4 by the hon. Minister of Finance and National Revenue.

I can confirm to this House that the budget documents that were tabled by the Minister of Finance in the House at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, November 4, were complete and contained all required information. These documents represent the official documents relating to the 2025 budget. With respect to the budget lock-up, there are many Speakers' rulings that substantiate that these venues are not proceedings of Parliament and are offered to parliamentarians as a courtesy to assist parliamentarians in preparation for the budget debate.

On March 6, 1997, on matters related to budget secrecy, the availability of budget documents and the budget lock-up, Speaker Parent ruled:

On the issue of budget secrecy, perhaps it would be helpful to remind all members of what Speaker Sauvé pointed out in a decision she gave to the House on April 19, 1983 at page 24649 of the Debates:

-budget secrecy is a political convention. So also is the practice whereby the minister presents his budget in the House before declaring it in any other public forum.

I agree with Speaker Sauvé. It would not be proper for the Chair to get involved in the interpretation of budget secrecy, nor the matter of the lock-up.

As for the issue of privilege...let me quote again Speaker Sauvé. In a decision which can be found in the Debates of November 18, 1981 at page 12898 she stated that:

-a breach of budget secrecy cannot be dealt with as a matter of privilege.

With respect to the assertion of the member for Joliette—Manawan that the budget he was provided with in the House was not complete, I would refer the member, and indeed all members of this House, to what the former minister of state and leader of the government in the House of Commons stated on February 26, 2003, with respect to which document constitutes the official budgetary policy of the government:

First, it is not the budget statement that is made in the House, that is the budget itself. It is the instrument that is tabled by the minister prior to him reading the budget statement. Mr. Speaker will no doubt know this as indeed would most hon. members. The document that was tabled in the House constitutes the budgetary document of the government.

The budget documents distributed to members in the lock-up, as well as the budget documents distributed to members in the House, are a courtesy to assist members in preparing for the budget debate. The official and complete budget document was tabled by the Minister of Finance and National Revenue on November 4, immediately preceding the budgetary speech.

It is for these reasons that neither allegation raised by the member for Joliette—Manawan constitutes a breach of the privilege of the members of this House.

That being said, the government is of the firm view that all members should be afforded the opportunity to be informed of the content of the budget as a courtesy to assist in the discharge of their parliamentary functions. As a result, the government will continue to work with all parties to ensure that they have the information they need, in the format of their preference, to assist them in their parliamentary functions.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1205)

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from November 7 consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in this place this morning to speak to the government's long-awaited budget. While the suspense built over the last six months waiting for this day, at the end of it, our biggest fears were realized and the disappointment was palpable. Canadians have been sold a bill of goods packaged up in promises and buzzwords, with the same tax-and-spend policies of the Liberals winning the day and a staggering \$78-billion deficit, which, if the budget is passed, will be the largest in our nation's history outside of the COVID pandemic, a deficit larger than what the Prime Minister promised and double what his predecessor left behind.

Before I go any further, I note that I will be splitting my time with the member for Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière.

This budget is strewn with measures under the same misguided understanding of economics and the notion that we can spend our way out of a deficit. Many Canadians expected better, given the Prime Minister's resume. He promised a generational budget, but the only way this qualifies as such is in the enormous amount of debt that it would leave to future generations. As author and commentator Kim Moody wrote on X, "this is a horrible budget that will cripple our future generations." Saddling our children and grandchildren with higher and higher debt-servicing costs robs them of opportunity and would hamstring future Canadian governments.

The new Prime Minister is saying and doing the exact same things as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did. As a result, his government will produce the exact same results: low growth, low investment and higher inflation. At their core, the Liberals believe that for Canadians and Canadian companies to build, get things done, create jobs, prosper and pursue their dreams, the government must be in control.

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However, what actually happens when a government, especially a Liberal government, gets involved and tries to control things? Investors stop investing. The Prime Minister promised more investment; the budget reveals investment is collapsing. Builders stop building. Companies have fled the country and are building in other parts of the world that directly compete with Canadian producers, for example, in oil and gas. Taxes are imposed, like the industrial carbon tax, which adds to the cost of doing business, making it difficult for Canadian companies to compete and discouraging any business considering moving to Canada. Jobs are lost, followed by higher unemployment, especially among young Canadians.

The impacts can be seen across this country. The farmers who produce food and the manufacturers who build things and create jobs in the riding of Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek are being penalized. The industrial carbon tax, which will continue to increase over the next five years and beyond to 2050, keeps input costs high for our farmers. It drives up the cost of materials like steel and concrete, which are used in the construction of farm shops, manufacturing plants, farm implements and residential homes. It makes our producers and manufacturers less competitive with their international competitors.

By maintaining his industrial carbon tax, the Prime Minister is sending manufacturers in Humboldt, Englefeld and St. Brieux, just to name a few, a message. He is in effect saying to them and to those whose jobs rely on these businesses that he does not really like what they are doing, so he will make it difficult for them to continue doing it.

Similarly, what is the message the industrial carbon tax sends to our resource sectors in Saskatchewan? Rather than creating the right conditions for these sectors to flourish and contribute to our economy, the Liberal government treats them like a bank machine where it can make tax withdrawals over and over again, taking money out of income-generating activities and putting it into a bigger bureaucracy.

Conservatives offered to work with the government to support Canadians and ensure a positive, hopeful and affordable future, one where our economy can respond to international threats from a place of strength, where our farmers can ship their products to new markets and where our manufacturers can compete and sell their goods both south of the border and around the world. Instead, the Liberals have decided to continue with their high deficits despite promising to spend less.

● (1210)

The Prime Minister made a promise to cap spending at \$62 billion and broke it. He promised to lower the debt-to-GDP ratio and instead is raising it along with inflation. In fact, with this budget, the Liberals are spending \$90 billion more than was previously committed. That is a \$5,400 increase that will come out of the pockets of every Canadian household. That is \$5,400 of new spending this year alone for Canadian households.

This budget fails to meet the moment. Fitch Ratings sent out a warning just a day after the budget was released that the constant expansion of fiscal spending by the Liberal government is putting pressure on Canada's credit rating.

To add insult to injury, after tabling the budget and asking Saskatchewanians to make more sacrifices, the finance minister headed off to a lavish “Prudence and Prosecco” party hosted by lobbyists and Liberal insiders. Apparently, it is okay to ask others to sacrifice, just not themselves.

Under their new projected spending, the Liberals are planning to add an extra \$321 billion to the national debt over the next five years. That is more than twice the \$154 billion the Prime Minister's predecessor, Justin Trudeau, was projecting to add over the same period. The national debt has ballooned to the point where the entire amount the federal government collects from GST will be less than what Canadians are required to spend just to pay the interest on the national debt.

For residents of Saskatchewan, it means the Liberals will spend more money servicing the debt they created than they will send to the provinces in health transfer payments. This is on the heels of taxing schools and hospitals for heating during the winter for years, which was done until it was politically advantageous for them to end the consumer carbon tax.

After shackling our economy with regulations and red tape over the last 10 years, the Liberals' strategy remains the same. They refuse to repeal their anti-resource development legislation, such as Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, and plan to continue with their clean fuel standards tax, which will cost Canadians an extra 17¢ per litre on their gas.

Former prime minister Justin Trudeau claimed that he was not spending but investing, campaigning on a promise of small deficits, but he immediately broke that promise. The current Prime Minister is maintaining the Liberals' unbroken record of broken promises to Canadians, but he has gone even further by changing the way he will account for his spending. By using an overly expansive definition of capital spending, the Liberals are giving the appearance of a balanced operating budget. If we bring their definition in line with international standards, they will not even deliver on their promise to balance their operational spending. Liberals refuse to get out of the way to let Canadians build, feed and house themselves.

In closing, the people of Saskatchewan and all Canadians deserve a federal government that gets out of the way so they can invest in Canada's economy, build for the future and feed and house themselves. They deserve the opportunity to earn livelihoods, to engineer and create with Canadian steel, to grow Canadian food to feed Canadians and the world, and to buy a home of their choosing. They deserve a government that does not gamble away their future with large inflationary deficits and taxes on their livelihoods. They deserve affordable homes with affordable groceries in an affordable life.

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Budget 2025 ignores the challenges people in Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek are facing. It is a budget that delivers for wealthy insiders, bondholders and multinationals. It will drive up inflation, will cost Canadians more in interest on the national debt than we collect in GST or spend on health care transfers, and will saddle our children and our children's children with paying for the Liberals' "buy now and have someone else pay for it later" policies. The bottom line is the Prime Minister has failed to deliver on his promises.

• (1215)

Hon. Buckley Belanger (Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Madam Speaker, in terms of the generational investments we speak of in this budget, I will ask the member from Saskatchewan what exactly the Conservatives would cut from it if they had that opportunity. I want to hear her perspective on that.

More importantly, for the last 10 years, Saskatchewan has been sending Conservative MPs to Ottawa. What exactly did they advise the people of Saskatchewan not to do regarding the opportunities and programs offered by the federal government, in particular this government, for the people of Saskatchewan?

Why have the Conservatives not taken advantage of the opportunities over the years? In the last 10 years, 14 Conservative MPs have represented my province in the House. How much did they turn down because of their political agenda versus what was good for Saskatchewan?

The Conservatives stand up and have the audacity to attack this budget. Can the member elaborate on what she would cut and what she has turned down in the last 10 years?

Kelly Block: Madam Speaker, Conservatives have always been united under a common vision of hope and restoring the promise of Canada. That is what we have been asking for over the last 10 years. This has never been more important than today. Taxes are up, housing costs have doubled, our national debt is out of control, and crime and chaos are wreaking havoc in our streets, all of which has led to the worst decline in Canadians' living standards in generations.

Canadians are continuing to find it hard to make ends meet, let alone get ahead, and what did the Liberal government do? It introduced the most costly and largest budget deficit in Canadian history outside of COVID.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, we are debating the budget. This morning, I got a letter from Arbec, a forest products processor and plywood manufacturer in Amos, saying that it is shutting down its plant temporarily. This will affect over 100 workers. Arbec is calling for co-operation and asking for support for its workers.

There is something very alarming about this announcement, coming as the result of the government's inaction, which we see even in the budget. Obviously, forestry workers will also be affected by the employment insurance measures in this budget. There are no real measures to help small and medium-sized businesses or the small firms that supply these forestry companies. That is having a very alarming impact on my region. Unfortunately, like I said, there

is nothing to boost the forestry industry or help it to get back on track. Is that normal?

[*English*]

Kelly Block: Madam Speaker, the short answer is that I think it is normal for the current government. We have seen this over and over again over the last 10 years, and I would say this Liberal budget lets everyone down. After promising to deliver a generational budget, the Liberals instead delivered more broken promises.

Conservatives have been clear. We want an affordable budget for an affordable life for Saskatchewan. That includes those working in the forestry industry. That includes small and medium-sized businesses, which the CFIB has said the government has left behind.

• (1220)

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, in this very House on September 17, the Prime Minister stated to Canadians, "We are going to have a declining level of debt." This budget shows \$169 billion of more debt than what was forecast by the Trudeau government.

Does this sound, as the Prime Minister said, like a "declining level of debt", or is it just another broken promise from the government?

Kelly Block: Madam Speaker, obviously in my speech I referenced that the Prime Minister has broken every promise he made six months ago, and he continues to break promises. He is adding the largest deficit this country has seen since COVID. Conservatives were really clear. We offered to work with the government, but even in this minority parliament, the government refuses to work with other parties.

We were clear, as I said, that we wanted an affordable budget, and we asked the Prime Minister to do—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): We are out of time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière.

[*Translation*]

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, before I get into this massive deficit budget, I want to say a few words about the bow tie I am wearing. My wife, Caro, gave it to me at the beginning of November. She asked me to wear it for the entire month of November to raise awareness about the reality of men who, like me, have had to deal with a diagnosis of prostate cancer. I was fortunate to be diagnosed early, so they were able to remove this insidious thing that was inside me. Today, I am here and able to speak to Canadians about the importance, especially for men, of seeking treatment and, above all, getting tested.

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Here is a short excerpt from the Procure website, which sells this bow tie precisely to raise awareness among men: “The most common of male cancers, [prostate] cancer is sneaky. It causes few or no symptoms at first. However, it is curable if discovered early enough, limited to the prostate, and treated in a timely manner.” The way to get treated in a timely manner is to get examined by a doctor.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I think that for the rest of my speech, there will be a little less applause from one side of the House.

This Liberal Prime Minister is going to be remembered as the leader of the most expensive government in Canadian history. Every dollar he spends and every dollar he says he is going to spend in his budget, which forecasts a \$78-billion deficit, has to come from somewhere. It comes out of the pocket of a mother who works at a grocery store and pays her taxes. It comes out of the pocket of a welder in Thetford Mines who looks at his paycheque and wonders why he has so little money left over. It comes out of the pocket of a student who goes out to eat once in a while and, when he sees the taxes on his restaurant bill, thinks to himself that next time, he will just stay home and eat noodles.

All the money the government spends comes out of the pockets of hard-working Canadians. It is not imaginary money. It is not money that does not exist. It is money that someone is one day going to have to pay. After the latest Liberal budget, Canada is at a point where the money currently being spent comes not only from the mother or the welder or the student. It is money that will have to be paid by their children, their grandchildren, their great-grandchildren, and even their great-great-grandchildren. This is worrying for the future.

It is no wonder that, when young people look at how their money is being spent here in Ottawa, they really wonder where they stand. Young people have lost hope of one day having their own home and their own land. Housing is being built in Thetford Mines. A lot of housing is being built, but hardly any houses are being built. That is not normal. Back in my day, when I was the mayor of Thetford Mines—I can say that, now—we wanted to have a lot of residential construction. It meant that a lot of young families could settle down, buy a home and stay there for a long time. Now, young people can only hope to have housing they will be able to afford. That is a big difference.

We presented the government with a simple solution. We promised to support the budget on the condition that it be an affordable budget that makes life affordable for everyone, from mothers to welders to young students, in short for all Canadians. Unfortunately, that is not the budget we got. The Prime Minister, who claims to be different but is following in the footsteps of the previous prime minister, promised to spend less, but will run a deficit of \$80 billion. One has to wonder what kind of world the Prime Minister lives in or what planet he lives on. One has to wonder who his friends are and who he shares his meals with every week, failing to realize that every dollar he spends is a dollar that was earned by a hard-working taxpayer. It is money earned by workers who sell fruits and vegetables or weld parts that we manufacture and are

currently trying to sell to Americans, without being able to sell them.

Adding fuel to the inflationary fire, as he is doing with this spending, will make life even more difficult for all Canadians. The cost of this Liberal budget will further drive up the price of food, housing and everything Canadians need. In his speeches, the Prime Minister would have us believe that Canada is in a strong fiscal position.

• (1225)

That is not the impression I have. I spent a week in my riding. I went to Thetford Mines, Plessisville and Lotbinière. I covered a large area, over many regions. When I went to the St. Vincent de Paul Society thrift shop in Black Lake, I was told that there has been a 20% increase in customers in recent months because people can no longer afford to buy clothes and can no longer afford to buy winter clothes at department stores. I definitely do not get the impression that Canadians and the people in my community are in a solid financial situation.

Families are struggling to make ends meet. As I mentioned earlier, it has become virtually impossible for young people to become homeowners. We hear that 2.2 million Canadians line up at food banks every month, and in Quebec, that number is 600,000. That is not a solid financial situation. I would call it a precarious financial situation for Canadians. Why did the Prime Minister break his promise to spend less? Unfortunately, that means that all Canadians will pay more.

There is something the Prime Minister does not seem to understand. I think that the cost of this budget to all Canadians will mean that, unfortunately, once again, more and more young people will lose interest in politics and their future and will disengage instead of wanting to bring about change. Fortunately, there are still people in the House who believe that the money that passes through our hands and that we must decide how to use does not belong to us, but to Canadians. We must make decisions so that people have more money in their pockets, not less.

In just a few months, the cost of strawberries has gone up by 25%. Beef is up 25%. Coffee is up 20%. Chicken is up 17%. When people go grocery shopping, they realize that it is unaffordable and that there are fewer nutritious items in their baskets. They turn to cheaper, less nutritious foods that they can afford to ensure that they can put at least one meal on the table every day.

This is the new Prime Minister's Canada. This is Canada after 10 years under the Liberals. I am not the only one saying this. Several commentators and analysts in Quebec have criticized this budget. I will quote a few.

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A La Presse article entitled “This is not a ‘generational budget’” said, “At \$78 billion this year, the deficit is already staggering. Yet, over five years, the Carney government will basically double the accumulated deficit, which will go from \$154 billion to \$321 billion. All of the fiscal anchors established under the Trudeau government have vanished. The government said that it would keep the deficit under 1% of the GDP, but it has failed to do so, and today, the deficit is at 2.5% of the GDP. The government also said that it wanted to keep the debt-to-GDP ratio on a downward track, but it has also failed in that regard. In four years, the debt-to-GDP ratio will be at 43%, when the hope was to reduce it to 39.5%.”

In an article about how the budget does not change much for people's finances, Le Soleil quoted Restaurants Canada when it said, “We are disappointed that the budget doesn't include sufficient measures to improve everyday affordability for Canadians, including Restaurants Canada's ask to exempt all food from GST.”

According to an article in Le Journal de Québec, “[The Liberal Prime Minister] has achieved the impossible: spending more than Trudeau.” Honestly, I did not think that was possible, but that is exactly what we saw when the budget was presented. To quote journalist Michel Girard, “Mark Carney's new Liberal government is spending even more than Justin Trudeau's did.... It works out to \$168 billion more than the five deficits the previous Trudeau government had planned for the same five fiscal years.”

When people look at these numbers, I think they realize that the government has simply missed the mark when it comes to presenting an affordable budget that will ensure an affordable life. I see that I am out of time. I could have talked about this a lot more, but I will stop there. I will now take questions from my colleagues.

• (1230)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member talked a lot about the deficit situation and about debt. I am wondering whether he could provide his thoughts in regard to the G7, the most industrialized countries, I would argue, as a good way to measure Canada. When we look at the G7 countries in the world, which include the United States, England and others, we see that we have the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, and I think we have the second-lowest, or maybe are tied for the second-lowest, deficit.

If we talk about the deficit this year compared to in 2009, when the member's party was in government and his leader sat in the Conservative caucus, with the value of real dollars we will find that the debt back then was higher than what it is in the budget that is before us.

I am wondering whether the member might want to rethink the Conservatives' whole premise of wanting to have an election based strictly on the deficit.

[Translation]

Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I simply cannot believe it. This shows how completely out of touch the Liberals are.

I just spent five or six minutes describing the precarious financial situation that Canadians and Canadian families find themselves in and talking about the fact that they are unable to pay their bills at the end of the month. Meanwhile, the Liberals are bragging about how Canada is better off than the other G7 countries, how those other countries are worse off and Canada is better.

When it comes time to pay for groceries, people realize that, unfortunately, everything is getting more expensive, despite the Liberals' lip service—which we no longer believe, and which the Parliamentary Budget Officer no longer believes. I did not have time to address that in my speech. It is not true that everything is fine and dandy.

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am interested to know what my colleague thinks about the magic trick that the Liberals played with the budget by categorizing one part as spending and the other as investments. One expert and economist said that if the same criteria had been applied to Justin Trudeau's budgets, they would almost always have been balanced or even surplus budgets.

What does my colleague think of the new creative accounting method used for the budget?

Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I call this creative accounting method Liberal flim-flam.

Speaking of the plan to divide federal spending into two budgets, one an operating budget, which the government promises to balance, and one an investment budget, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Jason Jacques, said this:

We have not seen a clear definition of what would fall into capital and would fall into operating.

Even the Parliamentary Budget Officer cannot tell what the outcome will be. He went on to say the following:

At this point it's impossible for us and for you as Parliamentarians, to assess the likelihood or probability of the government hitting any fiscal target.

Call it a plan, call it a strategy or call it a flim-flam, it does not work. A flim-flam is a flim-flam, nothing more.

• (1235)

[English]

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague started off by talking about how every dollar the government spends is taken from Canadians. What we see at the end of the budget is that in just a four-year period, more than \$10 billion more will be spent on interest on Liberal debt than is actually collected in GST, so instead of money going toward health care, it will be going toward interest on the debt.

What does the member think of the government's focusing more on money for bankers on Bay Street than for doctors on Main Street?

[Translation]

Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question. The purpose of my speech today was to show how completely out of touch this Liberal government is, because it does not realize that we are not only talking about GST but also about health transfers.

The Budget

The amount of interest on the debt that the Liberals are racking up will exceed the amount spent on health transfers, when people across the country are calling for investments in health so that everyone can receive care.

The government is showing that it is out of touch with the day-to-day reality of Canadians and, unfortunately, it has proven that this is not an affordable budget that will make life affordable for all Canadians.

[English]

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 the member for Bourassa.

Let me be very clear: My first priority is the constituents of Winnipeg North. I am very grateful for the many times they have made the decision to elect me to this beautiful chamber. I appreciate and value every day I am able to share what I believe are the concerns and issues related not only to my constituents but also to Canadians as a whole.

I know that if we were to reflect on the budget the Prime Minister has brought forward to the House, we would see that it is a true reflection of what Canadians' expectations are all about, coming out of an election we just had, in April.

It is indeed a budget that would build Canada strong. It is a budget that recognizes the importance of economic security and the role a national government can play in being there for its citizens. I find it not surprising but unfortunate that while the government is focused on delivering for Canadians, the Conservative Party of Canada is more focused on going back to the polls.

If the Conservatives were to consult with their constituents, what they would find is that the people of Canada recognize we had an election only months ago, we have a Prime Minister who has been aggressively dealing with the issues that are before us, and we are delivering tens of thousands of jobs. In September alone there were 60,000 more jobs, and in October there were 60,000. We are dealing with the issue of affordability. Yes, there is more work to do, and we are prepared to do that work.

At the end of the day, there is great contrast between the Conservative Party of Canada and what it is that the government is proposing. I would suggest it is a time in which we need a government that is prepared to invest in Canadians. That is what this budget does. We are investing in Canadians. We believe that the best way to build Canada strong is to have confidence not only in our economy but also in the people who make up our great nation.

On the other hand, the Conservatives continuously provide inconsistency in terms of the statements they make. Let me highlight that by just the last two Conservative speakers. They are trying to build an election scenario in which they want an election all because of the deficit and the debt.

The reality of the situation is very clear: When it comes to the debt, the G7 countries of France, the U.K., the United States, Japan, Italy and Canada, and there is another one, we actually have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio of any of the G7 countries. With regard to

the deficit, we are ranked number two; I think only Japan actually beats us on that particular issue.

We can talk about the accumulated deficit or the deficit for this year and contrast that to the deficit the leader of the Conservative Party had in 2009. That is when there was the greatest deficit, yet back then we had a government that insisted on not supporting Canadians, and that is the reason it was not able to create the same sort of jobs we have created, well over, virtually double, the number of jobs Stephen Harper and the current Leader of the Conservative Party did in the same period of time, ten years. We have created close to two million jobs.

The Prime Minister is leading the fight and working with different provinces and stakeholders to build a stronger and healthier economy in all ways. I say that we are investing in Canadians, and we do it in different ways. Again I want to highlight the contrast. One of the ways of investing is recognizing our children. We do that by saying that one of the things we need to recognize is that there are many children in different communities who did not have access to breakfast; they were going to school on an empty stomach. This is a reality. The Conservatives close their eyes and completely ignore it.

• (1240)

I was education critic in Manitoba many years ago when I served in the Manitoba Legislature. I can recall Sharon Carstairs', in 1988, talking about how we cannot expect children to learn on an empty stomach. This is a serious issue.

What is the response we get from the Conservative Party? One Conservative member stands up and says it is absolutely garbage and we do not need a program of this nature. Others kind of pile on and say that the program does not exist.

We have a Prime Minister who has looked at the value of the program and has made it a permanent fixture. That means children will not have to learn on an empty stomach. I believe that to somehow ignore the issue or give the impression that it is not a problem is just wrong. One cannot learn on an empty stomach.

With respect to our saying we are going to invest in people, let us look at the investment in apprenticeship programs. Canadians are going through some difficult times, and we recognize that. That is why we are enhancing apprenticeship programs, recognizing the value of training, of working and of creating job opportunities. It is why the Prime Minister has been travelling to Europe and to Asia; we are looking at ways to expand our economic sovereignty by having additional trading opportunities. It is why we have substantial legislation, like Bill C-13, which would actually enhance our trade with Britain and Northern Ireland.

This is what we have seen, virtually from day one, from the Prime Minister and the government. Let us look at the number of meetings that were held with the different provinces for the advancement of Bill C-5: one Canada, one economy and the mobility of labour. These are the types of actions that will continue to make a very positive, profound difference.

The Budget

Where are the Conservatives on these important issues? Their priority is not the interests of Canadians; their interest is all about their own political interests and that alone. We hear this with the type of announcements we hear from them. Virtually every day, the spreading of misinformation takes place, and it is really quite sad and unfortunate, because it is a challenging time.

We understand that affordability is an important issue for us to address. That is the reason the Prime Minister got rid of the carbon tax. It is the reason we gave a tax break to 22 million Canadians. Let us remember Bill C-4, which the Conservatives still have not passed through and for which there is no indication of their support. Bill C-4 would give a tax break to 22 million Canadians. It would also give a tax break on the GST to first-time homebuyers. It would also put into law that the carbon tax is gone. These are the types of initiatives that are being taken.

We have the bail reform legislation. Not only are we delivering on budget items that support Canadians, but we also have other legislation. Crime and safety in our communities was a primary concern. Issues like extortion are a primary concern of the government. The Prime Minister made a commitment to Canadians in the last election to bring forward bail reform legislation.

Let us take a look at Bill C-14, bail reform legislation that all of us should be getting behind. I have challenged the Conservatives on numerous occasions to make a commitment to pass bail reform legislation before the end of the year. Not one of them is standing up to say that they are prepared to do that for their constituents. I find that shameful.

That approach is a directive from the Leader of the Conservative Party, who is more interested in calling an election than in delivering for Canadians. It is not that we are scared of an election, but we are reflecting on what Canadians are thinking. They are not thinking that they want an election today. They want co-operation inside the House of Commons among all political entities, to look at what is before us that is good and at how we can enable the legislation's passage, because that is what is in the best interests of Canadians, not the type of filibustering and the hype we get from the Conservative Party, threatening to have an election because Conservatives want another kick at the can.

• (1245)

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Winnipeg North for his yelling and screaming. It is always fun. It is nice to actually see him have a chance to get up to speak in the House. He talks a lot about misinformation. I wonder if he could comment on his leader's, the Prime Minister's, saying in this very place on September 17 that we will have "a declining level of debt." The budget the member is defending today shows five years of increasing debt.

Is it a declining level of debt, as the member's leader stated in the House on September 17, which the member is welcome to look up in Hansard, or is it, as the budget shows, an increasing level of debt? Where is the misinformation?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we just heard the misinformation. Within the budget document, there is a pathway to having an operational surplus. That is actually a commitment we are getting from the government: to work toward an operational

balance. At the end of the day, I believe that members need to have a good sense of the expectations that Canadians have, not only of the government but also of all members of all political entities.

I truly believe that Canadians do not want an election. Just because someone is an opposition member, they do not necessarily have—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

[*Translation*]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, this is a big day. I can feel the excitement in the air.

With regard to the new calculation for investments, did my colleague check to see whether the deficit would have been the same had this model been applied in previous Parliaments since 2015?

If not, how can amortization be valid in a budget like this, when the government is not investing in anything that will become an asset?

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member makes reference to investments. A good way of looking at it is in terms of what is happening in foreign investments coming into Canada. I remember giving a speech here in 2024, talking about the first three quarters of 2023, when Canada was number three in the world in terms of foreign investment dollars coming in on a per capita basis. We were, I believe, number one in the G7, possibly even in the G20; I cannot recall offhand.

Countries around the world are recognizing the stability and the advantages of investing in Canada. As opposed to doing what the Conservatives do, and at times what the Bloc does, which is talking down Canada, we should be talking up Canada to generate even more foreign investment, because that generates jobs for Canadians.

• (1250)

Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, I would like it if the hon. member could elaborate on how important it is that, in the budget, we are committing \$81.8 billion of investment over the next five years in national defence, and on why it is so important that every colleague, every member of the House, support the budget to make sure that the men and women in uniform have the equipment they need going forward.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I truly appreciate the question. Having served in the Canadian Forces and having worked with many men and women who have served, I can say that it is long overdue for Canada to actually make a commitment to 2% of the GDP. That has enhanced salaries. It has provided all sorts of opportunities for industry here in Canada; I think of Quebec's aerospace industry and Manitoba's aerospace industry. The opportunities within the budget with respect to the military are just endless.

The Budget

We finally have a Prime Minister and a government that are actually focused on building up our sovereignty. A part of that is our military. Contrast that to the leader of the Conservative Party, with less than 1% of GDP in one year.

[*Translation*]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is with a deep sense of responsibility and great pride that I rise today to speak to the 2025 federal budget. Before I begin my speech, I just want to say that it has been over six months since I was elected and I want to once again thank the people of Bourassa for putting their trust in me and for giving me this responsibility.

This budget is not just an accounting exercise. It is a vision, a road map that shows the kind of country that we want to build: a fairer, safer, more prosperous and more innovative Canada, a Canada where families are supported, where young people have opportunities for the future and where communities like Bourassa and, of course, the entire city of Montreal finally get the investments they deserve.

We are at a critical juncture. We must act ambitiously and diligently in light of inflationary pressures, housing challenges, rapid technological transformations, geopolitical tensions and pressing infrastructure needs. Budget 2025 responds specifically to these challenges by focusing on meaningful investments that will have a lasting impact on our country's development.

This is a budget for families and the middle class. A reduction of the rate for the first tax bracket from 15% to 14.5% this year and then to 14% in 2026 will provide meaningful relief to millions of Canadians. For a couple, a single parent or a young worker, this means hundreds of dollars more each year, direct support that leaves more room in already fragile budgets. This measure reflects a simple conviction: Prosperity must benefit those who create it.

If there is one area in which this budget marks a historic turning point, it is infrastructure. This year, the government is allocating \$50.8 billion to modernize, expand and develop Canada's infrastructure. This is a huge investment and one that is absolutely necessary. Our infrastructure is the foundation of our prosperity. In my riding of Bourassa, we know how essential it is. Streets, parks, water systems, community centres, public facilities: These are everyday spaces that shape our quality of life. Thanks to this budget, Bourassa will benefit from safer, more modern infrastructure that is better suited to families, seniors and young people, including better-maintained streets, modernized parks and public spaces that are redesigned to be safer and more accessible.

These investments include one that is especially important for our community: the sports centre in Montreal North. I would like to cast this project in a more human light, as it is about much more than bricks and mortar. It is about more than walls and buildings. We are not putting up a building, we are creating hope. We are building the future of our young people. We are reigniting the pride of a neighbourhood which has too often been stigmatized or forgotten. A sports centre is not just concrete and steel. It is a place where young and old alike can find out what they are capable of. They can spend a day there with friends or family members. It is a place where families can gather, where a community can feel at home, where its members can look out for one another and lift one another

up. It is a place where dreams will be born and take shape. It is a show of confidence in our youth, a clear signal that Montreal North deserves the best and that our potential is unlimited. That is the very heart and soul of budget 2025: investing in people first, before investing in concrete and walls.

The budget also makes major investments in sustainable mobility, in bus networks, in improving urban travel, and in energy and green transition infrastructure. These initiatives will make our streets safer, help our neighbourhoods adapt and contribute to a real reduction in the cost of living.

In terms of housing, the budget allocates nearly an additional \$25 million to improve access to suitable housing. In Montreal, Montreal North and in the riding of Bourassa, where so many families spend more than 40% of their income on rent, these measures will provide welcome relief. Eliminating the GST for first-time home buyers, speeding up housing construction through Build Canada Homes, and supporting community housing will make it possible to offer lasting and meaningful solutions.

● (1255)

Budget 2025 also includes major investments in innovation, cybersecurity and advanced technologies, with \$110 billion to modernize our economy. This means jobs of the future for young people in Bourassa. These jobs are designed and planned for a future where advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, will be central to the jobs of tomorrow. It also means new opportunities and active involvement in Canada's digital economic transformation.

Security continues to be a priority. Adding 1,000 RCMP officers, enhancing the Canada Border Services Agency, establishing financial crimes agency, and making significant investments in cybersecurity will make our neighbourhoods safer and more stable.

I would like to share some comments made by seniors in my riding. They saw that budget line, which may look like a simple accounting entry, but to them, it represents a commitment to protection. Seniors are a prime target for cyber-attacks and financial fraud. They can clearly see that this line in the budget shows that someone is thinking about them, that people are the top priority. That is what budget 2025 is all about.

Lastly, while the budget may be big, it is a responsible budget. Canada continues to have the lowest net debt in the G7. Our fiscal trajectory is sound. Our trajectory is prudent. Most importantly, our trajectory is sustainable.

The Budget

This budget is a choice for the future. It is a choice for confidence in our families, our youth and our communities. For Bourassa, this budget represents a promise of a future that is brighter, more visible, fairer and more prosperous. For our borough, the budget means investments that finally meet our needs and make a tangible difference in each and every person's life. The future is not carved in stone. The future is what we make it. Today, with this budget, we are choosing to build a future. We are choosing to build pride. We are choosing to build hope. We are building Canada strong.

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to the speech given by my colleague, and he had a lot to say about his riding of Bourassa. He carefully avoided mentioning the people in Bourassa who cannot pay their bills at the end of the month. He avoided mentioning the 600,000 Quebecers who are lining up at food banks every month because they cannot put enough food on the table to feed their families.

I understand that the member for Bourassa wants to list off the talking points he was given by his Prime Minister and by the Minister of Finance and National Revenue. However, when he chats with people at the grocery store, do they actually want to talk about the state of public finances in G7 countries, or do they tell him about how people are struggling to pay their bills and afford groceries? That is the real question. That is the question the member should be asking himself instead of reciting talking points he has learned by heart.

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, first, I would like to point out that I have been in politics for more than eight years and that even my political aides do not write my speeches. These are not talking points from the Prime Minister or cabinet.

Last week, I met several people who only wanted to talk to me about the budget. I would like to thank them for their trust, and I am repeating what they told me at the grocery store. This is a people-oriented budget that takes citizens into account. It is a budget that, above all, responds to challenges related to inflation and housing. We listened to the people, and this is a budget that aims to help them.

I thank my colleague for the question and I want to reiterate that I wrote my speech from the heart. I wrote it myself, drawing inspiration from the comments that I heard from the people of Bourassa.

• (1300)

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like my colleague to explain something to me. For years, the Bloc Québécois has done everything in its power to end the discrimination against people between the ages of 65 and 74. Again this weekend, these people told me that they understand why the Bloc will be voting against the budget: This measure does not appear anywhere in the budget. I could also mention the 6% escalator in health care transfers.

Why was this measure not included in the budget?

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for that very good question because it focuses on people who we really listened to in the context of this budget. I would simply like to say that, although that measure is not included in the budget, there are other measures that take seniors into account.

That said, it is really important to understand what we are doing here. Our primary goal is to deal with urgent situations, particularly when it comes to housing. We want to help people with their housing needs. We also want to mitigate the impact of rising grocery prices. All of these measures show that our government is looking to reduce household expenses, particularly for seniors. We have not forgotten them. Believe it or not, our government thought about all of the elements, and we have not forgotten anything. On the contrary, our government is trying to propose a much more systemic budget that takes all of the elements into account to protect everyone's purchasing power.

Hon. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague from Bourassa has reminded us of the measures we are taking to invest in Canada and Canadians. We are making major investments, such as the sports centre in Montreal North, in the member's riding. We are proving that we are taking action for our country and to build a strong Canada.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on why it is so important to invest and build in the current context.

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, that is a very good question with two different aspects to it. First, why invest now? By investing in infrastructure, we are creating jobs. There are jobs created by the project itself, which is an investment, and future employment opportunities, which are ongoing jobs that can become permanent afterwards.

Second, Bourassa, in Montreal North, is the only borough in Montreal that did not really have access to a sports centre. There are young people like Luguentz Dort, who won the NBA Finals. There are young people who have won robotics medals. There are young people who have done well in various sports, but who did not have the opportunity to have a sports centre. It is important to note that people actually cried with joy when they saw that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance had thought of them and these young people. People actually had tears in their eyes when we announced this wonderful facility, which is a facility of the future, an investment in our young people, an investment in our families and, above all, an investment that will help prevent crime among young people.

[English]

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with the member for Edmonton Northwest.

The Budget

The budget speaks of a generational shift, but few Canadians would realize how deep this shift runs. For the first time, our nation's infrastructure is not just about steel, concrete and asphalt; it is about code, computation and data. Beneath that shiny language of innovation lies a quiet transformation, one that changes not only how we build, how we measure and how we account but also how we govern. The budget would link the Canada Infrastructure Bank to new investments in artificial intelligence, what is called in the budget a trusted "Canadian AI ecosystem." Traditionally, the bank financed retrofit water systems, power grids, etc. Now it would finance data centres and AI infrastructure. The budget would give the failed Infrastructure Bank an additional \$10 billion, for a total of \$45 billion in taxpayer-funded dollars.

There is also a shift in accounting. In the budget, with a deficit of \$78 billion, many people wonder how we would be able to pay for all of this. The reality is that the government would redefine the accounting system, primarily by changing the definition of a capital investment. The old system of assets and deficits would no longer exist because the government would move to a fully integrated digital accounting system. In this system, deficits would not matter and the carbon footprint in every transaction could be accounted for in a new transformational ledger. Under the new framework, intangible digital assets, algorithms, data sets and software systems would now be recorded as capital, just as bridges, hospitals and roads once were.

If everything digital can be reclassified as infrastructure, the government can borrow, spend and record it as an investment, even when no tangible assets exist that Canadians can see and use. As the system evolves, it could one day be connected directly to a digital ledger, perhaps even a blockchain, which is a kind of digital accounting system. This points to a future where we ourselves would be reduced to digital assets on a government ledger. In this system, every asset, expenditure and citizen interaction is recorded in real time. Mark my words: This will be how we calculate the GDP in the future.

The new system would also shift from human oversight to algorithmic control. With the budget, the government would essentially change how it keeps the nation's books. In the old system, capital spending meant building something we could see: a bridge and the day-to-day expenses that kept things running. If they spent more than they took in, there was a deficit, plain and simple. Now, more of the government spending could be called capital and put on the other side of the ledger, even when it is for such things as software, research and technology. The government would now be able to spread that cost over many years, so the deficit looks smaller. It is like buying a laptop and calling it an investment instead of a purchase; the numbers look better, but the money is still coming out of the bank.

The new accounting model would also change how we measure the country's wealth. Debt that was once a liability would now be treated as an investment. Intangible assets, such as AI systems, data holdings and even carbon credits would now be listed as capital. That makes the books look stronger and the GDP appear higher even if nothing has been physically built in our country. This shift would turn the economy from measuring what we produce to what

we project. This means that when every deficit can be labelled as an asset, accountability is pushed to the future.

We are moving from a world of tangibles to intangibles, one that is traceable. In the tangible world, the ownership was clear and the tangibles were clear. People owned their land, their car and their work. In the traceable world, ownership would be replaced by access. People stream music, lease data and rent rights through a QR code. That is the real generational shift the budget refers to.

• (1305)

This new system, which is built to measure outcomes, will eventually measure us. Every promise of transparency can become a tool of surveillance if not guided by the principles of freedom that we cherish. If everything of value becomes data, then every aspect of our lives can become data to be recorded and monetized. This is why we must be on guard as we see this change towards a new public system, the digital ledger, which is funded to the tune of \$1 billion. We need to have safeguards.

Digital infrastructure is not neutral. The same network that tracks investments can track individuals. The same AI that predicts the supply chain can predict personal behaviour. If these systems are not governed by strict privacy laws and democratic oversight, they will blur the line between accountability and control.

Canadians deserve an infrastructure they can trust. This means they deserve to know where the data is stored, who profits from its use and whether freely opting out of systems, including digital ID, will remain a right in the digital era, especially when it comes to accessing essential taxpayer-funded services. Without these answers, a trusted AI ecosystem becomes a polite euphemism for centralized control.

The Budget

As artificial intelligence transforms our economy, the budget projects that governments and industries will soon do more with fewer people. They claim that efficiency will rise, but we know that the security of work will fall. Some in government are even speaking of the universal basic income as a solution and a way to keep people afloat when machines do the work for us. As we modernize, we must never allow people to be reduced to mere consumers at the end of a bar code or a QR code. Human beings are not data points to be managed; we are souls with a purpose, and the future we build must reflect that truth.

This Parliament has a sacred duty to guard the public ledger of our nation, not only its finances but also its direct impact on the rights and freedoms of Canadians. The generational shift this budget accelerates is real, and it is happening at lightning speed. We see it in Bill C-5, which centralizes national development and infrastructure decisions. We are witnessing the government redefining the Canadian dream of owning a home by telling gen Z to accept a future in which they will rent modular homes instead of owning property and building equity for their families. In the digital era, we must find new ways to hold government accountable. Traditional critiques of centralization no longer apply, because governments will not be acting alone.

In this technocratic system, the very agile nation model that the Liberal government has been studying over the past few years has become a reality, and citizens themselves become the inputs that help the state move faster. The budget addresses problems like inflation with solutions that may limit our freedom, such as digital IDs. As well, for example, there could be programmable money that can expire, designed with the goal of keeping money circulating by forcing us to spend it before it expires, and currencies that can dictate how and when Canadians spend. The digital infrastructure investment in the budget claims to be generationally transformative. However, history will judge us not by how efficiently we digitize the nation but by whether we preserve the soul of this democracy in the process.

For five years, I have been monitoring and speaking about how the digitization of the economy and our infrastructures will affect our identities, and now it is here. Now, all that remains is how we choose to respond. Our task is not to reject progress but to reclaim purpose. As parliamentarians, we must insist that technology serves Canadians rather than replacing them. Our duty is to fight with dignity, sovereignty and the soul of the people, who must never be reduced to a mere QR code.

• (1310)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if I look at the contrast, we are not fearful of technology. We see the important role, for example, that the Internet plays in the advancement of society. There are a lot of positive things, but there are some negatives, which is one of the reasons we brought in Bill C-8, the cybersecurity act. However, the Conservative Party has refused to allow it to go to committee so that we can address some of the concerns, and some might say paranoia, that is espoused from the other side.

Bill C-8 would protect our industries; it would protect our consumers. Can the member provide her thoughts regarding why the

Conservative Party does not recognize the value of Bill C-8, which is all about cybersecurity, protecting Canadians and protecting Canada's economic industries?

Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, I would remind the member opposite that Bill C-8 purports to be able to shut down people's Internet without a court warrant. In an era in which the government is moving toward digitization and AI controls, people could end up in digital jails. That is why it is so important to have safeguards and accountability and ensure that with the government collecting this data, we know how it is used, we know that people's civil liberties are being upheld and we know that the government is being held accountable.

• (1315)

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, my region of Abitibi—Témiscamingue has been experiencing some stormy weather. Fortunately, I have my winter tires on. It took me an extra hour to get here to Ottawa last night. We should all be ready for a potential election, unless the Conservative Party decides to chicken out, as the saying goes.

Can my colleague give us the scoop or some sort of indication of what her party plans to do later to ensure that an election is called or is not called?

[*English*]

Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, when I look at my portfolio as the critic for infrastructure, I see that the Canada Infrastructure Bank is actually receiving \$10 billion more than it received before. We know of the recent scandal with respect to the \$1 billion sent abroad to fund the building of ships for BC Ferries, leaving our employees in Canada without jobs.

The real issue with the budget is accountability. We are not seeing the level of accountability and responsibility that should be entrusted with Canadian tax dollars.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for that thorough speech. It certainly was very informative.

I would like to ask the member the following question, given the youth unemployment crisis and the health care crisis we have in this country, among a bunch of other things. We see an additional \$324 billion added to the national debt over the next five years and being passed on to future generations. I wonder if the member can share with us the thoughts of some of her constituents, and how she feels, about passing on this debt for future generations to pay at a time when this budget is calling for us to pay more money in interest payments to banks than we are putting into health care, of all things.

The Budget

Leslyn Lewis: My concern, Madam Speaker, is with respect not only to the debt but also to how it is calculated. The fact is that the accounting system is changing, so Canadians have no real way of measuring the progress in this country. We will need some sort of independent auditing to assess whether the government is repackaging debt or whether we are actually seeing real progress in this country. Therefore, I am very concerned about the way that things such as operating expenses are now shifted over to be calculated as capital—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Edmonton Northwest.

Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for sharing her time with me.

Canadians have now had time to absorb this budget. A common theme heard from everyday Albertans in my riding of Edmonton Northwest is that the budget fails to address the number one concern of Canadians today: affordability. The government touts this budget as a generational budget, but the future generations of Canada, the young people of this country, only see ever-increasing challenges ahead in living their lives.

For the first time in a long time, Canadian young people are saying that they expect life to be worse than it was for their parents' generation. Housing is out of reach. I hear directly from young people in my riding who want to start a family and own a home but do not see a path to achieving those dreams.

Food costs, caused by inflationary spending and government taxes, are making getting basic meals a challenge. There are record lineups at food banks. Canadians are not imagining these things, as the government likes to say. Education is increasingly expensive and spots are less available. Wages are stagnant and the cost of living is rising faster than any of the paycheques people receive.

The urgency of this reality is not reflected in the priorities of the budget. On top of this, the Prime Minister has directly asked young Canadians to sacrifice even more. The budget talks about long-term housing supply but fails to address the crushing affordability crisis of youth today.

Youth, like all Canadians, are looking for leadership. The leadership they are looking for is systematic, not the same, old strategy of the last decade, when the government attempted to be the economic driver of Canada while systematically undermining the economy. It is the same failed approach the government takes with our resource sector.

We see in the budget a focus on major projects, which is good, but we do not see the systematic leadership to unleash the true potential of our resource sector. A vague line exists in the budget about the oil and gas cap, but this is only if carbon capture is a part of the equation, which would cost Canadians billions of dollars. The industrial carbon price, the tanker ban and Bill C-69 are still in place, and they are all things that tell investors that Alberta, in particular, is not a priority to Canada.

The government still very much controls the system, effectively saying to the market, “We know very much our own rules are ineffective and prohibitive, but if you lobby us for government subsidies, we will determine if you are a winner or a loser.”

There are indications out there that the federal government intends to sign an MOU with the Province of Alberta. While we were told things would be getting done at record speeds, MOUs do not get shovels into the ground. MOUs are non-binding; legislative systematic changes are binding.

Alberta is the natural resource engine of Canada, and this budget only vaguely strings Albertans continuously along the path of more federal government control over our potential as a province to help our whole country. Albertans have proven for decades that their entrepreneurship, particularly in the oil and gas industry, has been a catalyst for helping the whole country. From Newfoundland to B.C. and the north, people are heating their homes with diesel from our oil and gas fields.

I reflect upon my great-grandfather, Chief William Morin, who, in the 1950s, embraced oil and gas development, and said this would be the catalyst to increasing the living standards of his people and having us stand on our own two feet in the face of Indian Act paternalism. This brings me to the consequences of this budget on indigenous peoples.

It has now been just over six months since I arrived in Ottawa as a first-time member of the House. In my previous life as chief of my nation, I sought to lead in the example set by my great-grandfathers and the chiefs who came before me. They were entrepreneurial, first-time farmers in the late 1800s. They embraced oil and gas as a resource to eradicate poverty in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and started gaming in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, so as to show our people and Canada that we were responsible net contributors to treaty.

This coincides with the notion of self-determination and the fact that Ottawa does not know what is best for our people. Since 1867, Indian Affairs, now Indigenous Services Canada, underpinned by the Indian Act, has failed indigenous peoples across Canada. I came to Ottawa knowing that major structural changes were needed in how Indigenous Services Canada manages the relationship with indigenous peoples. Now more than ever, I know it to be true that significant structural changes are needed.

I was fortunate to lead my community on this new journey in the era of reconciliation, even doing some good things with the government along the way. I was only able to do so by the foundation of self-determination set by my chiefs who came before me, who sought effective win-win partnerships with Canada and Canadians by coming to the table with our own source revenue. For too many first nations, Métis and Inuit, this is not the case.

The Budget

• (1320)

Now I am afraid the Liberal government has reduced reconciliation to performative slogans, ministerial addresses and press releases. The budget offers none of the structural improvements to take reconciliation to the next necessary level, a level defined by individual entrepreneurship, less government, and more chief and council oversight. The government uses softer, patronizing language such as “reallocation” and “re-evaluation” and says that it is spreading reconciliation around to other ministries. All of this is performative and is part of the paternalistic saviour strategy that has created more uncertainty, fear, disappointment and division among indigenous peoples and Canadians.

What does it say about priorities when the federal government increases spending in the administrative aspects of Indigenous Services, such as the new bureaucratic commissioner's office, whose titles sound nice, but they have no real power to make tangible change in the community on the ground? The budget is good news for new federal offices and jobs. It is also good news for major project advisory boards, consultants and fraudulent companies posing as indigenous contractors, but it is not good news for indigenous peoples in community.

To quote the national chief, “When the best we can say is that Indigenous Services is only being cut 2%, we know that there's a problem”. The rephrasing of how this budget deals with indigenous communities is a distraction from ISC cutting \$2.3 billion in services while doing basically nothing to lower the administrative costs of government.

Thus far, the only legislation submitted in the House during this session has been for more bureaucracy for the indigenous files. Since 2018, ISC has doubled its staff from 4,000 to roughly 8,000 full-time equivalents. This is billions more in administration. It has been reported that 42¢ of every ISC budget dollar goes to administrative aspects. That would be more than \$10 billion. Imagine what that money could do if it actually reached communities and entrepreneurs directly.

The budget does nothing to change that and only exasperates more government control and dependency. There are zeros in this budget in the table entitled “Indigenous Reconciliation” after this year. There is no dedicated chapter to indigenous spending like there was in years past. This will only make navigating bureaucracy even worse, leaving behind vulnerable first nations, Métis and Inuit communities that lack capacity. Is this all by design?

The finance minister said in his speech, when referring to indigenous peoples of this country, “we build not just for ourselves; we build also for those who will follow us.” Are indigenous nations to interpret that as it being the government's way or the highway when it comes to critical infrastructure and housing? When it comes to this tactic and this philosophy, is the government using it in Bill C-5 as well?

In his next sentence, the finance minister had the audacity to say, “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.” With zeros on the chart for reconciliation beyond this year, along with cuts, more dependency on government and an \$80-billion deficit, the finance

minister shows again that he is all about virtue signalling indigenous people and Canadians and only cares about adding seven generations' worth of debt to all of Canada.

As Conservatives, we recognize the importance of self-determination and not dependency. We believe indigenous communities are fully capable of managing their own services, driving their own economies and protecting their own lands. We needed more promotion of healing and recovery in the face of addiction for indigenous communities. That is a federal jurisdiction for the Liberals, not a provincial one.

We needed Liberals to keep their commitment to making policing essential and to not walk it back, as was indicated by the public safety minister two weeks ago. How are indigenous people able to meaningfully participate in the economy when they are in constant crisis when it comes to safety, crime, addiction and poverty?

The Prime Minister says that we are in a trade crisis as a country. Indigenous communities have been in crises for decades. This budget does nothing to change that. We needed to set the table for entrepreneurship in this budget. Instead, there is no timeline for changing the broken federal indigenous procurement program, which highlights fraud and is ripping off indigenous peoples and Canadians alike. What we needed was not for more federal government, but for the federal government to commit to structural change and get out of the way.

• (1325)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, like the member opposite, I am a member of Parliament from the Prairies, and I look at the investments. I look at the major projects announcements and how our western provinces are going to benefit by these immensely, whether that is through mining, LNG or all sorts of other opportunities. We also have a Prime Minister who is working very closely with the Premier of Alberta.

It was interesting that the member shot down the idea of the Prime Minister and the Premier of Alberta getting along and possibly even coming up with an MOU. I am wondering if he can reflect on that negativism. Does he recognize that having a positive relationship with the Premier of Alberta and having an MOU are good things?

The Budget

Billy Morin: Madam Speaker, I did not say it was a bad thing for Alberta and Canadians to work together, but what I was highlighting was an indigenous perspective about the crisis we are faced with today. Sure, I wholeheartedly support Alberta and Canada working together when it comes to major projects, but those projects are five years, 10 years or maybe decades away. All these announcements are recycled announcements from over the last decade, when there have been no shovels actually in the ground.

What I was referring to was the actual processes and crises facing first nations communities in the ISC files today as opposed to the major projects. Those are two different things. I hope the member reflects upon those crises facing Canadians and the actual things that are not getting done by the Liberal government to change that today.

[*Translation*]

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am very disappointed in the budget.

From 2009 to 2011, I was a political staffer for the Hon. Johanne Deschamps, the member for Laurentides—Labelle at the time. Even back then, we had concerns about employment insurance and felt there was a need to reform benefits for serious illness. Now it is 2025. We have been waiting for a complete overhaul since 2015. Some 50,000 workers will be eligible for it.

What about the people of Quebec? Does my colleague agree that a comprehensive reform should be included in the budget, especially for regions where there is a lot of seasonal work, whether in the forestry or tourism industries, for example?

• (1330)

[*English*]

Billy Morin: Madam Speaker, I do wholeheartedly agree that times are changing and technology is changing. This country does need a strategy when it comes to AI and AI reform. I believe my colleague who spoke before me spoke about this very well. I hope to see that reflected more clearly in the budget. I do not think we are getting that from this current budget. Canadians have solutions.

I think the government has promoted that it is using a top-down approach and knows everything about AI or different sectors, like when it comes to the resource sector or anything like that, but we need to uplift entrepreneurs in our tech sector and give them the power to lead this initiative while strategically aligning with them side by side.

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, my neighbour from Edmonton Northwest or, as I call it, West Edmonton Mall northwest, had an excellent speech and brought up a lot of points.

This budget is an omnibus budget, just like other Liberal budgets, despite Liberal promises to not have omnibus legislation. It contains probably dozens of required legislative changes, but none of those will cover the important things for Alberta, such as repealing Bill C-48, the tanker ban, or Bill C-69, the no new pipelines bill. In fact, it does not commit to repealing the emissions and production cap either.

I wonder if my colleague could opine on what this means for Alberta, that the government still insists on keeping Bill C-48, Bill C-69 and the emissions cap.

Billy Morin: Madam Speaker, my colleague from West Edmonton Mall asked a good question.

I spoke about this in my address. It is frustrating as an Albertan. The government says one thing and then walks it back. It is systematic changes that we need in this country. It is not Bill C-5 being used as a weapon to pick winners and losers. We need to unite this country, yet we have seen no projects coming out of Alberta thus far.

The Prime Minister is from Alberta. Maybe we are going to see a MOU in the next couple of days, but that is still not going to change the fact that legislation still exists to block resources that go to protect this whole country, heating homes from Newfoundland to B.C. and the remote north. Albertans just feel like they are getting left behind.

When the government talks about Canada strong and Canadian unity, I really question the motives behind that.

Wade Chang (Burnaby Central, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Halifax.

I rise today to speak in strong support of budget 2025. This is a budget that strengthens our economy, advances a fair society and ensures safer, more resilient communities for all Canadians.

Last week, I received a letter from Emma, a 13-year-old student in Burnaby Central. After reading my September mailer, she urged her government to stand up against unfair U.S. tariffs and policies that would hurt Canadian workers and families. However, Emma's letter did not stop there. She is openly queer and wanted a government that stands for equality, fairness and inclusion. Her voice reminds us that the work we do in Parliament matters to the next generation. When a young person feels safe and empowered to speak up about trade and protecting 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians, it speaks volumes about our country and our responsibility as lawmakers.

This is why I am so proud that budget 2025 provides long-term, stable funding to the Department of Women and Gender Equality to advance women's equity, prevent gender-based violence and protect 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians. We owe it to Emma and to every young Canadian to build a society where they are free from fear and free to dream.

The Budget

I recently visited Nelson Avenue Community Church in my riding, where members shared one concern I hear every day: the high cost of housing and ensuring seniors can live with dignity in their communities. Budget 2025 delivers real, practical solutions. We are building deeply affordable community and co-op housing for low-income families; eliminating GST for first-time homebuyers for homes under \$1 million and reducing it for homes between \$1 million and \$1.5 million; increasing CMBs to support more housing starts; and supporting seniors through the new horizons for seniors program and funding local projects like fitness programs and national initiatives like financial literacy classes for seniors so they can stay active and live with dignity. Together with the build communities strong fund, these measures help families and seniors stay in the communities they love and flourish in.

Building a stronger Canada takes government, industry and world-class polytechnic institutions. In Burnaby Central, we are proud to be home to the British Columbia Institute of Technology, a national leader defining what polytechnic education means in Canada. BCIT is not just a school; it is a powerhouse of talent. It is where Canada's welders, electricians, engineers, technicians, nurses and innovators get the hands-on training that builds our country and infrastructure, powers our industries and strengthens our economy.

As our government advances \$115.2 billion in infrastructure investment, we will rely on BCIT more than ever, because without skilled apprentices, trained tradespeople and innovators ready to lead, no major project gets built, not on time and not on budget. BCIT is building the workforce of tomorrow. Our job is to ensure institutions like BCIT have the tools to keep doing that.

Innovation is happening in Burnaby. I recently toured three remarkable companies. Novarc Technologies is a global leader in welding automation, using AI robotics to tackle complex industrial applications. This is critical as Canada ramps up infrastructure and clean technology projects. Svante Technologies is a world leader in carbon capture, turning climate ambition into action and helping Canada lead in clean technology. BlueForce Energy advances low-carbon transition through electric fleet conversions, battery storage and renewable energy solutions.

To compete globally, Canada must reduce its carbon intensity. In Burnaby, leading innovators are showing how Canadian expertise, from advanced manufacturing to clean technology, can drive a cleaner, stronger and more competitive future.

Emma reminded me that young Canadians already understand one important truth: We cannot rely on one trading partner. With 70% of our exports going to the United States, trade diversification is essential.

• (1335)

Budget 2025 strengthens Canada's economic ties across the Indo-Pacific by deepening our relationship with key economic and trade partners such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India and Australia, while expanding opportunities with ASEAN members and Europe. Through this partnership, Canada is creating opportunities in agriculture, clean technology, digital trade, advanced manufacturing, and services, ensuring Canadian businesses can compete globally while building a more resilient economy at home. A diversified economy is a resilient economy, and this budget makes it a priority.

Every week in Burnaby Central, families tell me the same thing: They are working hard, but everything is so expensive. They want a government that gets that and acts on it. Budget 2025 does exactly that, delivering real relief that makes life more affordable for the middle class.

It starts with a tax cut. On July 1 this year, the first federal tax bracket dropped from 15% to 14%, helping nearly 22 million Canadians and saving dual-income households up to \$840. Budget 2025 also strengthens safety and security for all Canadians.

Last week, I hosted a tea party in my constituency office with small business owners, health care professionals, college security managers, Burnaby firefighters and the RCMP. One consensus was clear: We all want safe neighbourhoods.

This budget delivers on that promise. It invests in 1,000 new RCMP officers to keep our communities safe, invests \$617.7 million to strengthen the CBSA's capacity to stop smuggling and illegal weapons, reforms the Canada community security program to protect places of worship and culture centres, creates a new anti-fraud strategy to implement stronger protections for consumers, particularly seniors and newcomers, and creates a new financial crimes agency to bring together the expertise and resources needed to stop criminal activities. These are not abstract numbers; they are practical, tangible investments that reflect our values, protect our communities, support frontline workers and ensure that every person can feel safe and secure in their home and neighbourhood.

The Budget

In October, I visited Burnaby Hospital to discuss the hospital's expansion project and the critical shortage of health care professionals. The leadership expressed strong support for foreign-trained health care workers. Separately, I spoke with two foreign-trained physiotherapists who shared their frustration with Canada's licensing process, which can take three to four years. I know their struggle personally. After earning my law degree in Australia, it took me 18 months to become a qualified lawyer here in Canada.

Budget 2025 is taking action. It provides \$97 million to create a foreign credential recognition action fund, helping provinces and territories make it faster and easier for internationally trained professionals to contribute their skills and serve Canadians. It is about cutting red tape, and we are recognizing talent.

When Emma, a brave 13-year-old girl, wrote to me asking whether her government would stand up against U.S. tariffs and stand with her as an openly queer Canadian, she was not just asking for reassurance; she was asking for action. With this budget, we are saying yes: yes to workers, who need stability; yes to families, who need affordability; yes to students, who need opportunities and careers; yes to businesses, which need certainty; yes to newcomers, who need a fair start; yes to seniors, who deserve dignity; yes to women, who deserve safety and protection from gender-based violence; yes to 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians, who deserve to know their country stands with them and protects them; and yes to Canada, a country that refuses to settle, refuses to slow down and refuses to leave anyone behind. It is a country that builds boldly, competes fiercely and stands ready to lead.

This budget is our answer to a Canada that lifts people up, protects their rights and builds a future worthy of their courage, while making our economy stronger, more resilient and ready for the challenges of tomorrow. I thank Emma for her courage, her voice and her hope. She is the future of Canada.

Let us pass this transformational budget and build a Canada ready for Emma and for every child, every family and every future generation that will shine in the Canada we build today.

• (1340)

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the member's speech, and he talked about families and this somehow being a transformational budget, which of course is far from being so.

Today, sadly, 24,000 children will walk into food banks in this country hungry. The government had an opportunity here to do something about the industrial carbon tax, which adds costs to farmers on their equipment and their manufacturing processes. They get passed down onto the food prices people face when they walk into a grocery store. It is a question of affordability. Families cannot afford to eat, including the over 700,000 children who are walking into food banks hoping for some food today, children who are hungry.

Can the member please expand on why his government did not look at the industrial carbon tax seriously and did not provide help for the children and the 2.2 million Canadians walking into food banks hungry today?

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, our government is reducing personal income tax, we are reducing GST on first-time homebuyers and we are doing our best to protect the everyday Canadians who work hard in our country.

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for having the nerve to rise in the House to defend the indefensible, and by that I mean this budget. Obviously, I will be voting against it. Why? For one thing, because my constituents gave me a mandate to defend them. Barely seven months have gone by, but if we have to go plant signs in the snow again, we will, because this budget tramples on our convictions.

I find it especially hypocritical of the Liberals to pretend that they held consultations. That is completely untrue. Our demands were practically stricken from the budget in advance to make sure they would not pass. I think that the Liberals did the same with all the other parties.

I just want to point out how the Liberals have been penny-pinching with seniors. How can my colleague rise before fixing the unjustifiable gap that has been created and that is keeping seniors in poverty? I would like him to stand up and tell us what actions his party is taking to protect seniors, because I do not see any.

• (1345)

[English]

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, our seniors helped build this country, and budget 2025 would ensure they can age with dignity, safety and respect.

We are expanding the new horizons for seniors program and supporting local and national initiatives that help seniors stay active and connected. We are strengthening our community services and ensuring seniors have the programs they need to maintain their quality of life.

The budget would put seniors first through practical supports that make a real difference in their day-to-day lives. This is our commitment, and we will continue delivering on it.

[Translation]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his fine speech on the budget.

I hear my colleagues across the way say that the budget is not realistic. They want to increase the deficit in the budget by more than \$13 billion. However, they are forgetting that, last week, we supported the request from our colleagues opposite to extend the runway at the Saguenay airport because we are listening and talking to the members opposite.

The Budget

Can my colleague expand on how the budget will help the country move forward?

[English]

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, Canadians want more homes built faster, and this budget would deliver exactly that. We are building deeply affordable community and co-op housing, partnering with private and non-profit builders to increase middle-class supply. We will eliminate the GST for first-time homebuyers on homes under \$1 million, reduce it for homes between \$1 million and \$1.5 million and expand Canada mortgage bonds to unlock new construction.

Our priority is simple: build more new homes and make them attainable for the families who need them. That is what the budget is about, and it is what we will keep doing.

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the global economy has changed, and Canada must change with it. In the face of uncertainty and the need to transition to a low-carbon economy, our government's budget is a plan to meet the moment with generational investments that will build a stronger and more resilient country.

For my constituents in Halifax, these investments are not abstract promises. They include concrete opportunities to grow our city and our prosperity. Halifax's priorities are aligned with those of budget 2025, specifically in the key areas of defence, trade, infrastructure and building strong communities.

I would like to take a moment to discuss Halifax's unique positioning to be a key contributor in these areas.

The trade diversification corridors fund represents \$5 billion of investment to improve access to new overseas markets and develop our port, airport and rail infrastructure. Halifax is already a critical trade hub. The port of Halifax is situated in a naturally deep, ice-free harbour that is operational year-round. Its location allows for direct access to global trade routes and it is uniquely positioned in close proximity to many major European ports. We have a strategic advantage to propel Canada into stronger and more resilient trade relationships. Investing in Halifax will lead to direct economic benefits for the entire country. This investment in the trade infrastructure corridors fund reflects not only potential growth for Halifax, but an increase in well-paying jobs across industries.

Halifax is home to Canada's largest military base by number of personnel. The impact that the thriving and innovative defence sector has on our city is immeasurable. An investment of over \$80 billion in the Canadian Armed Forces would have a significant impact on CFB Halifax and would further boost the economy of the entire region.

Of particular interest to my constituents is the River-class destroyer project, which will be built in my riding by Irving Shipbuilding. This project alone will create and maintain over 3,700 jobs through to 2027 and contribute over \$719 million annually to Canada's GDP. Our government's strong commitment to supporting defence and meeting our NATO commitments will lead to economic prosperity and national security for the entire country.

Budget 2025 places a large emphasis on military spending, expanding trading relationships and building a strong economy. These are all essential pieces of the puzzle that is building Canada strong and, as I have highlighted, building Halifax strong.

It is also important to highlight that, in addition to these major priorities, budget 2025 represents a well-rounded plan to build more resilient communities. From local infrastructure development to affordable housing and from environmental action to social programs, this budget would make important investments in areas that will support Canadians where they matter most.

Right now, in Halifax, as in many cities across Canada, we are facing a housing crisis. Young professionals, students, seniors and essential workers, the very people who power our economy, are struggling to find stable and affordable places to live. That is why budget 2025 includes a \$13-billion investment in Build Canada Homes. This initiative will double housing construction across the country with a focus on non-market, sustainable and affordable homes, including co-operatives and supportive housing. This program ensures that we can build the homes we need to match the need now and well into the future. It will help us to reduce homelessness and bring home ownership back into reach for Canadians. Our government also recognizes that the need for first nations, Inuit and Métis housing is acute. For this reason, \$2.8 billion is included for urban, rural and northern indigenous housing.

With a significant increase in new housing, we need to ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure to support these communities. For this reason, the build communities strong fund is one of my favourite parts of budget 2025. This investment represents over \$50 billion in funding, with \$27.8 billion specifically designated for things like local roads, bridges, water systems, community centres and more. All of these represent the core foundation of community. This investment also includes \$17.2 billion dedicated to housing, health care and education infrastructure.

Across Canada, we feel the pressures that are placed on these sectors, and this funding would be essential to support our provincial and territorial counterparts as they work to alleviate those pressures. In Halifax, this funding has the potential to assist with infrastructure upgrades to our hospitals, schools and new community developments. The build communities strong fund is a win for all Canadians, and it is one that I hope to seek cross-party support for.

The Budget

• (1350)

Cities are not just brick and mortar; they are hubs of human connection, arts and culture, natural spaces and architectural wonders. An artistic and vibrant city is one where people want to live, connect, work and visit. Halifax is this kind of city. It is home to over 65 galleries, multiple performance venues, festivals and a creative economy that support thousands of jobs. Budget 2025 includes more than 400 million dollars' worth of investment in arts and culture to stabilize organizations that have been impacted by recent economic shocks, to support cultural infrastructure upgrades and to expand the production of export-ready cultural products. This funding would help drive tourism to our city and support our artists.

[*Translation*]

It is not just the arts. Canada is a multicultural country that is proud to be bilingual, and this is reflected in budget 2025. Our government is committed to supporting the French language. In Atlantic Canada, a clear example of our commitment is our \$4-million investment to support National Acadian Day.

[*English*]

Our government also remains committed to supporting under-represented communities. As Halifax is home to one of the highest per capita populations of gender-diverse individuals in Canada, many of my constituents will see a direct impact of this support. Inclusivity leads to welcoming communities, which lead to happy residents and thriving economies. Our government is stepping up to provide crucial funding to ensure that inclusivity remains a core Canadian value. We have committed more than half a billion dollars to Women and Gender Equality, with a core mandate to support women seeking leadership opportunities, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and those fleeing gender-based violence.

As we discuss building strong communities, we must recognize that we have an obligation to ensure that these communities are sustainable and resilient to climate change. We are committed to ensuring that a climate lens is applied across our initiatives because climate action is not only a moral obligation; it is an economic necessity. Stronger industrial carbon pricing and methane regulations will lead to the most effective reductions of emissions, and they will have a near negligible impact on individual household costs.

We will help businesses innovate and scale through new and renewed tax credits. In Nova Scotia, residents, stakeholders and governments alike were pleased to see recognition of the potential for offshore wind development in the launch of the Major Projects Office and again in the budget. This project can propel Nova Scotia and Canada forward as a clean energy superpower and will further connect eastern Canada with a clean, renewable energy grid.

Our government was faced with a choice in navigating global trade disruptions. We could have just made cuts across the board and crossed our fingers that things would sort themselves out, but that is not a responsible choice and it does not position Canada to have agency over its future. Instead, we made the responsible and strategic choice to invest in Canadians.

Budget 2025 is an ambitious plan to meet the moment and build a stronger, more prosperous country. Our plan includes generational investments that would propel Canada to become one of the

strongest economies in the G7, because we want Canadians to thrive.

Let us approve the budget and get to work on investing in a Canada that we can all be proud of.

• (1355)

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I happened to notice that, throughout the member's speech, a lot of the things she was talking about fall within either provincial or municipal jurisdiction. It seems like a lot of what the federal government is trying to do with the budget circumvents the provinces or works above the municipalities, instead of working through the proper channels, the way the federation is supposed to work, and the different orders of government.

I am wondering what the member thinks about that and if she has any concerns. Even though the government is trying to work on some nice things that she thinks might be helpful in her area, is she concerned about the breakdown of the jurisdictional responsibilities of the federal government, the provincial governments and the municipal governments?

Shannon Miedema: Mr. Speaker, I actually used to work for a local government and I spent a lot of time navigating jurisdictional differences between all three levels of government. We cannot move forward as a nation unless we work really positively and have strong relationships with our provincial and territorial counterparts, our indigenous governments and our local governments.

I would invite the member to point out where there might be a discrepancy, from his point of view, but I think the budget is really about working together with all levels of government and providing the funding, the framework, the policy and the programs to get things done.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague said earlier that this budget supports French. She mentioned a subsidy for National Acadian Day. I agree with that. That is good news.

However, there is nothing else. At the Standing Committee on Official Languages, we have heard from various francophone associations and school boards outside Quebec who are saying that they do not have enough money or enough schools. There is a real decline in French. Despite the fact that the modernized version of the Official Languages Act includes elements that were adopted to promote French in Quebec, there is nothing at all in the budget for Quebec, nothing has been done. The government is not abiding by its own Official Languages Act when it comes to defending the French language in Quebec.

What are my colleague's thoughts on that?

*Statements by Members**[English]*

Shannon Miedema: Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ. I sit in the Atlantic caucus, and we have a thriving francophone population across Atlantic Canada. In a recent meeting, I heard that our numbers are going up and passing targets.

We have multiple investments in this budget to support the Francophonie across our nation, and not just in Quebec. I outlined only one that was particularly exciting for me. That \$4 million would now be made permanent, whereas before, it had to be renewed. It was also doubled this year.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

*[English]***GORDON QUAN**

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour Gordon Quan, the last of the World War II Chinese veterans in Vancouver, whose life stands as a powerful testament to service, sacrifice and patriotism.

At a time when the Chinese were denied full citizenship in Canada, young Gordon volunteered for Force 136, Britain's legendary commandos fighting behind Japanese lines. Denied, he persisted until Canada, running out of recruits, decided to accept Asian immigrants.

Gordon served with distinction and, as a veteran, continued to volunteer. He was a fixture at Remembrance Day ceremonies, selling poppies until his death last month at age 99.

As we remember our veterans, let us honour the many immigrants who, though marginalized, risked their lives to serve Canada with honour and loyalty.

Lest we forget.

* * *

TERRORISM

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, intifada is violent resistance. It must be criminal to call for intifada on Canada's streets. It must be criminal to celebrate Hamas monsters by glorifying their death. That is why we need a bill to amend the Criminal Code, to criminalize the promotion of terrorist groups or terrorist activity.

Canada already criminalizes participation and aiding of terrorism, but there is no offence targeting the advocacy or promotion of terrorism. This gap allows extremists and recruiters to promote terrorism on the streets and online.

Colleagues, we need a bill to make it criminal to promote terrorist groups or terrorist activities while preserving the charter right to free speech. I am proud of our Conservative team for standing with me and for standing with Canada's Jewish community in a time of need, and I am proud that, this afternoon, I will be introducing a bill to criminalize the wilful promotion of terrorism.

TIBET

Karim Bardeesy (Taiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Tibetans have been part of Canada's fabric since the 1970s, after China's occupation of Tibet in the 1950s forced many into exile. They are guided always by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his lifelong commitment to non-violence, interfaith harmony and human rights. Today, Tibetan communities thrive in Taiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, Etobicoke, Halifax, Vancouver, Calgary and Montreal.

Tibetan Canadians are caregivers, business owners, food terminal and production workers, tradespeople and professionals. A new generation is building futures through higher education and civic leadership. Tibetan democracy, a fruit of His Holiness's vision, is active and thriving, with free elections for the Central Tibetan Administration taking place in 29 countries, including Canada, in 2026.

On this Tibet Day on the Hill, let us reaffirm Parliament's 2024 motion recognizing Tibetans as a people and a nation, with the right to determine their future free of interference, including the recognition of their next spiritual leader.

As Tibetans and Tibetan Canadians continue to preserve their language, culture and identity, let us honour their example.

Tashi delek.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, across Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, there was overwhelming attendance at cenotaphs and community gatherings honouring the service and sacrifices, past and present, of Canada's men and women of the Canadian Forces. The record attendance demonstrated that we will remember them, not just on November 11, but always.

In connecting with people last week, I also heard their challenges in facing increasing costs in everything from groceries to housing and simply getting to work. Canadians face challenges because the government refuses to balance affordable taxation with efficient delivery of services. People repeatedly shared that they are not seeing balances, because they are sending more in tax dollars and receiving less in service.

Budget 2025 was a chance to rebalance the fiscal scale. Instead, the costly credit card budget is increasing debt burdens for present and future generations. My Conservative colleagues and I will continue to fight for the balance that Canadians need and deserve.

*Statements by Members***YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS**

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to congratulate Halifax-based ImmigrateAI Global for winning third place in the global business competition at the G20 Young Entrepreneurs' Alliance Summit. This is the first time a Nova Scotia company has been recognized on the G20 stage.

Max Medyk, the founder and CEO, had to navigate the immigration system when he came to the United States and then to Canada from Ukraine. This sparked a desire to help others facing the same challenges. ImmigrateAI Global's venture is a platform designed to simplify immigration paperwork for professionals. It has helped to streamline visa applications, reduce costs for applicants and cut refusal rates in 140 countries around the world.

On behalf of all Haligonians, I applaud all those at ImmigrateAI Global on their success, and I look forward to seeing what they will do next.

* * *

● (1405)

DRUG POLICIES

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Premier of British Columbia has now admitted what countless frontline workers have been reporting: “I was wrong on drug decriminalization” and “it wasn't the right policy.” He even admitted that it has created “really unhappy consequences” for public safety and community well-being.

Allowing possession of such drugs as fentanyl, crack and meth was only possible because the federal government granted B.C. a special exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. Without the Liberal government's approval, this could never have taken effect, yet the public safety minister still refuses to take responsibility, claiming it was at the request of the provinces.

British Columbians deserve real health and safety. They are demanding immediate action. The minister must end this radical hard drug experiment, cancel the federal exemption and restore safety in our communities.

* * *

NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY

Chi Nguyen (Spadina—Harbourfront, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, November 15 marked National Philanthropy Day, recognizing Canadians whose generosity strengthens our communities. From food banks and shelters to arts, conservation and youth programs, philanthropy fuels essential work across this country.

Spadina—Harbourfront is home to the national chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and organizations such as Eva's Initiatives, the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, CAMH, West Neighbourhood House, Movember Canada and many others.

Canada's 170,000 charities contribute 8.3% to our GDP and employ 2.4 million Canadians.

I would also like to acknowledge an announcement last week from New Power Labs of a new fund Canada pledge. It calls on philanthropic and investment partners to direct \$500 million to

Black, indigenous, women-led and gender-diverse leaders and communities by 2030, showing how the sector is driving leadership changes to help accelerate community solutions.

When government, philanthropy and community leaders lead, together, Canadians get the future they deserve.

* * *

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the shadow minister for health, I rise to recognize the outstanding leadership of medical students across Canada.

More than 75 medical students from 15 medical schools are on Parliament Hill today for the Canadian Federation of Medical Students National Day of Action. These future physicians are meeting with parliamentarians to address one of the most urgent challenges facing Canada's health care system: the crisis in our emergency departments.

There are 6.5 million Canadians who do not have access to a family doctor. This is forcing far too many people to rely on emergency rooms, which are already at a breaking point. Patients are waiting hours, sometimes days, for care. These medical students are determined to change that. Their advocacy, skills and commitment to improving access to timely, high-quality care give Canadians hope.

I thank each of the participants here today for their commitment to improving health care in Canada. All Canadians are looking forward to seeing them on the front lines soon.

* * *

[Translation]

TIBET

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the House's attention to the invaluable presence of Richard Gere on Parliament Hill today. He is a staunch defender of rights and freedoms, and his fight for the Tibetan people deserves to be applauded in this House.

The year 2025 marks a historic moment: the 90th birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, a man whose entire life epitomizes compassion, peace and moral courage. Today, as parliamentarians, we have the opportunity to send a clear message by making 2025 the year of compassion.

Statements by Members

I therefore rise today in the House to call on parliamentarians to reaffirm our support for the religious freedom of Tibetans and their right to choose the Dalai Lama's successor without interference, to recognize Tibet's historical status as an occupied nation and to demand respect for human rights in Canada's international relations.

Compassion is not weakness. It is strength, courage and inspiration.

* * *

[English]

PETER BAYLIS

Hon. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honour the life of a remarkable Nova Scotian, Peter Baylis, a man who poured his heart, his voice and his extraordinary talent into every stage he stepped onto.

Peter's devotion to the arts began in the early teens; by 18, he was already woven into the fabric of Halifax's music scene. Through the 1980s he fronted Steps Around the House, and then he became the dynamic force in the Hopping Penguins, one of our most enduring and beloved ska-reggae bands, for decades.

His artistry reached beyond the bandstand. Many will never forget his powerful portrayal of Judas in Neptune Theatre's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, a role he described as the opportunity of a lifetime.

Peter was known to thousands as the Halifax Mooseheads' national anthem singer, his voice rising through the arena, clear and steady. It was a moment fans like me came to treasure.

My heart goes out to all who loved him. His wife, Jennifer, shared a wish that reflects his spirit so beautifully: "hold him in your hearts [and turn the music up] loud.... He'd like that".

* * *

• (1410)

THE BUDGET

Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister keeps spending more and more on his inflationary budget, seniors on fixed incomes are being forced to choose between medication and food, with 8.3% of food bank users being seniors, up from 6.8% in 2019. Fitch Ratings, which gives the government its credit score, has warned that because the Liberals are ignoring their own fiscal limits, federal finances run a high risk of further deterioration. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has raised the same alarm.

In 2024, the Liberal government committed to reducing the federal debt compared to the size of the economy, a key step in keeping borrowing costs low. That is another broken promise.

As a former banker, I understand the fiscal responsibility of budget demands, a lesson the current Prime Minister, also a former banker, clearly has not learned. It is no wonder he wants to fire the budget watchdog for telling the truth.

THE EDMUND FITZGERALD

Jake Sawatzky (New Westminster—Burnaby—Maillardville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, November 10, marked 50 years since the wreck of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*, when a ship and all 29 of its crew members perished in Ontario's waters of Lake Superior. It was one of the biggest disasters on the Great Lakes.

Although that happened long before I was alive, the story lives on to this day through Canadian artist Gordon Lightfoot's song, *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald*. Lightfoot had a large role in bringing awareness of this tragic tale across the world. Lightfoot passed away in 2023.

The bell of the ship was recovered in 1995. On November 10 of each year, it is rung 30 times, once for each member of the crew of the *Edmund Fitzgerald* and once for Gordon Lightfoot.

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down
of the big lake they called Gitche Gumee....

* * *

THE BUDGET

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister dropped the most expensive budget in Canadian history outside COVID, doubling Trudeau's deficits. Canadians know what that means: higher taxes, slower growth and a debt sentence for future generations.

As hard-working Canadians continue to pay the price, Canada's two-tier tax system benefits companies like Brookfield. At the finance committee, witnesses exposed Brookfield as being the most notorious tax avoider in Canada. As chair of Brookfield, the Prime Minister helped the company avoid \$6.5 billion in Canadian taxes through offshore tax havens, including two registered above a Bermuda bike shop and another in the Cayman Islands. While young Canadians are told to make more sacrifices, the Prime Minister is doubling Trudeau's deficit. He and his elitist buddies are shielding themselves from CRA.

Instead of avoiding questions as he helped Brookfield avoid taxes, the Prime Minister needs to come clean. Is he here to serve Canadians or Brookfield and himself?

* * *

[Translation]

WORLD DIABETES DAY

Hon. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, November 14 was World Diabetes Day, and I would like to take this opportunity to talk about my son's experience and the situation of all those who are living with type 1 diabetes.

Despite the daily challenges he faces because of his diabetes, Charles is an example of discipline and determination. Every day, he shows that anything is possible with courage and perseverance. As a physical education teacher, he is a true role model for his students and shows them that obstacles can become opportunities for growth. His commitment extends beyond his own situation. As chair of the board of Diabète Estrie, Charles actively contributes to advancing the cause and supporting the community.

A century ago, the discovery of insulin in Canada changed the world. Still today, Canada remains a leader in research advances because we have the talent and the opportunities. Our government believes in science and supports our researchers, which makes a real difference.

I am proud to highlight Charles's struggle and, more importantly, the wonderful man that he is.

* * *

● (1415)

[English]

GREY CUP CHAMPIONS

Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a historic day for Saskatchewan and all of Rider nation. After 12 long years, our beloved Roughriders brought home the Grey Cup, defeating Montreal in Winnipeg. What sweet joy to see green and white confetti raining from the sky in the home of the Blue Bombers. The determination of Trevor Harris, the leadership of Coach Mace and the grit of every player on the field mirror the resilience we see in our farmers, our families and our communities every single day.

From the “green mile” to the towns across our province, Saskatchewan families celebrated last night. This victory reminds us that when we come together with purpose and perseverance, there is nothing Saskatchewanians cannot achieve.

I congratulate the Roughriders. They have made Saskatchewan proud. Some people like gold, but in Saskatchewan, we know that green is the colour and football is the game. Go Riders.

* * *

TIBET

James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year we celebrate the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Following a request from His Holiness to then prime minister, Lester Pearson, the first two Tibetan refugees landed in Canada on October 15, 1970, just over 55 years ago. Since then, Tibetan Canadians have been contributing to the Canadian economy and to the community and social fabric of our country. Personally, it is a privilege to have the Tibetan Canadian Cultural Centre, established just over 27 years ago, in my constituency of Etobicoke—Lakeshore. The impact of His Holiness is far-reaching, and his message of peace, non-violence and the pursuit of harmony and happiness is making the world a better place.

I call on the House to declare 2025 the year of compassion.

Oral Questions

I welcome everyone from across Canada visiting for Tibet day on the Hill, and I give a special welcome to Richard Gere, who is a true champion for the campaign for Tibet.

Tashi delek.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve an affordable life with an affordable budget, but this Prime Minister is using his budget and the deficit like a credit card with no limit. In doing so, he is driving up the price of groceries, housing and future taxes.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the Prime Minister has doubled Justin Trudeau's deficit. That is a record deficit outside of COVID-19. That is \$16 billion more than he promised.

Why is the Prime Minister using his budget like a limitless credit card while forcing Canadians to make costly sacrifices?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2025 is a budget of generational investments. It is a budget that is going to grow our economy. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the current fiscal policy is considered sustainable over the long term.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is multi-generational debt.

Canadians deserve affordable groceries. In fact, the Prime Minister promised that he would be judged by the price of groceries. Today, Statistics Canada released data showing that food inflation is almost double the Bank of Canada's target. It is increasing 40% faster here than in the United States, all because of Liberal taxes.

The Prime Minister is using a credit card with no limit to finance his deficit. Does he expect Canadians to pay for their groceries that way too?

● (1420)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have good news. We are creating jobs, and inflation is dropping. The inflation rate has been within the Bank of Canada's target range for almost two years in a row.

We are growing the economy, reducing inflation and building Canada's future.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's costly deficit gambles our future on the national credit card, and it drives up food, housing and tax bills. In fact, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has revealed, in his recent report, the Prime Minister has doubled Justin Trudeau's deficit and he has brought in the biggest deficit in Canadian history outside of the pandemic, which is \$16 billion bigger than he promised only seven months ago.

Why is the Prime Minister breaking his word and forcing Canadians to pay higher inflation today and higher taxes tomorrow for his costly credit card budget?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is a good day. Inflation is down 2.2%. For almost two years, it has been running within the Bank of Canada's target. This is a good month. Unemployment is down again, and jobs are up again.

Today is a historic day. The Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues have an opportunity to vote for generational investment to build this economy strong.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, maybe it is a good day for the Prime Minister and his Brookfield buddies, who are dodging their tax bills, but it is a terrible day for the Canadian people, stuck paying record-high grocery bills.

In fact the Prime Minister said he would be judged by prices at the grocery store. Today, Statistics Canada revealed that grocery price inflation is almost double the Bank of Canada's target, rising 40% faster in Canada than in the United States of America, the direct result of the Liberal industrial carbon tax on farmers, of the food packaging tax and of the fuel standard tax.

The Prime Minister puts his budget on the national credit card. Does he expect Canadians to pay for their groceries the same way?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the rate of inflation is down. Job creation is up. Ambition and confidence in this country are sky-high.

We believe in Canada. We are investing in Canada. Today is the opportunity for every member of the House to join us.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not investing in Canada; he is dodging his taxes by putting his money outside Canada, while the Canadian people cannot afford to eat, to heat, or to house themselves.

Inflation is now nearly twice the target rate when it comes to the measurement of food, rising 40% faster in this country than south of the border. We have 100% more people lined up at food banks than in 2019, as the Prime Minister continues to raise taxes on farmers and on food packaging.

The Prime Minister thinks he can put his budget on a limitless credit card. Does he really expect that Canadians are going to buy groceries the same way?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again this month, just as it was last month and just as it has been every month while I have been Prime Minister, Canadian wages have grown faster than the rate of inflation. Canadians are getting

ahead. We are creating jobs despite the attack on this economy by the Americans and despite the obstruction by the opposition.

This is an opportunity to build our country. The vote is today. Stand up and be counted.

* * *

JUSTICE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was right by Surrey the other day, handing out tax dollars and doughnuts in a photo op, but he refused to take questions on the 330% increase in extortion that Liberals caused with soft-on-crime laws and open border policies. They have allowed extortionists out of prison by eliminating mandatory prison sentences, and they have allowed foreign gangsters to have visitor visas and kill our people in the streets.

Why is it that the Prime Minister had time, when he was near Surrey, to hand out doughnuts but not to stand up and protect Canadians against extortion?

● (1425)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is an opportunity to stand up and protect Canadians against extortion, against home invasion, against gun crime and against on-line harm to children. We are putting the legislation in front of the House. The opposition has a chance to support it. We will protect Canadians.

* * *

*[Translation]***CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS**

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at a time when the Prime Minister seems to be in a precarious position at best, he may be due for some soul-searching.

He was elected on a promise that he would quickly get rid of the tariffs imposed on Quebec and Canadian products, yet these tariffs have increased. Not only that, new tariffs have been added.

Will the Prime Minister admit that his strategy has failed?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has the best agreement with the United States, and over 85% of Quebec goods and services and Canadian goods and services are tariff-free.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there are so few who people who believe that, it seems likely that the Prime Minister does not believe it either.

He was also supposed to restore free trade as soon as he got elected. If he had, he would not need to pretend that we have the best agreement in the world, when there is no agreement.

Will the Prime Minister admit that his trade negotiation strategy with the United States, whose president does not even return calls, is a failure?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the President of the United States returns my calls because I have his phone number, unlike the others.

Today, there is an opportunity to invest in Quebec, in the Concrécœur project, in the second Saguenay wharf, in the Matawinie mine, in Hydro-Québec, in the future of Quebec and in the future of Canada, by supporting us.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is obsessed with cellphones. We made six non-negotiable demands of the government. Let us spare him yet another failure.

Is he prepared to make a formal commitment right now to put an end to the discrimination against seniors aged 65 to 75, increase health transfers by 6% per year and provide credit to young families to purchase their first home, all just to perhaps have a chance to save his own skin?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, by supporting this budget, members could protect transfers for seniors, which total \$80 billion. The budget includes major investments in Quebec, including huge investments in the cultural sector and significant transfers for seniors. That is the choice that members will have to make in the House today for Canadians.

* * *

[English]

FINANCE

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' spending is spiralling out of control, and they will do anything to keep Canadians from noticing. Parliament's budget watchdog has found that the Prime Minister is using fiscal tricks to hide how much money is being wasted here in Ottawa. He says there is less than a 10% chance that the Liberals will meet their own spending targets. They are the same targets the Liberals have blown through again and again. The warnings keep piling up, the waste keeps growing and the government's commitment to responsibility keeps shrinking.

The real question is, what are the odds that the watchdog gets fired next, just for telling Canadians the truth?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is only Monday and we already have good news: Inflation is down, employment is up and we have presented a generational investment budget to Canadians. We are going to invest in building this country. We are going to invest in protecting our sovereignty. We are going to empower Cana-

dians. We are going to grow this economy at the second-fastest rate in the G7, because we believe in Canada.

Canadians are going to see whether the Conservatives believe in Canada, because today, we will have a vote. Let us hope we are going to walk together. Canada needs to grow—

• (1430)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Thornhill.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians cannot afford groceries, they cannot afford rent and they cannot afford their mortgages, yet the Liberals want us to support the reason why. Most Canadians would say, “No, thanks.”

Going back to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, let us remember that this is the same watchdog who called Liberal spending “stupefying”, “shocking” and “unsustainable”. Now he says the government has abandoned any restraint at all. No wonder the Prime Minister wants him gone.

How many more watchdogs and how many more damning reports will it take for the government to stop maxing out the credit card with its reckless spending?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know it is a big budget. I am afraid they may have missed a chapter. Let me help them. Someone called Kevin Page, who served our nation, said:

We need to focus on economic growth. We need capital investment to boost innovation, improve our infrastructure and diversify trade. We live in dangerous times, and we must meet our NATO spending targets.

I believe Parliament should approve the budget plan....

These are the words of a former parliamentary budget officer.

We believe in Canada. Let us hope and let us see if the Conservatives will support Canadians.

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer rang the alarm on Friday. He told Canadians there is just a “7.5% chance” the Prime Minister will meet his own fiscal promise. The Liberals have twisted the definition so badly that he now recommends an independent expert body to police the numbers as he has uncovered a \$94-billion reallocation in the budget. What is the Liberals' response? It is not a correction, but an effort to silence the watchdog and replace the referee, rather than play by the rules.

Will the Prime Minister tell Canadians why anyone should trust his fiscal rules when he has no intention of keeping them?

Oral Questions

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am the member of Parliament for a region that has many small communities. I can tell the House that those small communities all across northern Ontario are looking forward to the investments this budget would make in small and rural community infrastructure and projects like the Crawford mine, just outside of Timmins, which is going to create thousands of jobs. These northern Ontario Canadians know they have so much to offer, and they are imploring the members opposite to vote for them in this evening's vote.

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course the Liberal government shrugs off its own experts when the truth is not convenient to it. One day after the budget dropped, Fitch Ratings rang another alarm, warning that the Liberals' reckless spending is eroding Canada's finances and putting pressure on our credit rating. Budget 2025 would blow the deficit up to \$80 billion and push our general deficit far above the AA credit rating median. It also reminds us that the Liberals have a strong track record of breaking every fiscal anchor they set.

How many more fiscal watchdogs need to blow the whistle before the Prime Minister reins in his reckless spending?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this historic budget aims to invest not only in infrastructure that is typically covered solely by provinces, but also in health infrastructure in small communities like Kenora, where communities are waiting for those investments so they, too, can have the kind of promise Canadians in larger municipalities have.

Let me be clear. In Nipigon, Ontario, where I visited a school food program, they are so excited that the program will become permanent. On this side, we know children need food to thrive. We hope the Conservatives do not vote against hungry kids.

[*Translation*]

Eric Lefebvre (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is the role of the Parliamentary Budget Officer? He plays a key role when it comes to the federal government's financial transparency. He provides members of Parliament with an independent, non-partisan analysis of the state of public finances. So what does he have to say about the Liberal budget? He says that the government's "overly broad" definition of capital investments creates a major discrepancy with its estimates. The government will have to abandon its fiscal anchor of reducing the deficit-to-GDP ratio.

Does the Prime Minister recognize the work of the non-partisan parliamentary officer, or is he considering dismissing him?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the serious and ambitious alternative to what the Conservatives are proposing is budget 2025, with the best fiscal position of any G7 country, a AAA credit rating, and the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio of any G7 country.

This is also about making infrastructure investments to modernize our infrastructure. These are major projects to build the country, notably with Nouveau Monde Graphite, with Davie, back home in

Quebec City, and in Contrecoeur. It also about the Port of Saguenay expansion, which I was very pleased to announce with the member's colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord last Monday. That is what budget 2025 is all about: growing Quebec's economy and growing Canada's economy.

• (1435)

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals like to quote experts, but only when it suits them. The Fitch rating agency, which assigns the government's credit rating, recently said that the federal finances are a disaster, but the Liberals are refusing to listen to what the agency has to say. Meanwhile, in his report last week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that government spending is unsustainable and alarming.

How many more expert reports will it take for the Prime Minister to understand that he needs to stop his unsustainable spending?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. Canada has an enviable fiscal situation. We have a AAA credit rating and the lowest debt-to-GDP and deficit-to-GDP ratios in the G7. What my colleague is about to vote against is a 20% salary increase for 6,000 soldiers at Valcartier, in Quebec City. We are reinvesting in our Canadian Armed Forces. I know this is important to my colleague.

How can he vote against that?

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will always support what works, but what is not working is this government. For 10 years, we have been seeing that this government is not working. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, who conducted a transparent analysis, said that the chance of meeting the deficit targets is less than 10%. We know that this government is not working.

Furthermore, this government just posted an ad for a new parliamentary budget officer. Why? Is it because the truth hurts?

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2025 includes generational investments to rebuild, rearm and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces. This budget includes a historic \$2 billion to boost pay for nearly 90,000 members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families. Low-ranking sailors, soldiers and aviators received a 20% pay raise last Friday. I encourage all members to unite in supporting our armed forces and in building a strong Canada.

Oral Questions

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed that the Liberal budget deficit is twice as large as projected because the government is disguising spending as investment. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said that "the Government's definition of capital investments is overly expansive". He even suggests that this subjective definition be reviewed by independent experts. If Justin Trudeau had used this method, he would have balanced the budget every other year and would have practically been accused of austerity. In short, it is a sham.

Why are the Liberals hiding the real numbers from Quebeckers?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see smiles on the faces of my Bloc Québécois colleagues, because there is a lot of good news in the November 4 budget. Bloc members are in the Magdalen Islands for the announcement about the airport. I hope they will be available for tonight's vote because I know the people of the Magdalen Islands. They watch television, and they will be watching tonight's vote. There is even more good news, such as the Port of Saguenay and the Contrecoeur expansion. There are many projects that will help Quebec grow, and we will also be investing in health care infrastructure. This is a budget that meets Quebeckers' expectations.

Will the Bloc Québécois do the right thing?

* * *

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer did not drink the Liberal generational Kool-Aid. There is no surprise there: His mandate is to conduct non-partisan analyses. That is exactly why the Liberals want to replace him. They posted a job listing for a permanent replacement with "tact and discretion". They want a low-key parliamentary budget officer who apologizes before he speaks. A little more and they will ask him to get a Liberal Party membership card.

Will they take the same approach used for judges and recruit the next parliamentary budget officer through the "Liberalist"?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am going to pick up on what my colleague, the finance critic, said, because the reality is that things do not stop there. We have even more good investments on the way. My colleague opposite is from Mirabel, and he knows that aerospace is important. I hope he will be as passionate in defending the government's investments in aerospace as he has been here today. If he votes against the budget, he is voting against aerospace industry workers in Mirabel. He is also voting against the health care infrastructure that is so important to Quebeckers.

* * *

● (1440)

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is claiming that his massive new deficit spending is

an investment in the economy, but Canadians heard this promise for 10 years under Justin Trudeau, who doubled the national debt. As a result, productivity flatlined, investment collapsed and business competitiveness fell behind that of the U.S., which meant lower wages and fewer opportunities for our workers. Now Canadians are hearing that same failed promise from the Prime Minister, who would add \$300 billion of new debt over the next few years.

Why is the Prime Minister repeating a decade of failed Liberal spending promises? What are workers going to get out of it? What is he promising them?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we are promising is the largest infrastructure investment in Canadian history. This would create thousands of good jobs in the skilled trades, but do not take my word for it. Canadian Ironworkers said, "when Canada builds, Canadians work". LiUNA Western Canada said this budget would create "thousands of great paying Union jobs right across Western Canada". The International Union of Operating Engineers said this budget's nation-building project represents "an important opportunity for workers across Canada." The Carpenters Regional Council said billions in infrastructure and housing investments have "the potential to create tens of thousands of good paying...jobs."

Why would the Conservatives vote against it?

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals keep insisting that more deficit spending will strengthen our economy, but the data says quite the opposite. Despite doubling the national debt and promising Canadians that it was an investment, after 10 years, Canada ranks well below average among the world's advanced economies in productivity, and business research and development investment. Again, that means lower wages for our workers.

Now the budget watchdog is warning that the budget abandons the fiscal anchors we need to protect our long-term sustainability. Why are the Liberals weakening our fiscal anchors when a decade of their reckless spending failed to deliver any results for our Canadian workers?

Oral Questions

Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, they say they are fighting for youth, but they plan to vote against a national school food program. They say they are fighting for families, but they plan to vote against a middle-income tax cut. They say they are fighting for workers, but they plan to vote against \$75 million in apprenticeship funding. They say they are fighting for our borders, but they plan to vote against a much-needed pay raise for our service members in our armed forces, including in my riding of Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke at CFB Esquimalt.

Canadians want to know who the Conservatives are fighting for, because it is certainly not them.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, imagine what someone could buy if they were given a credit card with no limit and never had to pay it off at the end of the month. They could just pass the bill on to their children and grandchildren. That is exactly what the Liberal Prime Minister is doing. This is a red budget that will put generations of Canadians in the red. Credits cards like that do not exist, except for the Liberals.

Will the Liberals heed Fitch Ratings' warnings to the effect that federal finances are at high risk of deteriorating further with an unaffordable budget that will increase the cost of living for everyone?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. The budget includes an average tax cut of \$800 per middle-class family. It eliminates the GST on new homes for first-time buyers. There is an unprecedented pay increase for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. They received the increase last Friday.

The budget includes investments to modernize infrastructure across our country, to increase the country's productivity and to grow the economy of Quebec and Canada.

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is in the budget is the biggest deficit we have ever had, outside of a pandemic. Fitch is not the only agency that is concerned about Canada's public finances. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has raised a number of concerns about the Liberals' broken promises. There is nothing to limit Liberal spending anymore. The Prime Minister has abandoned all of his fiscal anchors. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said that the anchor that we have had for 30 years was suddenly eliminated in this budget, without any discussion. It is no wonder the Prime Minister wants to get rid of him. He hates being told the truth.

How many more warnings will it take for this government to put an end to its irresponsible spending?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, it would be irresponsible not to make the investments we are proposing in budget 2025 to stimulate growth in Canada, respond to a change in the global economic order and increase the sovereignty and resilience of the Canadian economy.

I urge my colleague to reconsider and support budget 2025.

● (1445)

[English]

Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's costly credit card budget piles today's reckless spending on tomorrow's taxpayers, and the warnings keep getting louder.

Fitch, the government's own credit rater, says that the Liberals routinely blow through their fiscal anchors and that federal finances run a high risk of further deterioration. Now the budget watchdog is sounding the alarm, noting that the government has abandoned its debt-to-GDP anchor, which is the very metric the Liberals said was key to protecting the AAA rating. No wonder the Prime Minister wants to fire him.

How many more damning watchdog reports will it take for the Prime Minister to rein in spending?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 4 we introduced a historic budget to build Canada into the strongest economy in the G7 and to build an economy by Canadians for Canadians so we will never be reliant on one country again. We are making generational investments in infrastructure, in housing and in defence, and we will build our economy into the strongest economy in the G7.

The members opposite have a decision to make: Will they stand with us and support this budget, or will they force a Christmas election?

* * *

[Translation]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

[English]

Can the Prime Minister agree that it is a deficiency in the budget that our legally binding Paris commitments are not mentioned? Can he confirm here on the floor of the House that in passing this budget, the government is committed to holding to as far below the 2°C limit as possible, to funding climate adaptation, to delivering on the nature strategy and to continuing to engage in meaningful indigenous reconciliation?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank—

Oral Questions

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I will have to ask the Prime Minister to start from the top.

Right Hon. Mark Carney: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her advocacy for the Youth Climate Corps, which is in this budget and which the House can vote for, to vote for the future of this country.

This budget puts us on the path for real results for climate, for nature and for reconciliation. I can confirm to the House that we will respect our Paris commitments for climate change, and we are determined to achieve them. I can confirm with the House that consistent with our Kunming-Montreal commitments, the nature strategy will be released in the coming weeks.

We will build this country strong, sustainable and pure for future generations.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said to judge him on the prices at the grocery store. Nowhere is his failure more evident than with baby formula. According to StatsCan, since 2017, the price of baby formula has gone up by 84%. After 10 years of Liberal governments, desperate families are relying on Facebook groups and are even buying opened cans of baby formula for their children.

Why is the Prime Minister increasing inflationary spending and making baby formula more expensive?

Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes that in order to build a strong economy, we need to ensure that women and girls are safe and have the tools they need to be supported and to thrive. That is why our government is investing \$660.5 million over five years, with \$131 million ongoing. This includes stable funding to prevent gender-based violence, strengthen women's economic security and support equality across Canada.

When the Conservatives were in power, they gutted Women and Gender Equality 40%, which saw the closure of 12 regional offices. On this side of the House, we understand that when we invest in women, we are going to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1450)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, moms want to feed their own children, and they should be able to afford baby formula. If the Liberals' programs were working, we would not have one in three kids at food bank lines every single month. We would not have 700,000 kids, every single month, in food bank lines. We would not have baby formula as the number one stolen food product in Canada.

This is because of the Liberals' failure, so will they end their inflationary spending so moms can afford baby formula?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have taken action to fight food insecurity. Part of the solution is working with our provincial, territorial and indigenous partners to ensure that 400,000 more children get nutritious meals at school every year. That is why this budget will make the national school food program permanent. In Canada, no child should wonder at school where their next meal is coming from.

When members opposite talk about food insecurity, they should start by voting for the budget.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while families in Kitchener are increasingly using food banks at alarming rates, the government had a chance to lower food prices by scrapping the fuel standard tax. Instead it chose to increase it by another 17¢. This increases the cost of things like coffee, which is already up 34%, and beef, which is up 16%.

Why does the Prime Minister seem so determined to drive Canadians into poverty by ignoring skyrocketing food prices while he enjoys a luxury lifestyle hidden from the consequences of his own policies?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week we came to an agreement with Ontario to continue our work on affordable child care in that province, and all across the country families are saving money. Do not take it from me; listen to a parent from Andrew Fleck Children's Services, who said that their family has been able to have healthier meals at home and to start saving for post-secondary education. Another parent said that her family was able to buy a house because of the child care fee reduction, which has made a monumental difference in their lives.

If the Conservatives want to help families, why do they not vote for our budget?

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I asked a question on food, and in typical Liberal fashion, I got an answer on child care. I am going to ask again. Why is the Prime Minister not only refusing to scrap the fuel standard tax that is driving up food prices but also actually increasing it? This will drive up the cost to grow food, package food and deliver food across the country.

Does the Prime Minister want groceries to be a luxury item because luxury is the only thing he knows, while everyday Canadians cannot afford to put food on the table?

Oral Questions

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I guess the member was not listening to the parent from Andrew Fleck Children's Services who said that their family has been able to have healthier meals at home and start saving for post-secondary education. Another mother, from the same child care service, said that she would have had to quit her job and become a stay-at-home mom, and her family would not have been able to afford child care at previous prices.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Patty Hajdu: Mr. Speaker, I know that they do not really like seeing women in the workforce, but the mom talks about—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario.

Hon. Patty Hajdu: Mr. Speaker, the member talks about the coverage that her job afforded. Not everybody has the luxury to stay at home.

* * *

[Translation]

CARBON PRICING

Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I hope you will show me the same generosity.

The current Liberal government is the most costly in the history of Canada. Every dollar spent by the Prime Minister comes directly out of Canadians' pockets. Everything costs more: groceries, housing and heating.

The much-talked-about industrial carbon tax increases farmers' production costs. Do members know what farmers do? They produce the food that we put on our tables. There is nothing in the budget to give Canadians a bit of breathing room.

Why is the Prime Minister increasing the industrial carbon tax, which is driving up the price of groceries?

● (1455)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Conservative member across the way is a bit confused. If he wants to be less confused, all he has to do is ask his colleague seated next to him the question. She was a member for the Quebec Liberal Party and she voted in favour of the carbon pricing system in Quebec. Quebec's carbon pricing system is not the federal system. All the member has to do is ask his colleague seated next to him.

[English]

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the current Liberal government is the most expensive in Canadian history. Every dollar the Prime Minister spends is driving up the cost of everything and is paid for by hard-working Canadians. According to the latest data, year over year, the price of chicken is up 6%.

Seafood is up 8%, infant formula is up 6% and beef is up a staggering 17%. Food prices are now rising 40% faster in Canada than in the United States.

However, instead of scrapping the industrial carbon tax and making life affordable, the Liberals doubled down, hiking the tax on farmers and producers, driving up the cost of farm equipment and fertilizer.

When will the Liberal Prime Minister finally end his punishing industrial carbon tax so Canadians can afford to put food on the table again?

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the opposition members are busy talking down the economy, we are building it up. Maybe they are too busy to know that what went down is inflation.

We are investing in builders and entrepreneurs. I was at the OneEleven innovation zone in Toronto. Young entrepreneurs were thankful that this budget will make it easier to hire Canadians and invest in Canada. Do not take my word for it; listen to the Council of Canadian Innovators, which says that our budget is listening to innovators.

I hope the opposition listens as well and does what Canadians want: build in Canada, buy in Canada and believe in Canada. It should support the budget.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the current Liberal government is the most expensive government in Canadian history. Every dollar the Prime Minister spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians, driving up the cost of everything. Food prices have risen nearly 40% faster in Canada than in the U.S. What is the Liberals' answer? It is to increase the industrial carbon tax. The Okanagan Valley is the fruit basket of Canada, yet taxes on our farms mean the cost of fruit grown in Canada is higher than that of fruit from abroad.

Why is the Prime Minister increasing the industrial carbon tax and making food more expensive?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected the new government to deliver on affordable homes and strong, connected communities, and I have good news for my colleague from B.C.: Budget 2025 answers the call with historic investments.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Excuse me. I am going to ask the minister to start again because of the noise level around me.

Oral Questions

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Speaker, I have good news for my colleague from B.C.: Budget 2025 answers the call with historic investments in affordable homes that will make a difference in people's lives, and investments in improving our roads, our transit, our public infrastructure and our community centres, hospitals and schools. With Build Canada Homes, we are closing urgent gaps and building at an unprecedented scale that brings affordability to all Canadians. Every investment is about empowering Canadians and making a difference in their lives with affordable housing and great community infrastructure.

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the current Liberal government is the most expensive government in Canadian history, and everything the Prime Minister spends comes out of the pockets of hard-working Canadians. Let us take a look at the Liberal-appointed president of the Nuclear Safety Commission, who is racking up massive expenses for international junkets like \$14,000 to Paris. Meanwhile, the Liberals are raising taxes on fuel that are going to add 17¢ a litre, and their appointees are taking limo rides.

Why do Liberals get limo rides while Canadians get higher taxes from the Prime Minister and the Liberals?

• (1500)

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the government is doing is helping build the best nuclear system in the world. We are building at Darlington. We just put \$2 billion into building the first-of-their-kind small modular reactors that will be exported around the world, creating Canadian jobs. That is what we are doing.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Liberals are doing is making excuses for a Liberal appointee who raised his travel budget by 85% while Canadians are lined up at food banks in record numbers. Under the Liberals' watch, food prices have risen 40% faster than in the United States.

Why is it that every time the Liberals stand up, life gets harder for Canadians? Canadians cannot afford the Liberals. They cannot afford the Prime Minister, and they cannot afford higher taxes. Why are the Liberals doubling down on higher prices for Canadians?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what this government is doing is doubling down on jobs for Canadians. At Darlington, we are building \$20 billion of new SMRs, creating 20,000 new good-paying blue-collar jobs all across this country. That is what we are doing.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Chris Malette (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my riding of Bay of Quinte is home to several hundred Canadian Armed Forces members and their families. I know that my constituents, including our brave men and women in uniform, are watching as Canada

makes new investments in our forces and works toward our NATO targets.

Can the Minister of National Defence speak to the new defence investments Canada is making in budget 2025?

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in budget 2025, we are investing over \$81 billion to rebuild, rearm and reinvest in our Canadian Armed Forces. We are making major investments in our people, with the largest salary increase, up to 20% for CAF members, in a generation. This past weekend, nearly 90,000 CAF members saw their salaries increase.

That is what is in our budget: a pay raise for CAF members, support for CAF members, equipment for CAF members and respect for CAF members. Let us get behind our forces.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, there was deep disappointment with the Prime Minister's actions in British Columbia. While he took a leisurely walk along the beach admiring the White Rock Pier, families in nearby communities were attending vigils and town halls in response to more than 100 extortion cases reported this year, terrorizing B.C.'s Lower Mainland. These families are facing repeated shootings and intimidation, and the Prime Minister deliberately chose to ignore them.

Instead of taking leisurely walks along the pier, will the Prime Minister get serious and adopt our Conservative plan to finally crack down on extortion?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has taken many steps to improve the situation of public safety in our country. When the Conservatives vote against budget 2025, they are voting against more RCMP officers and more CBSA officers. They are voting against a \$1.7-billion investment in our RCMP. They are voting against pay raises for RCMP cadets. Essentially, they are voting against public safety.

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals can outline anything in the budget they want, but they are not addressing the problem we have with extortion. There has been a 550% increase in British Columbia. Business owners are especially scared because they are the ones being targeted. Abbotsford police and Surrey police have already put forward a special task force to deal with this growing problem. In the last Parliament, the Liberals had a chance to vote in favour of our Conservative plan to stop extortion and they rejected it.

Oral Questions

On behalf of British Columbians, when are the Liberals going to get serious and vote for our Conservative plan to reduce extortion and keep our businesses and communities safe?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have good news. The Conservatives have a chance, in this Parliament, to vote for Bill C-2, to vote for Bill C-14 and to vote for Bill C-12.

This weekend, I spoke to an extortion victim. They told me that it has taken the police months to get permission from the courts to link the phone number they are being extorted from to an actual suspect. Lawful access, which is in Bill C-2, would help provide the solution to this problem. When will the Conservatives get on board and vote for lawful access measures?

• (1505)

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, extortion is at crisis levels in Canada, up over 550% in Surrey alone, but the Liberals have done nothing to protect Canadians. Over six months ago, they promised 1,000 new RCMP officers to help the situation, but none have been hired. We brought forward legislation to crack down on extortion and keep Canadians safe; the Liberals blocked it.

When will the Liberals take extortion seriously and support our Conservative plan to keep these criminals behind bars and keep Canadians safe?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this country, extortion is taken very seriously. When extortion is committed, someone could serve life in prison according to the sentence in the Criminal Code of Canada. What is really important when it comes to the extortion crisis is solving extortion before charges are laid.

Police across this country are asking for lawful access provisions so they can investigate these cases appropriately. Who is against that? It is the Conservatives. Why will they not give law enforcement the tools they need to crack down on extortions?

* * *

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many community members in my riding of Brome—Missisquoi work in the natural resources industry and the manufacturing sector. They rely on strong, flexible infrastructure and supply chains to buy and sell the goods they need to support our local economy.

The Saguenay port is a strategic link for Canadian industry, benefiting all of Canada by playing an important role as an economic catalyst.

Can the Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement explain how the \$57.6-million commitment in the budget will stimulate economic development?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Brome—Missisquoi for his question. I want to be clear: Modernizing port infrastructure is es-

sential to increasing our productivity, stimulating our regional economies and strengthening the national economy.

On Monday, I was very pleased to stand with Carl Laberge and Stéphanie Desforges from the Port of Saguenay; Louis Ouellet, the reeve of the Lac-Saint-Jean-Est RCM; my Bloc Québécois colleagues from Jonquière and Lac-Saint-Jean and my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord to announce \$57.6 million for the second wharf project at the Saguenay port. This is a vital project for the region. It is a vital project for Quebec. I hope my colleagues will support the 2025 budget.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Kurt Holman (London—Fanshawe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve straight answers about how their money is being spent. The public accounts list more than \$173,000 in expenses over just nine days by the Liberal member for London West during her brief time as the government House leader, and Parliament was not even sitting. That is \$19,000 a day, even though her publicly documented activities were routine ceremonial stops or partisan events in London, not House leader work in Ottawa.

Will the Liberals table a full breakdown for these charges to allow Canadians to understand how this is even possible?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, sometimes I wonder if the Conservatives do not just sit on Twitter all day trying to figure out what they are going to say in the House of Commons, instead of the opposite.

This is absolutely groundless. This is absolutely baseless. There are no facts involved in anything the member just said. The member for London West has always taken a prudent and responsible approach to public finances.

There was nothing out of the ordinary: No new employees were hired, salary expenses for employees were normal and vacation expenses for employees were reported, as is always the case. The case is closed.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

HOUSING

Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis is affecting people everywhere in Quebec. Rent has gone up 16% in three years. There has never been so much homelessness on our streets. People are being forced to stay in substandard housing because they cannot afford to move. The Liberals, however, are planning to spend six times more on the army than on affordable housing.

Are the Liberals prepared to make a commitment and invest specific, substantial amounts in co-operative, social and community housing?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. We worked together with our NDP colleagues, and the result was obviously to maintain programs that are important to Canadians. These include child care, school food and national pharmacare programs. The most important thing is that we are making a generational investment in affordable housing that should help all Canadians.

We will always be there to help the middle class. The first thing we did was to reduce income taxes to let Canadians keep more money in their pockets. Canadians know that we will always be there for them.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1510)

[Translation]

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

The Speaker: I have the honour to table in the House, in both official languages, a letter I received from the Parliamentary Budget Officer pursuant to section 79.42 of the Parliament of Canada Act.

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[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 38 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, entitled "Federal Housing Investments".

Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table the Conservative Party's dissenting report to the second report of the human resources committee, "Federal Housing Investments".

Canadians are facing an unprecedented housing crisis. Rent and housing prices have skyrocketed, and young Canadians have lost their dream of home ownership. During the study, witnesses repeatedly confirmed that excessive regulations, high construction taxes and ineffective federal funding are major drivers of the crisis. Failed Liberal policies have rewarded municipal gatekeepers, increased homebuilding taxes and spent billions on programs that did not build homes.

Therefore, the Conservatives urge the government to focus on lowering housing costs and cutting taxes that make homes more expensive. We also call on the government to remove barriers that prevent builders from getting shovels in the ground. Finally, federal funding must be tied to real results rather than empty promises.

Canadians deserve a government that will actually get homes built and make housing affordable again.

* * *

● (1515)

CRIMINAL CODE

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-257, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (promotion of terrorist activity or group).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill that would amend the Criminal Code. The bill would create a new criminal offence against the wilful promotion of terrorism, a terrorist group or terrorist activity, with a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment. Canada already criminalizes participation in and the aiding of terrorism, but there is no criminal offence targeting the advocacy for or promotion of terrorism. This gap allows extremists and recruiters to promote terrorism on our streets and online.

My bill would amend the Criminal Code by making it criminal to promote terrorist activity or a terrorist group. The bill would protect charter rights by creating the defences of religion, truth or public interest discussions, because the purpose is not to abridge speech, but criminalize the glorification and normalization of terrorism before terrorism ensues.

I am proud of my Conservative colleagues for standing with Canada's Jewish community and supporting my bill to criminalize the wilful promotion of terrorism.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

The Budget

PETITIONS

SUPPORTIVE HOUSE PROJECT

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise on behalf of angered parents with children at Abbotsford Traditional School who are fighting against BC Housing's attempt to put in a safe consumption site across from the school playground and track.

Parents demand action from the Government of Canada with respect to the decriminalization experiment in the province of British Columbia, asking it to uphold the rules within that agreement and withhold funding from BC Housing until it respects the innocence of children and their right to play at a safe playground.

SHARED PARENTING

Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to speak to e-petition 6626.

Extensive social science research shows that children of separated or divorced parents exercise significantly better physical, emotional, social and academic outcomes when they spend equal or near-equal time with both parents, barring safety concerns.

In Canada, public opinion polling since 2007 shows that over 70% of Canadians, across all genders, regions and political affiliations, support legislation that establishes a presumption of equal shared parenting in child custody matters.

Over 17,000 Canadians have signed this petition calling upon the House of Commons to amend the Divorce Act and to establish a rebuttable presumption of equal shared parenting, defined as joint decision-making responsibility and equal or maximized practical parenting time in the best interest of the child, except where evidence demonstrates that such an arrangement would not be appropriate due to concerns for the child's safety or well-being.

FALUN GONG

James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to present a petition today on behalf of over 260 Canadians who are petitioning the Government of Canada to raise the alarm bells on the continued activity of the Communist Party in China as they go after Falun Gong practitioners, including the grotesque and illegal organ harvesting and arbitrary detention of Falun Gong practitioners in China.

As we know, Falun Gong practitioners continue to be surveilled and harassed here in Canada, including the Shen Yun dance squad, which is in North America. Its members perform classical Chinese dance, a beautiful ballet. They have been targeted with bomb threats and intimidation by operatives of the People's Republic of China.

As we know, G7 leaders have denounced transnational repression and have denounced the ongoing activity of the Chinese regime in foreign interference.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to call on China to end the Falun Gong persecution and execution, as well as the illegal organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners in China, and to hold those people to account through increased sanctions and travel bans, so we can ensure that Falun Gong can practise safely in Canada and around the world.

• (1520)

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394 and 395 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled in an electronic format.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to ask the hon. member for Halifax what she has been hearing. We just had a riding week, and she must have spent a lot of time with folks in her riding. They must have had multiple conversations about budget 2025 and the things that are really important for Halifax.

Could the member share with the House some of the great conversations she has been having with members in her community?

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am really excited about this budget, and people in my community are also very excited. It means great things for Halifax.

The Budget

As I outlined in my speech, we are a port city. We are well positioned to expand our trade to Europe and elsewhere. We have an amazing offshore wind resource. We are going full tilt on improving the health care system. I am really excited about the build communities strong fund. At the same time that we are building these large nation-building projects, we also have money for the local level, for communities at home, on the ground, to help support across all types of considerations and all types of sectors.

I come from the environment and climate space. I have had some really great conversations about what is in the budget for that too, such as industrial carbon pricing, methane regulations, the youth climate corps and so much more.

I really hope that we can get this budget approved and get to work on building Canada strong.

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to start, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler.

I am pleased to rise, once again, to speak to the budget. It is nice to actually see the budget finally here after a 19-month delay. That is almost unprecedented, but of course we saw the Liberals refuse to actually table a budget one year during COVID, so I guess they are just keeping to their habits. Has the 19-month wait been worth it? The answer is clearly no.

First of all, I have to note just how crass and cynical the government is to actually name the budget after the Liberal campaign platform “Canada Strong”. I think the government wants to be non-partisan. It should maybe find its own slogan.

In my view, the government always manages to set low expectations, and it always manages to achieve them. On September 17, the Prime Minister, in the House, stated, “We are going to have a declining level of debt.” Those were his exact words.

What did the budget deliver? On the top line is a deficit of \$78.3 billion for this year, which is \$40 billion more than delivered last year. Public accounts just came out showing a deficit last year of \$36.3 billion. What is remarkable is that it is actually lower than what was forecast under the Trudeau government. Under the current government, not so much. The famed banker is delivering worse results than the drama teacher. Let that sink in.

There is \$322 billion of new debt on the short time horizon of this budget, out to 2030, with \$160 billion more than projected in the fall economic statement under the previous government. This is the same government that the former finance minister quit due to the costly spending and the need, as she said, to keep the powder dry. She quit over a lower deficit and debt numbers to keep the powder dry, but this government came through and steamrolled over that with \$168 billion on top.

We have to ask, how much worse does it have to be to end up with deficit numbers that are 200% worse than those of the famed Trudeau government? It was famous, of course, for its profligate spending patterns. That happened despite an increase in tax revenue of over 97% over the time span of the current government.

Tax revenues are doubling, yet somehow the government is still managing to spend every penny of that and almost a third of \$1 tril-

lion more. There will be \$329 billion of interest on this Liberal debt over the next five years. That is almost a third of \$1 trillion gone to interest. That is 10% more that we are going to spend on interest than on health care transfers to the province, despite record lineups and record wait-lists for care at hospitals. People cannot find a doctor, but under the government, we are spending 10% more on interest than we are on health care transfers. That is 100% more than we are actually spending on the child benefit.

The government is placing a higher priority on spending and on paying interest to Bay Street bankers than on providing money to families, 100% more. It is more than we are going to spend on new subs, the over-budget frigate program, which is about \$80 billion over budget, and F-35s. We are still going to spend more on interest than all those needed items on defence.

To put it further into perspective, the GST is forecasted in 2029 to be \$62.7 billion, which is from what is collected each time someone goes out to buy a bag of chips, as I like to do because I am addicted to chips, or go to a restaurant, buy beer or buy a new car. There will be \$62.7 billion to be collected in GST, but the interest in 2029-30, at the end of this budget, is projected to be \$76.1 billion. The GST would have to increase by 20% just to pay the interest, not to pay for any health care, border security, RCMP or defence. That is just to cover the interest on the Liberal debt. In 2029-30, that will mean that 13%, or almost \$1 out of every \$7, of what is collected by the government, as taxpayers will be paying not only the GST but also income tax and corporate tax, will be for just the interest.

● (1525)

I think about how, if we were running a business like that, before we even opened the doors, 13% of the income would just be wiped out before we would provide any services. That is the Liberal record, and that is what this budget is calling for.

What would Canadians get for all this spending? What would they get for \$76 billion of interest payments? What would they get with a third of \$1 trillion more in spending? They would get an average growth over the next five years of 1.26% GDP growth. It would be a third of \$1 trillion in added debt just for 1.26% growth. The OECD predicts Canada will have the lowest per person growth for its economy from 2020 to 2030 and then from 2030 to 2060, so basically out to 2060.

The Budget

I mention the 2020 to 2030 part as well because 2020 is about the time the current Prime Minister started advising the Liberal government as a financial adviser. It would be billions and billions of added debt sinking the next generation with interest payments and debt for 1.26% growth and the slowest growth of economy per capita in the OECD.

What else has all this spending gotten us? We have the highest consumer debt per person in the G7. It is 80% higher per person than in the U.S. There are two million Canadians every month at a food bank. That is a result of the Liberal government. With all this spending, it has achieved two million people a month at food banks. We have a rise in urban violent crime in 19 out of 20 of our largest cities, the most unaffordable housing-to-income index in the G7 and a bloated bureaucracy that failed to achieve 47% of its goals last year.

Hidden on the same day the budget came out were the departmental results, where the Treasury Board puts out what the government projected for its plans and goals and what it achieved. The government failed on 47% of its goals. There are tens of thousands more employees in the bureaucracy, and over \$70 billion spent, and it failed on 47% of its goals.

We have youth unemployment of 14.1%, and I want to quote from the budget. This is from the Liberals' own budget: "The unemployment rate is projected to remain elevated over the forecast horizon". The forecast horizon in the budget goes out five years. The government is saying that, despite all its rhetoric, unemployment is going to remain elevated for the next five years. We have record spending and record debt, and in return we get little growth, little help for unemployment and little help for housing.

What would help would be to approve a pipeline. It is a 400-page budget, and the word "pipeline" is mentioned once, hidden in a bit about carbon capture. The best way this country can improve revenues, improve wealth and improve our productivity is to approve a pipeline.

The omnibus budget has about 75 legislative items it needs to change. There is nothing in there about repealing Bill C-48, the Canadian tanker ban off the B.C. coast. We allow American tankers, but not Alberta oil. There is no repeal of Bill C-69. There is no repeal of the production cap. There is no growth. Instead, we get another bureaucracy for major projects.

To finish, I just want to quote from Trevor Tombe, the famous economist. He says that this budget has a big gap between rhetoric and reality. He says, "Canada would benefit from a credible and sustainable fiscal strategy. Unfortunately, this platform takes us further from that goal."

This budget would be bad for Canada, and that is why I will not be supporting it.

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, we will soon be called upon to vote on a budget in which the government has decided to redefine what constitutes an investment. It turns out that the government's definition of investment does not exist any-

where else. The budget says so itself. It does not exist in Singapore and it does not exist in the United Kingdom.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, we are not talking about \$45 billion in investments, but rather \$2.2 billion. He has indicated that that definition is likely wrong and has suggested that a committee of experts should look into the matter.

I would like to know what role truth should play when a budget is tabled. What role should transparency play? Is the government not engaging in a campaign of misinformation directed at Canadians and Quebeckers?

[*English*]

Kelly McCauley: Madam Speaker, my friend brings up a very valid point. This is what the economist Trevor Tombe was referring to, the difference between reality and truth. There is a large gap between the truth of what the budget is and the rhetoric the Liberals are presenting.

The budget constantly talks about how they are changing how they record their expenses to do so as England does. However, when we actually look at it, the United Kingdom has a very narrow definition of capital. The government has expanded the definition of capital so much that \$90 billion of its supposed capital is actually operating. It is purely an attempt to hide from Canadians the true facts that the government can only spend and spend to produce sub-standard results, results that have led to two million Canadians a month going to the food bank, to the highest housing prices and to the highest deficit we have seen outside the COVID period.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if we contrast many things we hear from the Conservatives, we have a choice; Canadians have a choice. I hope it will happen sometime in the next couple of years.

Having said this, on the one hand, we have a Prime Minister and a Liberal caucus that see the value of investing in Canadians and our infrastructure, and we have seen tangible, positive results. On the other, the Conservatives want to see nothing but cuts and a government that stands by and does nothing to support the economy.

I wonder if the member would agree that there are times when we need to build our nation and that this is one of those times.

The Budget

• (1535)

Kelly McCauley: Madam Speaker, two million Canadians every single month is not a positive, tangible result. Record unemployment for youth is not a positive, tangible result. We have not seen any positive, tangible results from the government for 10 years, and we do not see them in the budget either. What we see is a generational debt being passed on to our kids and our grandkids. The government's own growth projection is 1.26%. The OECD said that we are going to have the worst growth going out to 2060. Failure is not a tangible, positive result.

[Translation]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North and his colleagues from the governing party go around telling everyone that it is important to invest in infrastructure. They talk about hospital infrastructure.

However, the budget lays out \$5 billion over three years to build hospitals in all the provinces. That comes out to about \$1.7 billion a year. For Quebec, this means \$300 million a year over three years. The Maisonneuve-Rosemont hospital alone is likely to cost between \$5 billion and \$6 billion.

Although it is saying that it is investing in hospital infrastructure, is the government not simply telling Quebeckers that it does not care about patients, those who are sick or the health care system itself, and that, ultimately, their concerns come far behind the oil interests of the western provinces?

[English]

Kelly McCauley: Madam Speaker, I think the government's budget is saying exactly what my colleague is commenting on. It is placing a priority on paying out interest to Bay Street bankers and not helping main street Canadians. The \$76 billion a year in interest payments could provide a new hospital every single year in the top 100 largest cities in the country. The government's focus is completely wrong. It should be on Canadians and health care and less on paying off bankers.

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Madam Speaker, this is a real doozy of a budget. It is such a doozy that perhaps this will be my last speech in this Parliament, so let us make it count.

I want to start with some confessions. I believe we need to spend less and invest more. I believe we need to build Canada strong. I believe we need to make generational investments in Canada's future. Unfortunately, this budget does none of those things. Each of those slogans is taken straight from the Prime Minister's mouth or the Liberal Party platform.

We are six months in. The budget is six months late. Even with that homework extension, the budget fails to produce on each one of the Liberals' own platform promises, and the House must give their work a failing grade.

Let us walk through them.

The central promise was to spend less and invest more. In an April 19 Instagram video, the Prime Minister explained what he meant by that. He likened it to purchasing a house: The purchase

price is a capital investment, and heat and electrical are operating expenses.

Let us take the first half of his promise on his own terms. Is he spending less on operating expenses? No. By the Liberals' own extremely loose definition of investment, the operating expenses are going up under budget 2025.

I would ask those following at home to please turn with me to Table A1.5 on page 233 of the budget.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I ask the hon. member to please be very careful when changing pages as it is a noise that disturbs the interpreters when close to the microphone.

I thank the member.

Matt Strauss: The day-to-day operating balance was minus \$4.1 billion under the Liberals' definition for 2024, and it will be \$33 billion under their definition for 2025. Is this what spending less on operating expenses looks like to the Prime Minister, increasing the operating deficit by 700%? Have the Liberals gone mad? Do their promises mean nothing?

How are we supposed to have a democracy when someone can run an election on balancing the operating budget and then increase the operating deficit by 700% in their first year? This is a terrible trick on voters. If I was not already signed up for blue team and a well-dressed Goldman Sachs banker ran for prime minister with red team promising to spend less and invest more, I might have believed him. I might have voted for him. That is how much I agree that we should spend less and invest more. Millions of thoughtful and prudent Canadians did believe him and did vote for him. Today the rug has been pulled out from under them. The budget is a sham; the Liberals are spending more.

Before they start shouting about tariffs across the way, those at home can please turn to page 66 of the budget document, Table 1, in which the government estimates that \$7 billion of the deficit is due to tariffs, or what they call "Economic and fiscal developments since FES 2024". Therefore, the operating deficit increases by \$33 billion, but only \$7 billion of that is in any way a consequence of tariffs. The rest is self-inflicted.

The Budget

Let us talk about the second half of the Liberals' promise, which is to invest more. The issues are twofold: how much investment there is and whether the investments are good or bad. I thank God for the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Table 1 of the PBO report on the budget shows an increase in capital investment based on the PBO definition of \$7 billion for 2025. The deficit has doubled from \$40 billion to \$80 billion, which is a \$40-billion increase, and only a fraction of this, or \$7 billion, is new investment under this definition. Obviously, this is not generational or transformative, just in terms of the size of the investments, but are they good or are they bad investments?

I am a physician, and I do my own investing for my retirement. How to define an investment as good or bad is very easy. A good investment provides a good rate of return, and a bad investment provides a negative rate of return. To use the Prime Minister's Instagram example, if someone buys a \$1-million house, that is indeed an investment. If that house loses 20% of its value, that person is \$200,000 poorer, and that is a very bad investment.

Every single year the Liberals have been in power, they have told us that they are taking our money through taxes to invest it for us, because we do not know how to invest as well as they do. They did it in 2015. Their platform promised "historic new investments in infrastructure". In 2019, their platform promised, "We will run modest deficits for three years so that we can invest in growth for the middle class". Their 2021 platform promised to "Immediately invest \$6 billion...to support the elimination of health system wait-lists."

What sorts of returns did we get on this investment? Did any of that happen? I do not see the historic infrastructure they built from 2015. I do not see that the middle class has experienced growth. In fact, I see that it has been decimated by the Liberals' inflationary deficits. Lastly, as a practising physician, I can promise we are far from eliminating health system wait-lists as they promised; wait-lists are worse now than they have ever been.

Furthermore, the national debt has gone from \$600 billion to \$1.2 trillion over the last 10 years. None of this quite seems as though the Liberals' investments are paying off. It rather seems as though Canadians know how to invest, but the government keeps taking their money and then investing it on white elephant programs that provide no rate of return.

What is the top-line conclusion of this? It is that we are now spending \$60 billion on debt financing. This is more than we spend on health care transfers or on national security. It does not seem to me that in the aggregate or in any specific case, when the Liberals say they are going to take people's money to invest it on their behalf, they do any sort of a great job at it ever. It never seems as though their investments provide anything like an acceptable rate of return. In fact, Bernie Madoff gave his clients a better rate of return.

However, let us take a specific case and drill deeper: housing investment. I find myself asking how many members in the House have ever, with their own hands, built a house from start to finish.

An hon. member: I have.

Matt Strauss: Madam Speaker, there are not many, and this does not surprise me. In general, politicians do not know how to build

anything, because they do not build things. Builders build things, and home builders build houses. In Canada, home builders have always built homes. The reason they are not building homes now is that they are not allowed to.

• (1540)

My friend Cal is a small-time renovator who lives in Kitchener. He bought a dilapidated house in London, Ontario, and wants to renovate it into a triplex so that three families can move in. He has waited months and months for the city to approve it.

I have an Albanian friend, Ben, who is a mid-sized housing developer in Kitchener. He bought a plot of land and wants to build 36 townhomes. The city fought him and said he can only build 16. He had to get lawyers and fight in the Ontario Land Tribunal for two years to finally be allowed to build homes during a housing crisis.

My friend Mike owns a gym in Kitchener. He moved locations, and to get his operations running up at capacity, he needed to put in a new washroom for a change room. It took months and months to get that permit for a toilet.

In each case, it is terribly demoralizing and financially injurious to have bureaucrats tell people what they can and cannot do with their own property when they are trying to build houses and provide services for our communities. In every case, and this is the issue from coast to coast to coast, bureaucrats stand in the way and say it takes nine months to approve a toilet.

Rather than standing up against this violation of property rights and letting builders build, the federal government is going to spend \$15 billion for a new federal bureaucracy to add on to the municipal bureaucracies. This will not work; it is a bad investment. Even if people thought the Liberals had perhaps turned over a new leaf after 10 years of bad investment, I am sorry to disabuse them of this notion. Pouring money into bureaucracy will not fix the housing crisis; it is the cause of the housing crisis. We need to build Canada strong, but the budget builds Canadian bureaucracy strong.

I want to make a last point about the Liberals' last promise: generational investment. The budget is not providing generational investment; it is providing generational debt. They are increasing spending by a lot and investment by a little. The sum total is \$2,000 of new debt for every man, woman and child in our nation just this year.

The Budget

I have a three-year-old daughter and a one-year-old son. How could I kiss them goodbye this morning and tell them that I am going to Ottawa to vote for a budget that puts them in thousands of dollars of debt before they even hit kindergarten? I honestly ask whether the Liberal MPs have small children. Have they told them that they are raiding their college fund, foreclosing on their future, to place bets on government bureaucracies that never pay off? I cannot imagine they have. In fact, I suspect that they were rather taken in by the Prime Minister's promises as well. I suspect that they did want to build Canada strong, spend less money and invest more and that many of them are feeling terribly disappointed now. To them, I extend my warmest personal invitation to come sit next to me on this side of the House. I ask them to please stand up now if they would like to take the offer.

• (1545)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the member wants to bring up housing. I did build a house, right from the basement all the way to the top, including the roof shingles. I would be happy to provide the address.

At the end of the day, let us take a look at the leader of the Conservative Party. He was the minister responsible for housing. Members will never guess how many homes he built when he was responsible for non-profit housing. We can count them using only two hands, minus four fingers. At the end of the day, the Conservatives were an absolute, total disaster on housing.

Having said that, I think misinformation is a serious issue. The Conservatives talk about the deficit. Let us talk about Japan, France, the UK or the United States. All of these countries' deficit-to-GDP ratios are much higher than Canada's.

I have news for the member: Canada is not burning. Canada is the best country in the world to call home. If the Conservatives would get off their pot and stop condemning Canada and saying how bad it is, they could contribute to building Canada strong, which he says he believes in. I believe in Canada strong.

Will he support a budget that believes in Canada strong?

Matt Strauss: Madam Speaker, as for the second point, it is easy to tell mistruths with statistics. Canada's federal debt is low compared to pure countries as a percentage of GDP, but in terms of Canada's total public debt, because the federal government off-loads so many services to the provinces, such as education, housing in some important respects and health care, the provinces have taken on terrible debts. The federal government has to backstop that debt, which is what puts us at risk of having a difficult time financing our debt. It is important to choose the correct statistics when we are talking about a specific problem.

As for my leader's record as a housing minister, this is a very tired attack. I cannot believe the member did not hear the answer in the speech I gave. Builders build homes; housing ministers do not build homes. That is why we have had housing minister after housing minister from the Liberal side promise to solve the housing crisis.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister's latest mantra is that he wants to eliminate the operating deficit, in other words, the normal net deficit from his bad investments.

However, by his own definition of operating deficit, the Trudeau government achieved a balance or generated a surplus during its first four years. We will overlook the pandemic years. The Trudeau government did not run an operating deficit in 2022-23. In its last year, the so-called operating deficit was \$31 billion. In this budget, the operating deficit is \$32.5 billion.

First, does this not demonstrate that by increasing program spending, which the Parliamentary Budget Officer says is not capital spending, they are hiding the truth from Quebeckers and Canadians? Second, by spending heavily on programs, is the Prime Minister creating a problem that he is promising to fix later? Is the new creative accounting in this budget not ultimately a way of hiding the true facts?

• (1550)

[*English*]

Matt Strauss: Madam Speaker, I think we have decades-old standards for how budgets are disclosed to the Canadian public. To suddenly change those standards is shifty or sneaky. Then, it causes me a crisis of faith to find out that, even based on the Liberals' own terms, they are not increasing investment by as much as they are increasing spending.

I was looking at Brookfield Asset Management's stock price increase. Shortly after the Prime Minister became the chairman there, he did some reorganization, moving the money around into different pots, and its stock price shot up compared to the S&P 500. Two years later, it is coming back down, because playing these sorts of shell games between operating expenses and capital may look very good and may attract some investor dollars, but in the end, those investors are going for a wash.

Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Liberal member for Winnipeg North was going on about Japan. I just wonder whether the member could talk about Japan and the folly of comparing Canada to Japan when it comes to debt and the debt-to-GDP ratio. How did Japan get there? Japan's debt-to-GDP ratio is 250%. How it happened is persistent, long-term deficits, and then all of a sudden, one day, it is in a big mess.

Could the member talk about how we should not be like Japan and about how we should get the budget balanced and provide fiscal certainty to the rest of the world?

Matt Strauss: Madam Speaker, Japan has a lot of problems. It had a lost decade. Now we have had a lost decade because the Liberals have copied its playbook.

The Budget

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the member for Trois-Rivières.

The ambitious budget that we presented to the House on November 4 contains a lot of good news for my riding of Madawaska—Restigouche. With the build communities strong fund, we are going to make significant investments in infrastructure. More specifically, the community stream, the former gas tax program, will give municipalities more predictability in planning their infrastructure investments.

As a former municipal councillor in the rural community of Kedgwick, I am well aware of the importance of this program, which allows for direct transfers to municipalities. It means money for paving the streets of Bois-Joli or Vallée-des-Rivières. It means funding for the water and sewer system in Upper Madawaska or Heron Bay. It means money for community infrastructure in Saint-Quentin or Grand Falls.

In addition, a provincial and territorial cost-sharing stream will contribute more than \$17 billion in new funding for infrastructure that will facilitate housing construction. Sometimes, for example, building an apartment building requires upgrading the capacity of a water system or building an extra stretch of roadway. The federal government will be there to support that type of project.

We are also establishing a new health infrastructure fund. This is important. It means money for our hospitals, emergency rooms and other health facilities that are important to our communities. In addition, there is \$6 billion for regionally significant infrastructure.

In addition to our historic investments in infrastructure, we are also making unprecedented investments in housing through Build Canada Homes. The \$13 billion we will invest through Build Canada Homes over the next five years will help accelerate housing construction across the country. That includes affordable housing.

Already in my riding, when we walk through the streets of Campbellton or Edmundston, we see apartment buildings being constructed with federal funding. This is transforming the face of our cities for the better. Having discussed this with several mayors in my riding, I know that some excellent local housing projects will be proposed.

Our investments in infrastructure and housing will strengthen local communities and fuel our economy. It is important to understand that in infrastructure and construction projects, quite often, local businesses are involved in the contract. That creates good jobs in my riding of Madawaska—Restigouche. On this side of the House, we understand that we need strong communities for a strong Canada.

I would like to give a concrete example of the impact the investments we are making in infrastructure can have on our communities. Last week, I had the honour of making an announcement on rural public transit on behalf of the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure. I got to announce \$700,000 in funding to expand public transit in towns and municipalities in Grand Falls, Vallée-des-Rivières, Saint-Quentin and Kedgwick. The service will

be offered by FlexGo under New Brunswick's Northwest Regional Services Commission.

This follows an initial tranche of federal funding that supported the launch of this service in Edmundston and Upper Madawaska at the beginning of this year. It has been a great success, because FlexGo provides reliable, quality, flexible service that is truly tailored to the needs of rural communities. This means that residents of Kedgwick and Saint-Quentin who do not have personal vehicles can now travel very affordably between the two communities to visit family. People who live in Edmundston and work in Saint-Léonard, Clair or Saint-François-de-Madawaska in Upper Madawaska can commute from their home to their workplace. Residents of Drummond and Saint-André who have an appointment at the hospital in Grand Falls will have a dependable means of transportation to get there.

This kind of investment truly improves the lives of our families, seniors, people with reduced mobility, workers and post-secondary students. As a member of Parliament, I am so happy to announce this type of investment, because I know it will make a real difference in the quality of life of the people I represent here in Ottawa. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the FlexGo team for their exemplary work on this file.

Forestry is a very important sector for the Canadian economy, and it is central to the economy in my riding. Everyone knows that the tariff war with the United States has had a significant impact on the softwood lumber industry. This issue is a priority for me. As the member for Madawaska—Restigouche, I am actively involved in discussions on this issue with my colleagues here in Ottawa. I am pleased to report that this sector has not been overlooked in the 2025 budget.

● (1555)

We have announced a \$700-million loan guarantee program, which will give affected businesses quick access to the liquidity they need. This comes on top of an additional half-billion-dollar investment in various forestry programs to help the sector diversify and develop new markets.

As well, various other programs and measures were announced in the budget to help both businesses and workers in sectors affected by the tariff war. Our government is determined to defend the interests of the softwood lumber sector during this period of economic turmoil. As the member for Madawaska—Restigouche, so am I.

The Budget

The Canada summer jobs program is very important to our young people and our communities. I am pleased to see that budget 2025 not only maintained but also enhanced funding for this program. Last summer, I visited over 200 workplaces where young people had benefited from Canada summer jobs funding. I got to see the real-life impact that this program was having in Madawaska—Restigouche. I spoke with young people who were getting their first work experience or their first opportunity to gain experience in their field of study through this program. The program also plays an important role in covering summer labour costs for our small businesses, festivals, municipalities, summer camps and community organizations, to name just a few examples.

I would like to remind everyone that the deadline for submitting applications for the summer of 2026 is December 11, and I am already looking forward to being home next summer to visit even more young people in the workplace.

Budget 2025 contains some excellent news: Not only has the government doubled the funding for National Acadian Day celebrations, but it has also made that funding permanent. This was a long-standing request from Acadian civil society, and the response came directly from our Prime Minister. We Acadians have been present in North America for over 400 years. We have had our share of challenges throughout history, but we are a strong, resilient, proud and forward-looking people. We have a strong attachment to our symbols, whether it be our national anthem, our flag or our national day on August 15. The announcement that funding for this celebration will be permanent not only corrects an injustice that has persisted for far too long, but it is also a wonderful way for our Prime Minister to recognize the Acadian people.

The people of Madawaska—Restigouche celebrate their Acadian roots with pride and in grand style. Just think of the huge show that took place last summer on Charlo Beach, the tintamarre in Campbellton or Grand Falls, the celebrations of our Acadian stars in Upper Madawaska, or the festivals organized in Edmundston, Saint-Quentin and Kedgwick. There is also the traditional August 15 dinner in Saint-Anne-de-Madawaska, where diners can enjoy a delicious stew known as *fricot* or a flatbread we call *ployes brayonnes*. Next summer, Madawaska—Restigouche will once again celebrate Acadia in style.

For more than 50 years, the demographic weight of francophones outside Quebec has been declining. It fell from 6.1% in 1971 to 3.5% in 2021. During this time, francophone immigration levels outside Quebec were very low. In fact, the first time Canada exceeded the 2% threshold for francophone immigration was in 2019. However, immigration is the main driver of population growth in Canada. The very low level of francophone immigration outside Quebec is a factor that has contributed to accelerating the decline in the demographic weight of francophones.

In 2022, the 4.4% target for francophone immigration was met for the first time. We exceeded 7% in 2024, and this year, we are on track to meet a target of 8.5%. In the budget, we presented the new immigration levels plan, which includes very ambitious targets for francophone immigration. The target is 9% starting next year and increases gradually to reach 12% by 2029. That is huge. For the first time in our country's history, the government has set targets to not only halt the demographic decline of francophones outside

Quebec, but to reverse the trend and to put the demographic weight of francophones on track for growth. That is huge. It will have a real impact on all francophone communities across the country, including on communities in Madawaska—Restigouche.

In closing, budget 2025 is full of great news for my riding. I could easily give many other examples if I had an extra 10 minutes, but I see that my time is almost up. I look forward to taking questions from my colleagues.

• (1600)

[English]

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Madam Speaker, when the Liberal Prime Minister split the costly Liberal deficits into so-called operating and capital spending, experts warned that he would use this to cook the books, and last week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed exactly that. The PBO says that the Prime Minister's new so-called capital definition is overly expansive, violating international standards, and that it hides \$94 billion in spending that would never be counted as investment in other jurisdictions.

In the private sector, when finance and accounting definitions are changed by management, it is a red flag. Even after the goalposts were moved, the PBO found that there is only a 7.5% chance that the Prime Minister would meet his own fiscal anchor. In other words, after all the spin, there is a 92.5% chance that the deficit-to-GDP ratio is going to worsen.

After breaking every promise he made to Canadians, how can the costly Liberal Prime Minister look families in the eye and pretend that he is spending less, when the PBO just exposed the truth, which is that he is manipulating Canadians and that Canadians are left to pay the price?

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Madam Speaker, at a time of economic turmoil due to the tariff war with the United States, the responsible thing to do is to be there for Canadians, to invest in our infrastructure and housing so we can boost and strengthen the Canadian economy, to be there for businesses and workers in the sectors that have been hit the hardest by the tariff war, to be there to build our economy's resilience and protect all the social programs that Canadians depend on. That is the responsible thing to do, and that is what we are doing with budget 2025.

Voting against this budget would be irresponsible.

The Budget

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned the \$5-billion investment in health infrastructure from coast to coast over the next three years. That represents approximately \$300 million per year for Quebec. At the same time, Quebec is being asked to invest the same amount. Also, in the same budget, we learned that funding for health care costs, which was supposed to be indexed at 6%, will be indexed at 3% for the next few years. The federal government is making Quebec poorer when it comes to health care costs.

The government is offering \$300 million, when expanding the Maisonneuve-Rosemont hospital alone could cost between \$4 billion and \$6 billion. They would have us believe that what is being offered to the provinces is huge, that it is fantastic, when we have just come out of a pandemic.

If health care had been given the slightest priority, perhaps we could have supported this budget, despite the \$78-billion deficit.

• (1605)

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Madam Speaker, I am pleased that my colleague mentioned the \$5 billion in federal investments in health care infrastructure. It is important to understand that this is complementary to all our other health care investments.

The budget allocates \$54.7 billion to the Canada health transfer for 2025-26 alone. This amount will increase to \$65 billion in 2029-30. This represents a \$300-billion investment through the Canada health transfer, in addition to the \$4.3 billion planned for 2025-26 for transfers under the health care agreements with the various provinces and territories.

We are also going to invest in workers. I am thinking in particular of the tax credits for personal support workers and the investments we will be making to improve foreign credential recognition, which will include health care professionals.

The youth employment and skills strategy includes funding for mental health counselling. There is also a whole section on improving access to health care in the north and in the Arctic. These are just a few examples of what our government is doing to support health care.

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we know that our government has invested \$150 million in CBC/Radio-Canada. We know how important culture and information are to Canada.

I would like my colleague to share his thoughts on the importance of this investment and its impact on our communities.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Madam Speaker, a healthy democracy requires a strong and independent press, especially in this era of disinformation, which spreads online. This additional \$150-million investment in our public broadcaster is an investment in a credible, high-quality source of information for local, regional and national news.

Back home in Madawaska—Restigouche, I listen to *La matinale*, or *Information Morning* on CBC in the morning. In the evening, I watch *Téléjournal Acadie*. I read the news on the CBC mobile app, thanks to the support we give our public broadcaster. It is essential for a healthy democracy and informed citizens.

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today in the House to talk about the impact budget 2025 will have on the people and businesses in my riding of Trois-Rivières. This budget will strengthen what we already have, build for the future and protect our territory.

First of all, this budget tackles the cost of living by implementing measures to leave more money in the pockets of Canadians and strengthen their purchasing power. These include measures such as the 1% tax cut for 22 million Canadians, including families in Trois-Rivières, and the Canadian dental care plan, which is helping families and seniors save hundreds of dollars. The budget is also making the national school food program permanent.

Later this week, we will mark National Child Day, which celebrates children's rights. Education is a right, but it is difficult to learn on an empty stomach, and too many children find themselves in this situation. Back home in Trois-Rivières, Canada's national school food program is being rolled out in more than 20 schools in disadvantaged areas, in collaboration with partners such as Breakfast Club of Canada and La Table des Chefs. In our community alone, this program helps hundreds of children succeed in school and helps families make ends meet when they need it most. In Canada, 400,000 children benefit from this program.

No one wants charity. The people of Trois-Rivières, like all Canadians, are proud people, but no one knows when hard times will come knocking. When they do, people know which party is there for them. This budget reinforces our commitment to give them a helping hand. That is what a united people is all about. With these measures, the government is ensuring that Canadians can keep more money in their pockets, but that is not all.

We know that rent is the biggest expense for families. The national housing strategy has resulted in hundreds of homes being built in Trois-Rivières and across Canada, and that includes market housing, affordable housing and social housing. However, we need to do more. That is why budget 2025 is setting up the Build Canada Homes program with \$13 billion in capitalization to build more housing faster while focusing on affordable housing. We are committed to doubling the rate of housing construction to increase housing supply and bring prices down.

The Budget

We are also supporting first-time homebuyers through a number of programs, such as the GST tax break on new homes. However, we need to change our methods if we are to build faster. That is why Build Canada Homes will help modernize the construction industry to incentivize factory-built construction, including prefabricated and modular construction, and accelerate the pace of homebuilding. That is how we get to work. Catalyzing the construction industry will also create more jobs and encourage young people to go into the construction trades or other skilled trades.

Budget 2025 also has initiatives to support the training of the workers we will need in the coming years. We will support our critical sectors, such as the steel and lumber sector, with predictable orders. However, we are not only going to build housing. We are also going to build strong communities with the community infrastructure and public transit they will need to reach their full potential. We will work hand in hand with all levels of government to ensure our communities are resilient in dealing with climate change. We will make sure they have the water infrastructure to support the densification of urban areas, which we need. In short, we are going to build strong communities.

This budget has a very clear common theme: building the future. To build the future, we need vision and confidence. On this side of the House, we have confidence in the future. We know that it will not be easy, but with budget 2025, we are investing in what we can control.

I would like to draw a parallel here with my riding, Trois-Rivières. For a long time, Trois-Rivières' economy revolved around a single industry, paper, with Canadian International Paper, among others, as a major employer. When the industry took a hit in the late 1990s and early 2000s and the paper mills closed, the city went through some tough times, but it managed to bounce back and emerge from this situation even stronger and more resilient. The city had to be ambitious and bold. Trois-Rivières envisioned a different future and rolled up its sleeves to make it a reality.

Today, Canada finds itself with a dance partner that is looking to unilaterally change the rules. Faced with this, we have two choices. We can resign ourselves to it, or we can choose to take control of our destiny and focus on what we can control. On this side of the House, we choose Canada because we know that Canada is the envy of the world. We have everything we need to succeed here at home: talent, ingenuity, the industries we need, plenty of land, the energy resources the world needs and the critical minerals that will power the technologies of the future.

• (1610)

In the face of uncertainty, there is only one thing to do: take action and forge ahead with a thoughtful and bold plan that focuses on our country. That is what budget 2025 does. First and foremost, the priority is to protect jobs and support the strategic automotive, steel, aluminum, and lumber industries. We are doing this through the \$5-billion strategic response fund, the regional tariff response initiative, and two programs worth up to \$1.2 billion to support the forestry industry.

Next, we are investing in competitiveness. With the productivity super-deduction, we are introducing tax incentives to enable businesses to write off their venture capital investments right away. For

Trois-Rivières businesses such as FAB 3R and Germain et Frère, this helps counter uncertainty and make our industries more competitive and productive, in addition to creating the best investment climate in the G7. In fact, international economists are already predicting that we will have the strongest growth in the G7 next year.

We are also stimulating our economy by building the major infrastructure projects we need to support this growth, so that our ports are ready to meet demand, so we can connect our communities to Canada's far north and so we can make travel by high-speed rail easier along the Quebec City-Toronto corridor, with a stop, of course, in Trois-Rivières. We are also continuing to sign agreements to open up other markets and encourage the diversification of our exports around the world.

Let us talk for a few minutes about defence and protecting our sovereignty. Trois-Rivières has a long and proud military history. In 1776, when the United States was trying to annex Quebec after American troops arrived in Montreal, the battle of Trois-Rivières was decisive in pushing our southern neighbours back to the other side of the border once and for all. Budget 2025 makes historic investments in defence and in the Canadian military to modernize the military's working conditions and the equipment at its disposal, including record wage increases for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. They are the ones who make sacrifices every day to protect us.

Defence investments will enable us to build and protect the far north, construct dual-use infrastructure that will benefit communities and invest in research and development so that our industries can continue to innovate. I will work to ensure that industries in Trois-Rivières and Mauricie contribute to this evolving ecosystem, in order to support companies such as Marmen and Infinition, which provide good jobs in my riding. With the new buy Canadian policy, we are ensuring that these investments will benefit businesses across Canada.

In closing, we are at a crossroads. This is a moment that our children and grandchildren will remember. It is a moment that calls for greatness and courage, that calls for putting politics aside. Canadians expect us to work together to build the Canada of tomorrow, a strong Canada.

• (1615)

[English]

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member talked a bit about the mill closures that happened in her community. I have been a member of Parliament for six years now, and one of the more common headlines I have seen in the news is that mill closures are happening all across Canada.

The Budget

There has been no new softwood lumber deal with the United States for over 10 years. We hear a lot about housing in the House of Commons, and one thing we need for building houses is lumber. We also need steel to build it. We are hearing lots of uncertainty among some of the steel mills in Canada as well.

I am wondering how the member feels about the budget, given that there is no certainty in it for sawmills. There is no certainty in it for sawmill workers. There is no certainty in it to try to combat the tariffs and get a better deal for Canadian producers. If we do that, we will produce more and have more certainty, so we can produce the goods that Canada needs to build the things we need in Canada.

[Translation]

Caroline Desrochers: Madam Speaker, if my colleague is so concerned about the industries he is speaking about, I strongly encourage him to vote for the budget we are putting forward because, first of all, it protects jobs in strategic sectors.

Second, as I said earlier, we are committed to doubling the construction rate. This will help the forestry industry in particular. It will create more jobs. In recent months, one of the vital things we did to address the current situation was to protect jobs through forestry programs. We announced investments of up to \$1.2 billion in programs to support forestry. We have been fighting a long time for softwood lumber, and I have been following the situation for a long time. We have come to expect ups and downs, and we are still there for forestry workers.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Madam Speaker, organizations that support people experiencing homelessness have expressed concerns about the funding for the community encampment response plan. What we understand from reading the budget is that the amount allocated for 2024-26 will not be renewed and that there will be no increase in funding to help organizations. However, we know that this is a serious problem.

Can the hon. parliamentary secretary confirm that Ottawa is withdrawing assistance to tackle homelessness outside of housing initiatives, for instance to address encampments?

Caroline Desrochers: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to work with my colleague on housing issues. I can assure him that the issue of homelessness continues to be a priority. The 2025 budget includes a \$1-billion investment in transitional housing to address the challenges associated with homelessness. For example, we are in discussions with the Réseau Solidarité Itinérance du Québec and the National Right to Housing Network to find solutions. We are in discussions with the Quebec government about projects in several cities throughout Quebec to address homelessness. With the cold weather coming, this is an important issue. We understand the urgent need to take action and we are working hard on it.

• (1620)

Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Madam Speaker, could my colleague from Trois-Rivières tell us more about the Build Canada Homes program? How does the government plan to decarbonize buildings and transition them to net zero?

Caroline Desrochers: Madam Speaker, the Build Canada Homes investment plan will emphasize sustainable construction. We will prioritize the use of sustainable materials, such as certified

Canadian recycled wood, as well as low-carbon materials in order to reduce our emissions, ensure climate resilience and support the Canadian value chain.

We will prioritize technologies that will make it possible to build buildings and housing with the highest-efficiency materials in order to achieve net zero.

[English]

Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today to talk about the budget. I will be sharing my time with the member for North Island—Powell River.

This budget, in my mind, is really a confirmation of what we have seen gradually increasing over the last 10 years. The Prime Minister himself has spoken about it. He gave a pre-emptive speech a few weeks ago and talked about the sacrifices that future generations will need to make, which was basically a confirmation of what we warned about, even 10 years ago, regarding the risks of deficit-heavy spending budgets and the accumulation of debt, which is where we are today.

This budget is a confirmation that the covenant with Canadians has been broken. By that I mean that gone are the days when somebody could work hard at school, get good grades, have an opportunity to get an education they were dreaming of, whether in the trades, at community college or in university, whatever it was, and graduate with a reasonable amount of debt, or in some cases no debt. They could get out into the workforce, get a meaningful job that hopefully they were trained in or inspired to do and save a few bucks. Maybe their parents would help them; maybe that was not an option, but they were able to save a few bucks and buy their first home. It could be modest or grand, whatever they saw in their own eyes, but they would be able to have a home.

Then they could find somebody special to raise a family in that home, have a career and an affordable retirement. With enough money set aside, saved and invested, when it was time for them to retire, they would be able to retire in the comfort of their community, perhaps in an elaborate way, and have a retirement they would enjoy and find meaningful and fulfilling. In addition, along the way their kids might have the opportunity to get involved in sports, music or the arts. Whatever it may be, they would be able to get behind them and support them in their extracurricular activities and maybe take a modest vacation once in a while. Also, their taxpayer dollars were being used in such a way that if they needed to go to the hospital or see a doctor, they would have a family doctor, and health care would be accessible to do that.

The Budget

I think the vast majority of Canadians my age and younger now feel that this covenant with the government has been broken. I hope it is not permanently broken, but most people feel like it has been broken in one way, shape or form. I believe the Liberal government's propensity to spend and go for this theme of the day or that theme of the day, without real direction, has caused us to be where we are today.

I would like to go back in time, because it may help us shape where we need to go in the future. If we go back 10 years ago and look at the budget that Stephen Harper and Joe Oliver presented to Canadians, there was a budget surplus. It had a clear path and direction. It had an enticement to get private capital investment into this country. They knew this was a country where people could do business and grow and expand within the country, because all the frameworks were there for that.

The deficit this year will be \$78 billion. I never would have believed at the beginning of this year, after Justin Trudeau stepped down as prime minister, that the current Prime Minister, who announced he was going to run for the Liberal leadership, won it, was successful in the election and became the Prime Minister, would outperform Justin Trudeau in the deficit department. I did not think that was possible.

● (1625)

Out of all the thousands of doors I knocked on, I do not think the people I talked to thought this is what they were voting for either, although there were a few, once in a while, who said they were voting for him. I think they thought they were voting for a business person, not a spender like the previous prime minister and the finance minister were. We have somebody who was supposed to be a responsible fiscal manager but who now makes Justin Trudeau look like Warren Buffett. It is hard to believe, but he has done it. It is sad to be here listening to him sometimes, but that is the reality.

We will have a \$78-billion deficit this year, and until the 2029-30 fiscal year, it is going to average \$64 billion per year, which outdoes Justin Trudeau every year, except for when we had the COVID pandemic. It is really shameful. It is going to leave a shameful legacy if it is allowed to go on.

The other thing is that Justin's deficit this year was only projected to be \$42 billion. His accumulated amount of debt over the same period of time was only going to be \$131 billion. It is shocking to say "only". That is still a lot of debt. With this version, maybe \$265 billion over the next number of years will be added to our debt.

As for interest, I did hear many times today in our debate that there will be \$53 billion in interest this year, going to \$76 billion per year in just a few short years. The interest on the debt in 2015 was \$25 billion. That puts into perspective what the interest was then compared to what the interest is now and the perils of the path we are on.

There was a Liberal member of Parliament who said that compared to Japan, we are looking pretty good. We should never compare ourselves to them, because they are just a few years ahead of the path we are on right now.

Another cause for concern is the amount of GST we collect every year. Projected roughly, we will collect \$52 billion in GST this year, which would roughly cover interest payments, although paying interest is not what GST was set up for. If we project it out to the year when interest will be \$76 billion, GST is only projected to bring in \$62 billion, which is a tremendous amount of money, but it obviously falls short of covering interest. As I said, this is not what GST was meant for; it is just a comparison.

Total debt is over \$2 trillion. If we go out to 2029-30, it will be \$2.9 trillion. Sometimes we use the net debt number, but I do not think we should be using that number anymore; it should be total debt. The total debt in 2015 was \$1 trillion. If we look at that, everything has doubled. That is a troubling trend considering that we had a balanced budget 10 years ago. We are starting to lose our fiscal ability to recover from this, as well as our path toward balance and the light at the end of the tunnel for the investment community.

Government expenditures, this year, are getting pretty close to \$600 billion for the annual spend. Ten years ago, it was \$288 billion. That is the lay of the land of where we are.

The other thing, and maybe in questions and answers we can get to it, is trade. Trade has been a big issue, obviously, in the news headlines. It has been a reality for Canadian exporters.

For a long time, I have been saying that we need a reconciliation in all our trade deals. There are trade deals, for example the comprehensive European trade deal, in which we are not getting our fair share. I have said this many times in the House. We do not get our fair share of what we bargained for. It was supposed to be \$500 million or \$600 million a year in trade with beef and pork. It is a fraction. We have a trade deficit with the United Kingdom on beef.

All of these things need to be reconciled. Canada has been a fair trader for many years, and it is time for us to get our share too.

● (1630)

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have one specific question regarding the reference the hon. member made to the budget of 10 years ago by former prime minister Stephen Harper, where the member reported that there was a surplus. We must remember that among the things that government had to do to create the surplus was to cut our military spending to less than 1% of our GDP. The current government has been spending the last 10 years trying to increase that spending.

Would the hon. member agree that perhaps cutting our military spending to less than 1% of our GDP was worth it, to say that the Conservatives had a balanced budget?

Ben Lobb: Madam Speaker, the member is missing out on a few key points. One is to remember which government initiated the national shipbuilding project. With respect to some of the spending the Liberals may be taking credit for today, those seeds were planted many, many years ago.

The Budget

Another thing I would also mention is the expenditures on the F-35. The bungling of the Liberal government on the F-35 lost us direct national benefits for the manufacturing of parts in this country. That was a major screw-up, to my mind. We would already have F-35s here today, we would have pilots trained and we would be able to be an active participant with NATO. We had a plan, and if the Liberals had just stuck to our plan, we would be years ahead today.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Madam Speaker, the government announced in the budget that it was eliminating the tax on web giants. That could well be included in the budget implementation bill. This tax was supposed to make up for the fact that these web giants pay no income tax. It was announced two years ago. Earlier this summer, the Prime Minister announced that he was scrapping the tax in order to secure a trade agreement that would get the U.S. President to lift the tariffs. The agreement did not materialize, however, yet that is still in the budget.

Does my hon. colleague believe, as I do, that this tax should be reinstated to restore a little fairness between our SMEs, businesses that are active here, and the web giants?

[*English*]

Ben Lobb: Madam Speaker, what I would say is that it was given up and there was nothing gained in return. At one time, the Liberals gave it up because they thought it would help them get to the negotiating table. We have done that too many times now, and that is unfortunate.

Another thing I would say to my Bloc colleague is that the Liberal government has way overstepped its boundaries and is so far into all the different areas of provincial jurisdiction. The Liberals have to pull back on some of that stuff, and they have to do an analysis of what the federal government's job actually is. This is not to say that the Liberals cannot partner with provinces, but they certainly cannot stick their toe into everything the provinces are supposed to be responsible for.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, Automotive Industry; the hon. member for Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, International Trade; the hon. member for Leduc—Wetaskiwin, Finance.

• (1635)

[*English*]

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to the Liberal budget, a budget put forward by the government that I believe to be fiscally reckless, utterly immoral and lacking any kind of grand unifying vision that Canada, at this moment in its history, so desperately needs.

I speak first and foremost, as always, on behalf of my constituents of North Island—Powell River. However, I also feel duty-bound to speak today on behalf of another group of Canadians, a group without voice and without champion, a group of Canadians

who are all too often overlooked, whose interests are marginalized and whose concerns are ignored. I speak of course of future generations, of people still in cradles, strollers and schools, and of those yet to be born.

Over the last 10 years of Liberal government, the debt being left to these future generations to pay for has doubled. Put another way, the Liberals have borrowed more money since 2015 than every other government in the history of this country combined, borrowing even more money than it took to build the national railway and to win the Second World War, and that is accounting for inflation.

Before the unveiling of this budget, I think many Canadians, including those of us here in opposition, were hoping for something bold and something special, a budget that was transformative, that was daring, that marked a clear departure from the decade of Justin Trudeau and that set Canada on a new fiscally sustainable path that a majority of Canadians could support with pride.

Instead, we got more than \$300 billion in new debt and the largest deficit in Canadian history outside COVID. In other words, it was nothing remotely transformative at all but rather a simple continuation of the same old Liberal policies of spending money that we do not have and leaving the bill to the next generation to pay. If the same policies are enacted, we should not expect a different result.

For starters, we can expect the taxpayer money wasted paying interest on our debt to rise even further, with the government's own projections forecasting a 37% increase, to more than \$76.1 billion a year. That is more than 11¢ of every dollar that Canadians pay in taxes squandered, taxpayer money that cannot be spent on roads, health care or Canada's national defence. It is money that is wasted paying interest to big banks on Bay Street.

Because governments rarely if ever pay back the principal on their debt, Canadians have to pay the interest over and over again, year after year. In fact Canada's federal debt today stands at around \$1.2 trillion, yet since 1980, Canadians have paid over \$1.4 trillion just in interest on that debt. I have not met a single Canadian who thinks that has been a good return on investment for them.

With the Liberals' announcing plans to spend and borrow even more, the problem will only be getting worse. Just to be clear, this is not an issue with taxes being too low, or some sort of government revenue problem. In 2015, when the budget was balanced, the government took in \$282 billion in taxes and other government revenues. For the current fiscal year, today the government projects that number to be \$507 billion, an increase of more than 80%.

The Budget

The issue, instead, is reckless, totally unrestrained government spending that has increased during that same time period by 109%, to \$586 billion this fiscal year. Now the Liberals have announced, in this budget, that they want to spend \$90 billion more. What is their justification for all the spending and all the debt? It is the same tired refrain as it has always been, that Canadians need their government to step up to do and spend more.

However, if we look back on the last 10 years of faltering economic growth and ballooning national debt, we see the exact opposite. Canada's economic stagnation is not due to government not stepping up in any particular way. Canada's economic stagnation is the direct result of government, and the Liberal government in particular, getting in the way, whether by blocking pipelines like northern gateway and energy east, by scaring away investment with bills like Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 and the industrial carbon tax, or by overseeing a dramatic increase in federal spending and a doubling of Canada's national debt, with almost no discernible benefits to everyday Canadians.

What is more is that all of this reckless spending and borrowing has another cost: high inflation.

● (1640)

My grandfather, who will be turning 95 years old next month, first came to Canada in 1956, fleeing persecution and communism in eastern Europe. He instilled in me a very basic lesson early in life: There is no such thing as a free lunch, that everything has a cost and that eventually all bills come due.

That is also true about government spending and borrowing massive amounts of money. If the government injects billions of dollars into the economy without producing more of what that money buys, it will not make Canadians any richer or any better off; it will simply devalue the Canadian dollar and by extension make the same goods more expensive than they were before. That is why, over the last decade of the Liberal government, we have experienced the highest levels of inflation in 30 years, at a time when the majority of Canadians identify the cost of living as the single most pressing concern in the country.

At a time when Canadians identify the rising price of goods and homes as their most important issue, the government has introduced a massive budget deficit that will make that exact problem even worse. Because assets like homes and stocks tend to experience a corresponding increase in value along with inflation, inflating the money supply always ends up hurting most the people with less, especially younger Canadians. It is truly a regressive economic and social policy that prioritizes political short-sightedness over long-term economic strength and generational equity.

Of course, our Prime Minister claims that he is not spending more money and that nothing could be farther from the truth. Instead, he is investing; he is building Canada strong. The truth is that a deficit is a deficit, and government debt is government debt. All the money that is borrowed in tax goes into one giant pot and then is spent on a variety of government priorities. Creditors do not care if we borrowed the money in order to build a road, to pay teachers or to buy new submarines. It all costs interest. It all erodes our fiscal capacity as a country, and it is all being passed on to the next generation to pay for.

Here is the kicker. The new Prime Minister, the fiscal hawk, the central banker, is planning to borrow more than double what Justin Trudeau was planning: \$321 billion over the next five years.

Many people probably know me from my last five or six years of making political documentaries or other short films, but before that I worked with a group called the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. My role at the CTF was to organize and tour its giant debt clock, which showed how much debt governments in Canada had racked up and how fast that number was ticking up, to university campuses right across this country, to wake up the next generation whose future was being mortgaged by a cabal of politicians either too blind or too self-serving to recognize and admit a truth that only numbers can truly tell: that this country was and is on the path to insolvency and that we are leaving young Canadians with the bill.

It is for this reason more than any other that, as a Conservative, I will be opposing this budget, a budget that spends and borrows on the backs of those who in the last election did not have a vote and did not have a say.

This brings to mind a very Canadian thing that used to happen, and I suppose still sometimes happens, at Tim Hortons drive-throughs right across this country, where people would pay it forward. Someone would drive up to the window, only to find out that an anonymous stranger in the car in front of them had paid for their coffee and their doughnut. It was always a pleasant surprise.

For future generations, the government's budget is the exact opposite. It is like someone's driving up to the window with \$5 in hand to cover their double-double and Boston cream, only to find out that the guy in front of them had not paid his bill and that now they are on the hook for not only their own meal but for his as well. That is government debt. It is unethical, it is unfair, and it is something I hope all parliamentarians will join me in fighting and voting against.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, unfortunately the Conservatives never had that sort of a principle when they were actually in government.

Talking about disinformation, I will use this as an example. The speaker who spoke before the member made reference to my using the example of Japan with respect to deficits. I referred to G7 countries like Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom and France, and I talked about Canada's deficit-to-GDP ratio. I reflected also on the overall debt. We are doing outstandingly well. We are number one in one category and number two in another category.

If we reflect on Stephen Harper and when the member's current leader sat in Harper's Conservative caucus, and if we look at real dollars, the deficit then was higher than it is today.

The Budget

I wonder if the member would not recognize that the false argument the Conservatives are putting forward to justify their desire for an election is just that, just one of the many things they continuously mislead Canadians about.

• (1645)

Aaron Gunn: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for giving me the opportunity to point out something that needs to be raised in this House, and that is how bad the deterioration of the fiscal situation has become in this country.

The truth is, and I believe my hon. colleague will know this, that Canada's federation is structured differently than other countries in the G7. We hold massive amounts of what is called "sub-sovereign debt" in our provinces. Historically speaking, the federal government has backstopped those provinces if necessary. Looking at total government debt, according to the International Monetary Fund, the IMF, Canada is the seventh most indebted country in the entire world. We are right up there with Italy and France. We are right up there with the United States, but it has the world's reserve currency, so it has a slightly different set of circumstances to deal with.

If the government truly thinks that sub-sovereign debt should not matter in that calculation, as it does in all the international metrics, then it should get up and declare publicly that it is not willing to support or back any provincial governments that may run into problems down the road. Barring that, we need to start looking at total government debt in this—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): We have to go to other questions.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Joliette—Manawan.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for the eloquent answer he just gave.

I want to go back to the issue of the deficit announced in the budget, which is \$78 billion this year. The government is saying that this includes so much investment that it is no longer calculating the deficit the way it did in the past. When we look at the details, we see, for example, the Parliamentary Budget Officer saying that "the Government's definition of capital investments is overly expansive". He even suggests that this subjective definition be reviewed by independent experts. With that method, the Trudeau government's deficits were much smaller.

What are my hon. colleague's thoughts on that?

[*English*]

Aaron Gunn: Madam Speaker, my colleague raises a very good point, which is the fact that what the government is trying to do, and we have seen it happen in corporate Canada before, is move money around into different pots and try to mask the top figure, which is the massive amount of new debt.

What matters is that the government is planning to borrow \$321 billion over the next five years and put that money on the back of future generations to pay for. If the government moves money around, it does not matter whether it is put into Crown corporations or whether it is called an investment. When a creditor is lending

money, they do not care if the money was borrowed to buy submarines that are going to last 50 years or to pay schoolteachers today. Debt is debt. It all comes with interest. It all affects the carrying capacity of our country.

We need to cut through the spin and look at the bottom line of how much the government is borrowing and how that compares to previous generations. As I pointed out, the government has more than doubled our national debt. It is time to get back to fiscal sanity and fiscal responsibility in this country.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington.

I am pleased to rise today to speak to the budget. For months in the House, we have heard from the Liberals, one after another, telling us that we were going to be presented with a generational, if not transformative, budget for this year, 2025. Of course, we were waiting with bated breath to listen to the budget, which is not fooling anybody.

This is not a budget; a budget is done before the money is spent. However, the current budget is the most expensive in Canadian history outside the pandemic. The fiscal year, as Canadians know, begins April 1 for the Government of Canada. The budget calls for \$586 billion in spending, which is the most expensive, as I said, in Canadian history outside the pandemic, but here is the thing: Seven months have already transpired; seven months of what is in the budget has already been spent. Using simple division, with seven of the 12 months, the Liberals have already spent \$343 billion.

Now the Liberals have brought this 406-page omnibus budget bill into Parliament, saying, "Hey, here's what we're going to do. Vote with us." They do not care about what our vote is going to be. They have no respect for Parliament or the process of this place. They do not care for the house of democracy. They do not care to listen to debate. If they did, they would have presented the budget when they were elected, not wait seven months, take the summer off, go on vacation, perhaps do a little bit of golfing, travel to Europe and come back. They did not even present in September or October. On November 4, they said, "Here's a budget, and we've already spent seven months of it. If you guys don't vote for it, oops, you may want an election."

Well, I have news for them: Canadians are not buying it. No matter how many times the finance minister stands up in the House and says that he has good news for Canadians, Canadians know that with the government, it is nothing but bad news; we know that for sure.

The Budget

This year, the budget is calling for an \$80-billion deficit, which is spending \$80 billion more than we take in. Every Canadian family and every Canadian business knows that if we spend more than we take in, it is a formula for bankruptcy. It never bodes well. However, it gets worse; it gets a lot worse. Over the next five years, a staggering \$324 billion will be added to our national debt, which is on top of the roughly \$1.4 trillion Canada is still in debt for today.

Here is the problem with that: When we borrow money, we have to pay interest on that money. This year, lo and behold, the Liberal government opposite with a so-called economist brainiac Prime Minister is offering Canadians a staggering debt of almost \$60 billion in interest payments, which is more than we spend on health care in this country. Today, Canadians walking into an emergency department of a hospital have to wait hours and hours to get service, and when they get that service, quite often they are put in the hallway of the hospital for days, waiting for service. However, the government has nothing in the budget that increases any previous commitment on health care. Nevertheless, there is a lot in the budget that will increase the cost of interest that Canadians will pay.

Everybody in the House, as well as all Canadians, knows that the government has no source of income other than the Canadian taxpayer. Who is going to pay for all of this? Hard-working Canadians are going to pay for the bill that they keep adding and adding to. It is a staggering number: \$60 billion in interest alone.

Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. They walk into the grocery store, and the prices keep going up. I have met seniors and young people who are saying they have to eat less. I have told the story in the House about a lady in my riding, who, when I knocked on her door during the election, said, "Sir, I'm not into politics, but I'm on a fixed income and I have to eat less because the prices are so high and I want to keep living in my home."

• (1650)

I was looking in the budget for some kind of relief for our seniors, but what did I find? I found the words "industrial carbon" tax. The industrial carbon tax adds costs to farmers for their equipment and for their manufacturing processes. For trucking companies, this adds cost to the freight. What do the Liberals think happens when they keep adding these costs?

Liberals will stand and say that this is imaginary and that they are not taxing food. What do they think happens to the manufacturers, the producers and the truckers, who deliver the food that people consume to the grocery store, when they increase the costs by imposing this industrial carbon tax, which is programmed to increase in the budget? What happens is very simple, which is that they will add that cost to the cost of their product. This eventually ends up added to the price of the food items we walk into grocery stores to purchase. In effect, the Liberals are raising food costs at a time when people are struggling to make ends meet.

Speaking of struggling to make ends meet, members may have heard us say in this House repeatedly that food banks have told us a record 2.2 million Canadians are now visiting food banks on a daily basis, with one-third being children. That is over 700,000 children a month. In fact, to put things into perspective, today, while the Liberals are here asking for a free credit card, a free line of credit on money they have already spent seven-twelfths of, 24,000 hungry

children will walk into a food bank hoping to find an item they can consume, because they are hungry.

I say shame on the Liberals and shame on the government for not considering the impact of its actions with the budget and continuing to increase costs by imposing such things as the carbon tax and the fuel standard tax on the manufacturers and the people who deliver goods. Children do not have enough food to eat, and this is making it even harder for their families to buy food to put on the table so that they do not go to school hungry. That is shameless.

It is shameful, but the Liberals feel no shame for that at all. In fact, I have heard Liberal after Liberal get up in the House and tout the budget as being generational. We all know the only thing the budget is doing is indebting our children. The Liberals are right: It is generational in the sense that it is adding generational debt to our children moving forward.

Speaking of children, let us talk about youth. Youth unemployment is hovering around 20% in the greater Toronto area. Why is it hovering at that level? In large part, it is because of the actions of the Liberal government over the last 10 years. I have heard people stand on the other side and talk about Stephen Harper. Guess what. Mr. Harper, who was an outstanding prime minister, has not been here for 10 years. I notice the Liberals conveniently forget the 10 years they stood up in the House and spoke vociferously in support of Prime Minister Trudeau and all the additional debt he put on this country and the mess he created in pretty much every file, including, of course, immigration.

Speaking of immigration, we have international students and temporary foreign workers, all of whom are taking jobs our youth could take today. In closing, in the minute I have left, I will say that the Liberals continue down this path of bringing folks into this country who take jobs away from our children, and down the path of imposing costs on Canadians that do not need to be there. They stand up in the House and manoeuvre back and forth, and the worst thing of all is that the Liberal Party is the only party in this House that has uttered the word "election".

God forbid that we do not want to put \$324 billion of additional debt on our children; the Liberals say it is because we want an election. They are out of touch with Canadians. They do not know what people are dealing with. I myself would argue vociferously that a government has a responsibility to produce a document and spend the finances of this country in a way that benefits the Canadian people, Canadian families and Canadian businesses.

The Budget

• (1655)

[Translation]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am surprised to hear my colleague remind us how much the Conservatives like to talk about Mr. Trudeau even though he is no longer here. They seem to be missing him in the House today.

We have a new Canadian government that is presenting a new budget, which includes economic measures to help Canada's communities grow. This budget proposes significant investments in the military. As a G7 country, Canada must have an effective military and defence system. This will create many job opportunities across the country.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the investments we are making in the Canadian army.

[English]

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, the member is sad that I mentioned the name Trudeau. Whether he likes it or not, he is part of that party. He thinks this is a new government, but it does not take a genius to look at the front bench and see the musical chairs the Liberals played, with ministers being in different positions. It is obvious. The Minister of Finance today was the former minister of industry. I look back and forth, and what they have done is played musical chairs with the front bench.

Shame on them. We are talking about producing something, a budget, that will address the needs of Canadians. Playing politics on that is shameful on behalf of that party and the Liberal government.

• (1700)

[Translation]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very interesting speech.

The budget is an important step. There has been a lot of talk about all the things that are missing from the budget, including investments in health care, transfers to the provinces in different areas, and investments to address the housing crisis. These points have been raised with good reason. However, one thing that has not yet been discussed in relation to the budget is justice. This is of particular concern to me, since I am the justice critic in Parliament. I see major problems. I saw nothing in the budget about justice.

Will funds be allocated to appoint judges? Will there be transfers to the provinces, prevention programs, and help for victims? There are all kinds of justice-related issues that are not addressed in this budget, and that worries me.

I would like my colleague to speak to this.

[English]

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague is right. There is precious little in this budget that deals with the actual problem we have with housing, with health care and with employment. On the justice issue, I live in a community where in the last 60 days we have had two murders on the quiet streets of Richmond Hill. I was also looking in the budget to see if we got some kind of

relief, focus or attention regarding how our justice system runs in this country, but unfortunately it is not in there. This is a document full of rhetoric that does not respond to that.

The issue of immigration is a big problem in this country, but on page 311, which scantily addresses the issue, the top line says the Liberals are going to reduce the resources for immigration, because they are going to be imposing a 15% cut on the department. This is ridiculous.

The government has missed the boat and continues to miss the boat on what really is affecting Canadians today.

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague worked in business. I would like to get his understanding of this: If a business were to be run in a way that adds \$10 million in debt every hour, as the government is set to do with this inflationary budget, how long would it be able to stay in business?

Costas Menegakis: Madam Speaker, it is a formula for bankruptcy. That is what this is, but the government does not seem to care. It just passes on the debt to our children, to future generations and to our seniors, who cannot afford to eat. Children are walking into food banks hungry. The Liberals are very good at heckling, but the bottom line is this: Canadian families are suffering, and 24,000 children are walking into a food bank hungry today.

This is a good question. A business goes bankrupt if it spends more than it earns. That is business 101. That is a lesson the Liberal Party and the Liberal government have never learned, and they have shown no indication that they have the capacity to learn it.

Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to bring the voices of Chatham-Kent—Leamington to this chamber.

Today, I rise to speak to the federal budget that was tabled on October 35. I realize there is no such date in our calendar, but perhaps there is one in the Liberal calendar, where deadlines are flexible and keeping promises is optional.

I was looking for one thing in this budget: hope. I was looking forward to the banker this country elected bringing sound fiscal management to government finances, which would in turn lead to affordable living for Canadians. However, once again, the Liberal government's budget is not affordable. It is late, but Canadians cannot afford to wait, because every month of delay means higher bills, higher grocery prices and higher costs for families already struggling to get by due to the government debt incurred by the Liberals' overspending. It is confirmed, on page 245 of the budget, that the government is projecting public debt charges will amount to \$55.6 billion in 2025-26. This is going to grow to \$76.1 billion in four years.

The Budget

The Prime Minister's accounting tricks are apparent to me and anyone who has been in the position of operating a business before. Business owners know the difference between capital and operating debt and that both incur interest charges. We also know the difference between investing and spending.

This past Friday, November 14, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the PBO, tabled his report on the 2025 budget. It is clear that the government has blurred the line between capital and operating spending for political convenience. In fact, to quote the PBO, "PBO maintains its view that the Government's definition of capital investments is overly expansive." Based on the PBO's definition, capital investments would actually be approximately 30%, or \$94 billion, lower compared to what budget 2025 has to say. Because to this, the PBO warns, "Given the subjectivity involved in defining federal capital investments and their role in guiding fiscal policy decisions...the PBO recommends that the Government establish an independent expert body to determine which federal spending categories and measures qualify as capital investment".

When an independent budget officer has to recommend the implementation of an independent referee because the government keeps moving the goalposts, it is a sign of serious fiscal credibility problems. Canadians in charge of a business or household know that they must work within their means and operate with a fiscal anchor. The PBO has clearly stated that the government has abandoned its previous fiscal anchor, which was to reduce the federal debt-to-GDP ratio, a commitment made during the 2024 fall economic statement. It was a key metric "not only for fiscal sustainability, but also to preserve Canada's AAA credit rating, which helps maintain investors' confidence and keeps Canada's borrowing costs as low as possible."

Now the Liberals have put Canada's international credit rating in jeopardy. When the government spends more than it brings in, it borrows money in our names. The federal debt now carries over \$55 billion a year in interest payments alone. That is more than we transfer to the provinces in health care, at \$54.7 billion, and more than the government receives in GST revenue, at \$54.3 billion. These are big numbers.

What does that mean to us? Each month, households across this country are effectively sending \$421 to Ottawa per month, over \$5,000 per year, in either today's or tomorrow's taxes, not for defence, hospitals or other social programs, but just to cover the interest on federal borrowing. Imagine people doing that for their own households, paying down someone else's credit card while their grocery bills keep climbing. That is the weight of overspending. The Liberal government's deficits have found their way back to Canadians' kitchen tables through inflation, higher prices and higher taxes.

Inflation is the cruellest tax of all, in that no one Canadian ever voted for it. When everything costs more, their paycheques buy less. If one could spend oneself into economic prosperity, Canada would be the most prosperous nation on this earth, with no one standing in line at a food bank, but after 10 years and a doubling of our nation's debt, we have more than doubled our food bank lines.

• (1705)

What is this supposed new government's plan? It is more spending and a doubling down on deficits. How long do the food bank lines have to become?

History has told us the same story every time. When governments overspend, inflation follows, and food inflation is the clearest example. According to Value Chain Management International's report on food inflation in Canada, released on October 16 of this year, the average retail food basket in Canada rose by 34% between 2019 and 2025. That means food prices have risen nearly twice as fast as everything else, hitting families where it hurts the most: at the dinner table.

In June of this past year, Abacus Data highlighted the growing financial strain felt by Canadians, as 61% said they lacked confidence in their ability to afford groceries six months from now. That report came out five months ago, yet these concerns are here with us today. Furthermore, Dr. Sylvain Charlebois told the agriculture committee this past month that Canada is the only G7 country that has seen four consecutive months of food inflation increases and that Canadians may have to deal with more bad news on the price of food in 2026.

Inflation does not just empty wallets; it erodes dignity, and it always hurts those at the lower socio-economic levels far more than those with assets. Wages never rise as fast as costs do during periods of high inflation, so when Ottawa spends without restraint, it piles costs onto Canadians through higher prices, higher taxes and fewer opportunities. Because of that, the social programs that Canadians rely on and value so much are put at risk. When interest payments eat up more of the budget than our core services do, it is, again, Canadians who lose out. As the saying goes, every dollar the government spends is a dollar from our pockets. There is no such thing as government money; it is only the people's money.

The Budget

I know, and I can hear it already, that the Liberals are going to accuse me and accuse Conservatives of not supporting Canadians simply because we critiqued the budget. I expect to be asked why I do not support this program or why I do not support that program, but governments, like families, have to make choices. A family who loves their children might want to send them to hockey, dance, baseball, taekwondo or, of course, music lessons, but if they try to do everything, they cannot pay off the credit card at month's end. That does not mean any of those things I listed are bad; it means they cannot afford them all right now. If they ignore that reality, the debt grows and so does the burden on Canadians, and that is exactly what the government is doing to our country.

There is hope. Canada can change course. We can build a country of bigger paycheques and lower costs, where work once again pays and families can once again save. We can cut wasteful spending. Where? We can focus government on what matters the most: empowering Canadians themselves and not focusing on increasing government reliance. What we need to do is get the government out of the way.

Even the Value Chain Management International's report calls for a government that becomes a "facilitator of competitiveness" so that food and essentials stay affordable. Let us take that advice. Let us reward those who produce, who build and who seek to rebuild the foundation of an affordable Canada. Let us choose a Canada where food is affordable, work is rewarded and, most importantly, where government lives within its means.

The Conservative Party will put forward amendments to boost take-home pay; deliver affordable homes and food; end hidden taxes, on food in particular; cut waste; open our country to opportunity; and clear away the bureaucracy that stands in the way of building the homes Canadians so desperately need. The responsibility now lies with the government. If this budget is to pass, the Liberals must work with the opposition and the Conservatives to ensure that it reflects the hard work of Canadians and the sacrifices they have already made, not ask our youth to sacrifice even more. If the Liberals ignore the practical solutions we bring forward and push forward a budget that leaves Canadians behind, then any election called as a result of this would not be the fault of the Conservatives or the opposition. It would be the consequence of a government unwilling to listen, unwilling to act responsibly and unwilling to provide a better future for Canadians.

It is time for the government to work with the opposition, listen to the amendments we propose and deliver a budget that truly serves Canadians. The choice is the Liberals': to collaborate for the good of Canadians or to bear the responsibility—

• (1710)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): We are out of time.

We will continue with questions and comments. The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member wants it to be very clear.

Let us be very clear that, if there is an election, it will be because the Conservative Party has put their political interests ahead of Canadians' interests. That is what would precipitate an actual election.

The member talks about children and affordability. Every member of the Liberal caucus is concerned about the issue of affordability. That is the reason we brought in a tax break for 22 million Canadians. That is why we have a Prime Minister who has made the national school food program permanent to support our children. That is the reason we are investing in Canadians and investing in our infrastructure.

The member has a choice. We can either invest in Canadians or we can do nothing. It seems that the Conservatives are proposing to do nothing and wanting to have an election.

• (1715)

Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North has again illustrated that math is not the government's strong suit.

The last time I checked, the Liberals are not a majority in the House. They have not shown any willingness to work with the opposition, none at all. As I said in my speech, they need to make the hard decisions, prioritize and not add further debt for ourselves now, for our children and for our children's children. That means hard choices. It absolutely does.

However, that is the responsible thing to do, rather than pile on debt. Over and over again, the Liberals are expecting a different result from the same manner of acting. Inflation always follows this massive overspending, and it is going to come again. It will lead to higher interest rates, exacerbate our housing crisis and exacerbate our food prices.

Are math and balance really too much to ask for?

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, no matter what the Liberals may say, this budget makes cuts to health care. It is clear even just looking at transfers. The escalator is going to drop from 6% to 3%, while system costs are 6%.

Meanwhile, the Liberals are boasting. They are boasting that they are investing \$5 billion in health care infrastructure to build hospitals, when in fact they are doing so over three years, and Quebec is set to receive only about \$300 million. What is more, while the system is getting poorer and poorer because the escalator is not indexed to system costs, Ottawa is saying that Quebec will have to kick in \$300 million itself.

Considering that the expansion of the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital is going to cost between \$4 billion and \$6 billion, this investment, which is for all projects from coast to coast to coast, is just a drop in the bucket. It is a drop in the bucket. Does my colleague not agree with me that the Liberals are wrong to boast and that this is misrepresentation?

[English]

Dave Epp: Madam Speaker, there are certain things that the Liberals are spending more and more on, with higher rates of inflation, and things that they are committing to less and less.

The point that I want to highlight is actually a point that was brought up by the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Irrespective of the numbers that the government put in the budget, he is saying that there is about a 7.5% likelihood that they are going to hit them. That makes it a 92.5% likelihood that they are going to miss him. The 3% on health might only be 2% or 1% because of all the other spending. Certainly our debt, and not only the debt but also the cost of servicing that debt, is growing much faster.

The Liberals can spend more when they choose to, but it is not on the social programs we rely on because we are having to commit so much of our funding to servicing our debt.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Madam Speaker, there is a narrative we have been hearing from the Liberals today, which is that the budget they have put forward should just be blindly accepted by all opposition parties, and that if we do not go along with this reckless budget, an election is on our hands.

Interestingly, with a member as loquacious as my colleague from Winnipeg North, we can always find something he has said in the chamber. Back when there was a Conservative minority government, he sang a very different tune. All of his messages, and I found about a dozen of them, were about how the government needs to listen to opposition parties.

My question to my colleague from the neighbouring riding of Chatham-Kent—Leamington is, when did it become the obligation of opposition parties to find support for government legislation?

Dave Epp: Mr. Speaker, I guess it became the obligation in the mind of the government after the last election. The member is absolutely right. It is the role of government to seek to maintain its own survival by working with the opposition. If they choose not to—

* * *

PRIVILEGE

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am rising on a question of privilege arising from the troubling notice published by the Parliamentary Budget Officer on Thursday afternoon. In letters to the Speaker, the Deputy Speakers and their counterparts in the Senate, Jason Jacques wrote to provide notice, under section 79.42 of the Parliament of Canada Act, that he is of the opinion he has “not been provided with free and timely access to information requested under section 79.4 of the Act.”

Under the latter provision, subsection 79.4(1) of the Parliament of Canada Act reads:

The Parliamentary Budget Officer is entitled, by request made to the head of a department or of a parent Crown corporation, to free and timely access to any information under the control of the department or parent Crown corporation that is required for the performance of his or her mandate.

Specifically, Mr. Jacques has indicated that he has been stonewalled in respect to requests about budget measures, specifi-

Privilege

cally the so-called comprehensive expenditure review, addressed to five ministers of the Crown, namely the Minister of Fisheries, Minister of Health, Minister of Public Safety, Minister of Justice and the Minister of Industry. I will note, on October 30 in the operations committee, when questioned on this, the President of the Treasury Board stated he would provide the information to the PBO. Again, he has not done so.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer is mandated by Parliament to, among other things, analyze budgets tabled in the House by the Minister of Finance. In the course of doing just that for the budget tabled on November 4, he wrote to the minister specifically requesting information concerning “the savings of the CER [the comprehensive expenditure review] by program, planned personnel reductions, and details of potential service level impacts of the years 2026-27 to 2029-30”.

On behalf of the ministers, the Comptroller General of Canada answered that the information will not be provided within the timelines required by the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Again, I go back to October 30 in the operations committee when the President of the Treasury Board assured the committee that information would be provided. It remains to be seen if the information will ever be shared with Mr. Jacques, especially in light of news that the government has launched a job posting for a new Parliamentary Budget Officer, but I digress.

Mr. Jacques' letter explained the importance of this information being provided in a timely manner. He says:

The [comprehensive expenditure review's] proposed cuts of \$60 billion over the next five years are an important aspect of the Government's economic and fiscal plan outlined in Budget 2025. Given that parliamentarians will be asked to vote on this plan next week [tonight, in fact], I am seeking your support to compel the Comptroller General of Canada to release the necessary information without delay. Timely disclosure is essential to ensure parliamentarians can engage in a fully informed debate on these significant measures. To meet this objective, I kindly request your response to this letter at your earliest convenience.

Parliamentarians need this information, and we need it now. Provision of the Parliament of Canada Act, which the Parliamentary Budget Officer relies upon to seek information from the government, largely mirrors a similar authority the Auditor General enjoys under subsection 13(1) of the Auditor General Act. Similar to section 79.42 of the Parliament of Canada Act, which triggered Mr. Jacques's letter to the two Speakers, the Auditor General is obliged by paragraph 7(1)(b) of the Auditor General Act to report annually to the House of Commons on whether, in carrying on the work of her office, she received all the information and explanations she required.

Privilege

While the current statutory framework for the Parliamentary Budget Officer's information request was enacted in 2017 as part of the Liberal Budget Implementation Act, which was another omnibus bill, by the way, the Auditor General's parallel authorities, upon which I would argue the PBO's authority was modelled, has something of an established history. In 1982 and 1983, Pierre Trudeau's government denied information to then auditor general Kenneth Dye respecting the takeover of Petrofina by then Crown corporation Petro-Canada. This denial of information went to the courts, going all the way to the highest court in the land.

● (1720)

In the 1989 decision in *Canada (Auditor General) v. Canada (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources)*, Chief Justice Dickson, writing for a unanimous Supreme Court of Canada decision, described in pages 98 and 99 the interaction of the two statutory provisions concerning the Auditor General's right to information from the government and duty to report any failures to this House. It states:

The section refers to a duty to report of the Auditor General, but can, in my view, simultaneously be characterized as a reporting remedy....

There must be some purpose for conveying such information to the House of Commons and one must assume that Parliament intended the House of Commons to exercise its judgment as to whether to seek the information its servant had not been able to secure on its behalf.

● (1725)

At page 103, the then chief justice of Canada explained that an Auditor General does not have judicial recourse to secure access to information required, writing:

In this case, it is reasonable to interpret s. 7(1)(b) as the Auditor General's only remedy for claimed denials of s. 13(1) entitlements not only because the text is conducive to such an interpretation but also because, in the circumstances, a political remedy of this nature is an adequate alternative remedy. The Auditor General is acting on Parliament's behalf carrying out a quintessentially Parliamentary function, namely, oversight of executive spending pursuant to Parliamentary appropriations. Where the exercise of this auditing function involves the Auditor General in a dispute with the Crown, this is in essence a dispute between the legislative and executive branches of the federal government. Section 7(1)(b) would seem to be the means by which Parliament itself retains control over the position it wishes to take in such a dispute.

The reason for judgment concludes on page 110 by observing, "Nothing in the foregoing should be taken as prejudicing the right of the House of Commons to deal with a s. 7(1)(b) report as it sees fit."

In summary, the Supreme Court of Canada has said it has no role in addressing a breach of subsection 13(1) of the Auditor General Act, but it is up to the House to vindicate the powers conferred upon the Auditor General, an officer of Parliament. In turn, I would respectively submit that identical conclusions should be drawn in relation to the Parliamentary Budget Officer and section 79.4 of the Parliament of Canada Act.

That is why I am turning to you on this question of privilege so the House can consider how to address itself in this situation.

Page 122 of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, which I am sure the Speaker has memorized, speaks to the right of the House to regulate its own internal affairs. It states, "where the application of statute law relates to a proceeding

in Parliament or a matter covered by privilege, it is the House itself which decides how the law is to apply".

At page 180 of the *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, second edition, offers this insight, stating:

...each House interprets and administers the law of Parliament in order to find breaches of privilege or contempt in appropriate cases, and interprets any statute law setting out procedures to be followed. This is the only part of the general and public law of Canada in which the House has jurisdiction for purposes of interpretation and adjudication. Otherwise, "the Chair is in no position to interpret either the law or the Constitution...".

To my mind, I believe this question of privilege is the most appropriate means for this proceeding.

Bosc and Gagnon write, at page 59, "The House has the authority to assert privilege where its ability has been obstructed in the execution of its functions".

At page 60, they add:

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

More specifically, Maingot writes, at page 240, "Statute laws affecting the House of Commons, such as tabling of documents, may constitute contempt if not adhered to."

In delivering a ruling about a minister's failure to present documents by a deadline fixed by a statute, Speaker Fraser, on April 19, 1993, at page 18104 of the Debates, associated himself with the opinion that "a statutory provision and statutes are the highest form of command that can be given by this House. In my view the disregard of that legislative command, even if unintentional, is an affront to the authority and dignity of Parliament as a whole and of this House in particular".

● (1730)

In going on to find a prima facie case of privilege, the Chair explained:

In the present case it is not merely an order of the House that has been violated, but a law duly assented to by the Crown as a constituent part of Parliament. The delegate of the Crown has not met the exigencies of the law of Parliament.

As I have said before, Canada is not an executive democracy nor an administrative democracy, but a parliamentary democracy....

The requirements contained in our rules and statutory laws have been agreed upon by this House and constitute an agreement which I think all of us realize must be respected.

As a 1989 Supreme Court decision observed, "The Auditor General is acting on Parliament's behalf carrying out a...Parliamentary function—namely, the oversight of executive spending pursuant to Parliamentary appropriations."

The Parliamentary Budget Officer is performing, on our behalf, an equally essential role but at the front end of the financial cycle, providing us with objective, non-partisan analysis of the budget proposals of the executive. If the Parliamentary Budget Officer is denied access to the information he requires to do his job, on the legitimate and reasonably explained timelines he has established, we, as members of the House of Commons, are impeded from carrying out our constitutional duty of holding the government to account.

I will note that, when refusing this information to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the government argued that it could not possibly allow parliamentarians the information to vote on until it was actually voted on and passed by the House.

King Edward I, when calling the model Parliament, was famous for saying that, basically, what is being presented for all should be decided by all. The House should be deciding that. We cannot decide that if the government is hiding the information from us. I would submit that the denial of information requested by the Parliamentary Budget Officer, our officer, is analogous to the committee's request for documents going unanswered.

Bosc and Gagnon explain, on page 138-39:

If a committee's request that it be given certain documents is met with resistance or disregarded, the committee may adopt a motion ordering the production of the requested documents. If such an order is ignored, the committee has no means to enforce the order on its own. It may report the matter to the House and recommend that appropriate action be taken. It is then a decision of the House whether or not to issue an order for the production of papers. This may be done by the adoption of a motion or by concurring in the committee's report.

Like a committee, Mr. Jacques has reported his distress. In respect of Parliament's standing statutory order to produce information, the Parliamentary Budget Officer's notice letter indicates an unequivocal call for help: "I am seeking your support to compel the Comptroller General of Canada to release the necessary information without delay."

However, unlike a committee's report, we do not have the option of a motion to concur in Mr. Jacques's letter. That said, a concurrence motion would not even, in these circumstances, be necessary. Upon receiving a report of the finance committee's distress, on March 9, 2011, page 8840 of the Debates, Speaker Milliken found a prima facie case of privilege in his ruling.

The Chair stated:

...there is no doubt that an order to produce documents is not being fully complied with, and this is a serious matter that goes to the heart of the House's undoubted role in holding the government to account.

For these reasons, the Chair finds that there are sufficient grounds for finding a prima facie question of privilege in this matter.

I understand that the comptroller general responded to the Parliamentary Budget Officer with arguments as to why they cannot answer in a timely way.

I would return to the words of Speaker Milliken, which I agree would be equally applicable in the present context: "It may be that valid reasons exist. That is not for the Chair to judge. A committee empowered to investigate the matter might, but the Chair is ill-equipped to do so."

Privilege

Although there is no specific precedent ruling in the House of Commons on this point, Bosc and Gagnon recall for us, at page 81, that the law of contempt of Parliament is "extremely fluid and most valuable for the Commons to be able to meet novel situations."

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to find a prima facie case of privilege so that the House may discuss the means to which we can best provide the support to the Parliamentary Budget Officer that he seeks. While it is well established that Speakers themselves do not rule on questions of law, the fact that my question of privilege relates to a requirement under an act of Parliament does not mean that it is beyond your purview to render a decision and find a prima facie case of privilege.

The 1993 ruling of Speaker Fraser, which I quoted earlier, concerned a tabling deadline fixed by the customs tariff. More recently, another of your predecessors made rulings concerning provisions of the Canada Elections Act with respect to members' right to sit and vote in the House on June 18, 2013, page 18550 of the Debates; October 17, 2013, page 66 of the Debates; and November 4, 2014, page 9183 of the Debates.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, you can, and I would argue that you should, find a prima facie case here so that the House may address the government's failure to be transparent.

• (1735)

Maingot explains, at page 221, the nature of such a ruling:

A prima facie case of privilege in the parliamentary sense is one where the evidence on its face as outlined by the Member is sufficiently strong for the House to be asked to debate the matter and to send it to a committee to investigate....

As Speaker Fraser said in an October 10, 1989, ruling from page 4457 of the Debates, "Normally in cases of doubt, it has been the practice for Speakers to allow an appropriate motion to go forward for a decision of the House."

Another of your predecessors, Speaker Jerome, on March 21, 1978, at page 521 of the Journals, endorsed these comments, found in a February 1967 report of a Select Committee on Parliamentary Privilege in the United Kingdom:

...the question which the Speaker should ask himself, when he has to decide whether to grant precedence over other public business to a motion which a Member who has complained of some act or conduct as constituting a breach of privilege desires to move, should be, not—do I consider that, assuming that the facts are as stated, the act or conduct constitutes a breach of privilege, but could it reasonably be held to be a breach of privilege, or to put it shortly, has the Member an arguable point? If the Speaker feels any doubt on the question, he should, in my view, leave it to the House.

Since the courts determined, after the original Trudeau government stonewalled an auditor general, that they have no jurisdiction, and if you decide there is also no place for the House to intervene in support of our officers of Parliament, then that would render moot the very word of Parliament. It would undermine a core principle of statutory interpretation that Parliament does not speak in vain. That, I would submit, is my arguable point.

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Sir John Bourinot, a former clerk of this House, wrote in *Parliamentary Procedure and Practice in the Dominion of Canada*, fourth edition, at page 203, “Each House is bound by every consideration of self-interest and justice to observe strictly its rules and standing orders, and to rebuke every attempt to evade or infringe them.” That is exactly what we are being called upon to do here as well.

If Parliament is to expect the accountability from the government that it prescribes in law, it must stand up for itself and for its officers, such as the Parliamentary Budget Officer, when the government's efforts fall short.

Should you agree, I am prepared to move an appropriate motion.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. member for his intervention. The Chair will certainly take it under advisement and report back to the House.

* * *

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Vancouver Centre.

[Translation]

It is with pride and conviction that I rise to express my support for the 2025 federal budget. It is a budget that reflects our Liberal government's vision, priorities and values: building a fairer and more prosperous Canada for all. This budget represents a solid, pragmatic and results-driven plan that is designed to improve the lives of Canadians today while preparing our country for the challenges of tomorrow.

[English]

The budget contains bold choices and tough choices, but these choices are necessary in the current global climate to protect our families, our workers, our businesses and our communities, as well as to preserve our dignity and territorial integrity.

[Translation]

The global context remains complex. The international economy is marred by geopolitical tensions, trade disruptions and the lingering impacts of climate change. Although these realities create uncertainty, they also create opportunities, such as the opportunity to rethink our economy, strengthen our industrial sovereignty and invest in what makes Canada strong—our collective know-how, solidarity and talent. In this context, our government made a clear choice to take action, protect purchasing power, stimulate growth and accelerate the transition to a more sustainable economy. This budget shows that it is possible to reconcile fiscal responsibility with social ambition.

We know that the cost of living continues to be a major concern for Canadians. That is why our government continues to support families through targeted measures such as enhanced tax credits, the continuation of the carbon tax rebate for households and increased investments in affordable housing.

• (1740)

[English]

The 2025 budget includes tax incentives to speed up the construction of new housing, whether family homes, community homes or affordable rental buildings. We are also making it easier for developers and municipalities to access financing in order to reduce delays and boost construction.

[Translation]

In my riding of Alfred-Pellan, these measures will result in concrete projects: more housing, more construction jobs and genuine relief for families struggling to find housing. Affordable housing is more than an economic need; it is a fundamental right.

Canadian workers are key to our prosperity. Budget 2025 strengthens training and re-skilling programs so that everyone can benefit from the new economy.

We are introducing a refundable tax credit for personal support workers equal to 5% of their eligible income, up to a maximum of \$1,100 per year. This measure recognizes the essential role that these professionals play, especially in the lives of our seniors and vulnerable people.

In addition, \$97 million will be provided over five years to establish a fund to speed up foreign credential recognition in sectors experiencing labour shortages, like health care and construction. This will allow more skilled newcomers to enter the workforce quickly and contribute to our country's growth and vitality.

[English]

Finally, we are expanding the Red Seal training program and supporting innovation in union training to prepare our youth and workers for sustainable, well-paying jobs. These initiatives will help meet the growing demand for labour while strengthening Canadians' competitive and determined position.

[Translation]

Innovation remains central to our government's economic strategy. Budget 2025 modernizes the scientific research and experimental development tax credit, an essential tool for stimulating research and innovation in our businesses.

[English]

Eligibility thresholds are raised for small businesses. Certain measures are extended to public companies, and capital expenditures are reintroduced. These changes will encourage applied research, the commercialization of new technologies and the creation of quality jobs in strategic sectors.

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[Translation]

We know that Canada's competitiveness also depends on the energy transition. That is why this budget invests in clean technologies, hydrogen, sustainable manufacturing and electric vehicle production.

In September, our government announced targeted regulatory adjustments to help the auto sector stay competitive in the face of U.S. trade disruptions. By eliminating the 2026 target, we are enabling a more realistic and sustainable transition, while supporting auto manufacturers and workers. This is a responsible decision that protects jobs, the environment and Canadian competitiveness. These strategic investments position Canada as a global leader in the fight against climate change, while creating sustainable jobs by stimulating growth in our regions.

Our government recognizes that complex tax rules can be a barrier for Canadians and businesses. That is why budget 2025 introduces targeted adjustments to indirect taxes and the tax treatment of loyalty programs to simplify the system and make it more transparent. These adjustments will encourage consumption, promote investment and enable businesses to better plan for growth. A simpler tax system means more clarity for households and more confidence in our economic institutions.

These adjustments will make life easier for hundreds of thousands of Canadians whose tax situations are not complex. Think of students, like Massimo in my riding, who does not have time to file a tax return, or seniors, like Thérèse and André, whose only income comes from old age security and who struggle to access online services.

In a time of global uncertainty, our government is showing discipline. Every dollar invested is aimed at generating tangible economic benefits and strengthening the resilience of our economy. That is why, in budget 2025, we are reaffirming our commitment to buying Canadian. By supporting Canadian businesses, workers and products, we can maximize the impact of every public investment and support local supply chains.

• (1745)

[English]

Our priority is clear: to support the population without compromising the country's financial stability. This balanced approach sets Canada apart on the international stage and strengthens market confidence in our economy.

[Translation]

This budget will have a meaningful impact on our communities. For Alfred-Pellan, the budget means more jobs in construction and innovation, better access to housing and new opportunities for young people and families. Small and medium-sized businesses in Laval will benefit from new tax credits for research and clean production, promoting local investment and the creation of quality jobs. Thanks to Build Canada Homes, these benefits will be felt across the country. Even a single project can generate orders for steel in Hamilton, concrete in Calgary and heavy equipment rentals in Laval. This is proof positive that federal investments support the

entire Canadian economic chain, from manufacturers to workers on the ground.

This budget charts a course for an inclusive, innovative and resilient Canada. It supports families, strengthens the middle class and invests in sectors of the future. It embodies our government's deep conviction that when we invest in people, we build lasting prosperity. Every measure, whether training, housing, innovation or the green transition, is designed to give Canadians the tools they need to succeed.

The 2025 federal budget is not just a fiscal plan. It is a vision for the future. It reflects our commitment to building a country where every citizen, every community and every region can thrive. It shows that solidarity, responsibility and innovation are the foundation of Canadian progress. With this budget, our Liberal government is confirming its commitment to building a stronger, fairer and more sustainable Canada.

Together, let us continue to build a future where generations to come can live in prosperity, security and confidence.

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, earlier in the debate, my colleague from Montcalm explained that this budget represents a disengagement from health care funding because the health transfer could potentially increase more slowly than the costs of the system. In response, the member for Bourassa, the great intellectual, and the member for Trois-Rivières, the great diplomat, shouted names at the member for Montcalm, saying that he was wrong. I know that my colleague from Montcalm knows that what he said is true, and he knows what disengagement is: it is when a transfer increases at a slower pace than the costs of the system. We know this because it gets taught in introductory CEGEP courses and university intro to economics courses.

I would like to know whether my colleague from Alfred-Pellan will explain to his colleagues why, technically speaking, this is a disengagement from health care. Does he perhaps think we should freeze the salaries of a couple of Liberal MPs for a couple of years to show them what happens when sums of money are not indexed?

Angelo Iacono: Mr. Speaker, I do not entirely agree with my colleague's question. This budget protects essential services, including health care, dental care, pharmacare, and child care, while stimulating growth with major investments in housing, clean energy, and infrastructure. Families, seniors, and local businesses benefit from a plan that improves the everyday cost of living as well as long-term economic prospects.

• (1750)

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hear my colleague from Alfred-Pellan talking with my Bloc Québécois colleague. I just want to remind everyone that last week, we listened to our colleagues across the way once again: we extended the runway at the Magdalen Islands airport. We listen and we collaborate.

How would he explain today that this budget was designed to boost Canada's economy?

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Angelo Iacono: Mr. Speaker, it is simple. Sacrifice means choosing to do less in order to do better. It means reducing what is effective in order to focus our resources on what is essential: services to citizens, economic growth, and the country's competitiveness. We made the right choice. We did not take the easy option, as the opposition would have liked.

[*English*]

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know the Prime Minister was quick to abandon one of the fiscal anchors he campaigned on. In the last Parliament, the member belonged to a government that said one of its fiscal anchors was that the deficit would never go over \$42 billion, yet here he is, poised to vote in favour of a budget that is going to put Canada \$78 billion in the hole this fiscal year.

Will the finance minister and the Prime Minister do the same thing the last finance minister did and commit to upholding fiscal anchors next time around instead of abandoning them?

[*Translation*]

Angelo Iacono: Mr. Speaker, contrary to what my colleague opposite is saying, we are not running up the deficit to finance current spending, but rather to make generational investments in housing, infrastructure, clean technology, defence and economic security.

These investments are creating jobs now and generating economic benefits that will strengthen our finances in the long term.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, does the hon. member recognize that, in the budget, the government is taking away one-time health transfers and returning the transfers to Stephen Harper's level of 3% per year? It is a well-known fact that costs are increasing by 6% a year. All Quebec governments, regardless of party affiliation, have asked for a 6% escalator in transfers, and the federal government has refused.

Does my hon. colleague recognize that, with this budget, the government is reducing its share of health care funding, which is the top priority?

Angelo Iacono: Mr. Speaker, this budget is designed for the country, not for political games. We are fulfilling the mandate Canadians have given us to build a stronger Canada for the long term and to support families, seniors, workers and businesses.

Our priority is the stability and economic growth of the country.

[*English*]

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have not been this excited about a budget since 1995, when we faced a \$43-billion deficit, 18% mortgages and 26% youth unemployment, left to us by the Conservative government of the day. Jean Chrétien's budget was transformative, as is this one. It looked at Canada going into the 21st century and prepared us for that. It was a budget that looked forward and built for the future.

This budget recognizes the reality that the world has changed: Supply chains have changed globally, allies are no longer allies and friends are no longer friends. We borrowed sugar from our friends, our next-door neighbours, over the fence, but now we cannot depend on them. They are changing every day, and we do not know what to believe in anymore. It is time for us to let Canada build a

strong economy, a strong country and a strong sovereign nation. Let us stand on our own and do what we can to make ourselves great. We have lots of reasons to believe we can do that.

This budget is building on that hopeful but truthful idea, and Canada is poised to be the second-best economy in the G7, along with Germany. We are able to say what we can do to be a leader, be strong and build new friendships and security allies that will defend us.

This budget looks at so many things that I do not know where to start, but I am going to try to move forward.

This budget talks about the urban-rural divide that we hear about often, and it is bridging that divide. It is looking at, for instance in British Columbia, having a transmission corridor that would build communications and electricity transmissions that would link Yukon and British Columbia and go all the way down British Columbia. We are looking at building LNG for the Nisga'a people. This is a strong indigenous incentive. There will be a huge number of jobs with phase two of the Nisga'a LNG. We are also looking at the Ksi Lisims mine, which will look at critical minerals and move down the corridor as well. We are looking at all of that.

For me, British Columbia is a winner in this budget, but it is not the only winner. This budget is about all regions winning, whether it is Quebec, the Atlantic provinces, the Prairies or British Columbia.

Let me speak about British Columbia a little more. As we advance trade and believe we cannot be friends with our neighbour anymore or trust our neighbour to help us out, we are looking at diversifying trade. Our Prime Minister has been to Asia and has built strong trade relationships with Japan and China. He is looking at India, and he just signed a deal with Indonesia.

The bottom line is that British Columbia is the gateway to the Asia-Pacific. As we look at the infrastructure that is going to build ports, whether in the Prairies in Churchill or in British Columbia, British Columbia is poised to trade with Asia-Pacific, not only on the seaway on the Pacific, but also by air. This is big for British Columbia. It is going to create lots of jobs.

We are looking at the fact that British Columbia has mines, critical minerals, clean energy such as hydroelectricity, and LNG. This is something British Columbia is poised to do well with. However, this is not only about building an economy and ensuring that we start looking at manufacturing. We have a huge lumber industry in British Columbia. One of the issues we see there is tariffs, so what are we doing? We are putting money into helping the sectors, whether it is steel, aluminum, auto or lumber. We are looking at how we can help workers and those industries not just survive, but expand to build manufacturing.

I like to say to look at IKEA. Sweden could fit into British Columbia and get lost, yet IKEA is in the biggest middle-class furniture industry in the world. British Columbia has so many forests. Why are we not building furniture or looking at manufacturing?

This budget is big and bold, and it says we can do this. We can build. We can be a strong manufacturing region in British Columbia. This is good for B.C.

● (1755)

I look at the Prairies. What happens when Manitoba agrees and we open up Churchill to get that port to go out to Europe to sell our clean energy, whether it is hydrogen, LNG or hydroelectricity? We are ready; we are poised.

This is a budget that talks about “build, build, build”. It is a budget that looks to the future.

It talks about workers; it is a budget for workers. As we build manufacturing and as we build in other sectors, we are looking at good jobs. This is such an important thing. What did Unifor have to say about this? It believed that this was a big deal. Its national president said, “Building a resilient economy means ensuring that the commitments outlined in the federal budget translate into good, union jobs for Canadian workers.” Jobs are what people want so they can earn money to buy things and to do the things they need to do.

This budget is also helping people who are having a hard time. For the sectors hurting from the tariffs, money has been set aside to help them rebuild and re-skill. It is for re-skilling workers whose jobs are not going to be useful anymore in this new Canada and this new world. We are looking at redundancy, so let us retrain and re-skill.

We are looking at students, and we talk about youth. We are now moving from 75,000 summer jobs for youth to 100,000. Those jobs mean that kids get hands-on experience working in the real workplace. They are going to be ready to go out there and work when the time comes.

This is a budget that I am so proud of.

On housing, the budget bridges the rural-urban divide. People in rural areas are going to get infrastructure money to build clinics and hospitals.

The budget is creating a new brain gain from the United States, which people want to leave. We are looking at researchers. We put \$1.7 billion into building research. We can build a strong pharmaceutical sector here. We have the know-how. We have the inno-

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vation. We have the brains. During Diabetes Week, we must remember who gave the world insulin: two Canadians, Banting and Best. This is not new; there have been people who won the Nobel Prize for creating chemical diabetes insulin in British Columbia. We have the brains; what we need are the people to get things going. The money has been set aside to do that.

Field of Dreams says, “If you build it, [they] will come.” Well, this budget is about building it, and they are coming. Saab is here, and it wants to build a defence sector with us. We need to protect our Arctic. We need to work with Scandinavian countries like Sweden to help us build a strong Arctic defence. Saab is coming to build the fighter jets.

The King and Queen of Sweden are also coming here with 60 business and industry people to work with Canada, to build with Canada. This is already happening. It is exciting. It is going on. Tomorrow the King and Queen of Sweden will be here. This is just the beginning. We are seeing China and India. We are seeing Australia helping us with defence.

The world has changed, and Canada is not going to sit by and wait to see where that change goes. Canada is, in the budget, going to lead that change. We are going to take our way. We are going to control who we are. We have already started with a good economy. We know we have the lowest inflation right now. We see what is going on in the United States. I heard people talking about food prices the other day. Well, I think people have to pay \$15 to buy a carton of eggs in the United States, but I just bought some for \$4.69 at my local supermarket.

I want to tell members to believe in Canada. We can do it. We are a strong nation. We have the ability, the brains, the know-how and the innovation. What we need is for people to believe that we can do it. The rest of the world, such as Sweden, for example, is believing. Therefore let us move. I say build it and they will come.

● (1800)

Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have noticed that when we are talking about the economy, Liberals are very selective in the facts and the statistics they like to highlight. They say, “Oh, our debt-to-GDP ratio is not as bad as in other countries”, but they consistently do not mention sub-sovereign debt. To compare apples to apples, they need to include that.

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Another thing the Liberals do not like to talk about very much is our lagging productivity metric as compared to that of our trading nations. This is the ability of a country to service its debt and be productive and wealthy. They recognize that it is a problem, because the budget says, for example, “Productivity remains weak, limiting wage gains for workers.” I think this is the fifth or sixth Liberal budget I have listened to, and every time, the Liberals acknowledge that productivity is a problem, but they never do anything about it. Why should Canadians believe them this time?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, the world has changed. This is a new budget. The hon. member talked a bit about why we should look at productivity. Yes, Canada has lagged in productivity. What do we do when we want to increase productivity? We train people, we skill people, we build industries and we help industry to expand to create jobs. That is what productivity is about. We make sure that women can join the workforce. We make sure that the workforce is a diverse one. We help people to become skilled. That is what productivity is about, and this budget is addressing that productivity lag.

• (1805)

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during the last election, the government chose to abolish the carbon tax for individuals but sent out cheques to compensate them. However, provinces like Quebec that do not pay this carbon tax because they have their own system were not compensated. Through the taxes they paid, Quebec's taxpayers contributed nearly \$900 million to this election giveaway.

Does my colleague believe, as my party and I do, that the government should repay Quebec's taxpayers the amount they contributed to this election giveaway?

[English]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, this is very interesting. British Columbia did not get any money back either. Do you know why? It is because British Columbia had its own carbon tax. The province ran it, and it gave money back to the people by way of social programs. I do not understand why if a province did not participate in the national carbon tax it should be compensated for anything. Does it make sense to you? It does not to me.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The member is an experienced member. She knows to address her comments through the Chair.

An hon. member: She was asking you, Mr. Speaker.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I have a lot of opinions, but I will not be sharing them.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Bourassa.

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to say that the future is not carved in stone. The future is what we make it.

I would like my colleague to tell us what this budget does in terms of building. Is it an investment in building buildings, or are we also building Canadians' future? As far as infrastructure is con-

cerned, can my colleague explain how this budget will also help people find jobs, including recurring jobs, after the infrastructure is built?

[English]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, building is not just about building houses. It is not just about building housing units. It is about building industries and about building manufacturing sectors. It is about building the skills of workers. It is about creating workers.

This is a visionary budget; let us make no bones about it. It is a budget that is looking straight down the road to a strong future for Canada, and these are kinds of building: expanding the Port of Vancouver, building Churchill port, expanding airports, building in small rural areas all the transmission grids and electricity grids that they need. This is what this budget is all about. That is what we said. I keep saying, “Build it, and they will come”, and they are coming.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Milton East—Halton.

Kristina Tesser Derksen (Milton East—Halton Hills South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the good people of Milton East—Halton Hills South to bring reflections on our government's 2025 budget, a budget that lays the blueprint to address a new paradigm of economic development, nation building and generational investment. It is a budget that believes in Canada. This budget is historic, and it comes at a historic time.

However, this is also a time of challenges. We know that Canada is grappling with recent economic hardships as a result of the unfair tariffs the United States has thrust upon us. These tariffs have contributed to a global disruption of economic conventions and to unaffordability around the world, and it is not just a Canadian problem. In fact we heard recently that unaffordability in the U.S. is so critical that the American President has actually reversed course on his prized tariff policy, reversing tariffs on some food items that Americans struggled to afford and still do.

However, Canadians know that times of challenge are also times of opportunity. Now is the time for us to re-evaluate and recommit to our own destiny. We do not need to rely on anyone in order to be prosperous. We have much of what we need right here: an educated, hard-working and patriotic population; vast natural resources that the world wants; and a philosophy of co-operation, quality and responsibility that makes us a desired partner for trade, investment and collaboration the world over.

The Budget

The broad, shifting tides of the global economic landscape are being felt in the daily lives of Canadians. As a government, it is our duty to address this. Our 2025 budget is the foundation of our answer to this challenge. Here, in the people's House, we hear it all. We feel it. Affordability, housing, employment, our young people, and crime all need and deserve our collective attention.

It is the right of every Canadian to feel secure in their daily needs and endeavours. We understand the importance of investing in resources for a safer community, and that is why budget 2025 will invest \$1.7 billion over four years into public safety and border security by hiring 1,000 new RCMP officers and 1,000 new border security agents. Safety in our communities is also top of mind. By investing in law enforcement and justice reform, we will tackle organized crime, gun violence, auto theft and many other crimes. Safety is the first pillar of prosperity.

I have four young adult children. As a mother, their struggles are my struggles. Youth unemployment rates are not acceptable. Over the next two years, \$594 million will develop 100,000 summer jobs under our Canada summer jobs program. Investing over \$300 million over two years in our youth employment and skills strategy will provide employment and support to 20,000 young people facing employment barriers, and we will create 55,000 work-integrated learning opportunities for post-secondary students by investing \$635 million in our student work placement program.

The government has also committed \$40 million to create a youth climate corps that will provide paid skills training to young Canadians to quickly respond to environmental emergencies, support recovery and create a resilient Canada for years to come.

Hand in hand with employment is the pride and accomplishment of a home to call one's own. We have been facing a steep housing supply gap. To combat this, our government has allotted \$13 billion over five years to our Build Canada Homes initiative, supercharging the housing industry and catalyzing private sector partnerships to build homes at a rate unseen since the postwar period. We will also expand transitional supportive housing for the most vulnerable among us, working with our provinces, territories, municipalities and indigenous communities.

In the short term, we are providing relief by bringing down house purchase costs through our elimination of the GST for first-time homebuyers, allowing them to recover up to \$50,000 of GST paid toward a new home, money that would go directly back into their pockets. We are also protecting existing affordable housing through launching the \$1.5-billion Canada rental protection fund under Build Canada Homes to ensure that affordable rent is not being lost to increases.

To provide quick relief to nearly 22 million Canadians, our government has implemented a middle-class tax cut aimed specifically at targeting Canadians in the lower and middle tax brackets. In hand with this, our government is transitioning to automated federal benefits for Canadians through simplifying federal tax returns. This will result in approximately five and a half million Canadians' receiving the benefits they are entitled to but are not currently collecting simply because they are not filing tax returns. These benefits belong to the people, and our government is removing obstacles so the people can benefit.

Canadians are not afraid of hard work, and the government is implementing a new re-skilling package for workers. By providing \$570 million, we will support training and employment assistance to workers who have been affected by tariffs and global market shifts.

Guaranteed in our charter is security of the person, and this is a foundational tenet in Canada's health care system, a system that is envied the world over and that every Canadian can look to with pride. The government will invest \$5 billion over three years to our dedicated health infrastructure fund. We recognize that hospitals, urgent care centres, emergency rooms and medical schools need to be at the forefront of investment to serve Canadians.

● (1810)

In my riding of Milton East—Halton Hills South, plans are under way for a brand new hospital in Georgetown and a palliative care hospice, each facing significant capital costs. Budget 2025's health infrastructure proposal is the type of plan that will support such projects. Our municipalities and our people need this support.

My history as a municipal councillor in Milton gives me an insightful perspective in this sphere. So much of our municipal planning depends on investing in core public infrastructure. Municipalities have limited ways to raise revenue and cannot run budget deficits, yet they are burdened with increasing responsibilities, typically without the corresponding financial support.

I am so proud to stand up for this budget, which commits \$54 billion to creating core public infrastructure over the next five years through our build communities strong fund. This infrastructure is imperative to supporting municipalities as they work to facilitate homebuilding in our communities.

Of course, with development, we must be mindful of our impact on our natural environment. Our budget outlines the path to supporting a green future while providing prosperity by becoming an energy superpower in both clean and conventional energy.

The Budget

Our Prime Minister has been clear: Canada's new government will spend less so we can invest more. At a time when Canadians are facing economic pressures in their daily lives, this government recognizes its duties in solidarity with all Canadians. That is why this budget demands \$60 billion in savings. We have done this while still protecting the vital services that Canadians rely on: child care, dental care, pharmacare and our national school food program.

I am so proud to be a Canadian and a member of a government that is unafraid of taking bold action and meeting challenges head-on.

• (1815)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: It being 6:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of Ways and Means Motion No. 2.

The question is on the motion.

[*English*]

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

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I would love to carry it on division, but I have a sense there is a desire for a recorded division.

The Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1900)

[*Translation*]

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

(Division No. 50)

YEAS

Members

Acan	Al Soud
Ali	Alty
Anand	Anandasangaree
Auguste	Bains
Baker	Bardeesy
Battiste	Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River)	Bendayan
Bittle	Blair
Blois	Brière
Carney	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Champagne	Chang
Chartrand	Chatel
Chen	Chenette
Chi	Church
Clark	Connors
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dandurand
Danko	d'Entremont
Deschênes-Thériault	Desrochers
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Earle	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith

Eyolfson	Fancy
Fanjoy	Fergus
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Fuhr
Gaheer	Gainey
Gasparro	Gerretsen
Gould	Grant
Greaves	Guay
Guilbeault	Gull-Masty
Hajdu	Hanley
Harrison	Hepfner
Hirtle	Hodgson
Hogan	Housefather
Hussen	Iacono
Jaczek	Joly
Joseph	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Klassen	Koutrakis
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lapointe (Sudbury)	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lavack
Lavoie	LeBlanc
Leitão	Lightbound
Long	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacDonald (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Maloney	May
McGuinty	McKelvie
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McKnight
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)	Ménard
Mendès	Michel
Miedema	Miller
Mingarelli	Morrissey
Myles	Naqvi
Nathan	Nguyen
Noormohamed	Ntumba
Oliphant	Olszewski
O'Rourke	Osborne
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Provost	Ramsay
Rana	Robertson
Rocheffort	Romanado
Royer	Sahota
Saini	Sarai
Sari	Sawatzky
Schiefke	Sgro
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sodhi
Solomon	Sousa
St-Pierre	Sudds
Tesser Derksen	Thompson
Turnbull	Valdez
van Koeverden	Vandenbeld
Villeneuve	Watchorn
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NAYS

Members

Aitchison
Allison
Anstey
Au
Bailey
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Belanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)

Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bonin	Bonk
Borrelli	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cobena
Cody	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
DeRidder	Deschênes
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duncan
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)	Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Groleau	Guglielmin
Gunn	Hallan
Hardy	Ho
Hoback	Holman
Jackson	Jansen
Jivani	Kelly
Khanna	Kibble
Kirkland	Kmiec
Konanz	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kronis
Kuruc	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lawton
Lefebvre	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lloyd
Lobb	Ma
Mahal	Majumdar
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)	Mantle
Martel	Mazier
McCauley	McKenzie
McLean (Calgary Centre)	McPherson
Melillo	Menegakis
Moore	Morin
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ross
Rowe	Ruff
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shipley	Simard
Small	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stevenson
Strahl	Strauss
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Vien	Viensen
Vis	Wagantall
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PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.*[English]*

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will remind hon. members that they are not to take pictures in the chamber. I will ask hon. members who took pictures to immediately delete the pictures. That goes for all hon. members. The House is in session. The mace is on the table. There are to be no pictures taken within the chamber during proceedings.

To all members on both sides, if they have taken pictures, I will ask them now to delete those pictures and confirm that with the Chair.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to rise in this House. I suspect members opposite knew I had the first late show this evening, and that is why so many of them are still here, which we are not used to seeing in Adjournment Proceedings. I am very grateful for that.

I note that the question I am asking of the government comes on the heels of this House's passage of what I will say is a very dangerous budget for Canada and for Canadians. It is a budget that commits a \$78-billion deficit, a budget that signs Canada up to \$321 billion more in new debt over the coming years and a budget that will allow \$55 billion to be spent this year on debt interest alone. That is more than the government spends on health transfers going to provinces. That is more than the government spends on child tax incentives. That is more than Canada collects in GST.

When I bring that up, it is to say that these numbers have meaning. Canada's fiscal situation is dire after 10 years of mismanagement by the Liberal government. This is something we have heard warnings of. We have the fastest-shrinking economy in the G7. The deficit of \$78 billion is one that the Liberal government and the Prime Minister said would not exist, because he promised a deficit of no more than \$62 billion.

Adjournment Proceedings

The reason this is so important is that Canadians could not afford to run their own household budgets the way the government is running Canada's budget. In fact, I do not think the Prime Minister would have had the deal he did at Brookfield if he had run Brookfield the way he is now running Canada and Canada's books. Where is the master banker we were promised? Where is the master financier, the guy who can move at the speed of crisis? Where is that Prime Minister?

The question I asked in this House a few weeks ago and on which I rise again today has to do with the auto sector specifically. My riding of Elgin—St. Thomas—London South has a great many employees who have been affected by a number of plant closures over recent weeks. Some are from the CAMI plant in the neighbouring riding of Oxford, and some are vendors and suppliers to CAMI around the region, including in my riding, where hundreds of workers, well over 1,200, have been put directly at economic risk, their livelihoods terminated because of the government's failure to fulfill a promise that it made, the key promise by the Prime Minister to stand up for the auto sector.

There has been, from the Liberal government, a fair bit in the way of revisionism. When we called out what the Prime Minister said, which is that he would get a deal with the United States, a deal with Donald Trump, by July, the Liberals said that he did not really mean that. He meant that he would work toward it. It was not really a deadline; it was a guideline. Well, for Canadians who put their trust in the Prime Minister to secure an economic future for this country, that is a broken promise.

In this budget, we do not have anything resembling a plan that will protect auto workers and will protect manufacturing jobs in my region and across the country. This budget will only put Canadians at risk of having to spend more in debt interest and having to deal with more inflation because of runaway debt and deficit spending, with no plan to secure our jobs and secure an economic future for our country.

Will the Prime Minister say once and for all that the Liberals have a plan to protect the auto sector and reveal what it is?

• (1905)

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in the aftermath of quite a historic moment in the House, where the main budget motion has passed on a budget that brings forward an investment plan focusing on investments in housing, investments in infrastructure, investments in defence, investments in talent and investments in productivity. They are investments that are really about triggering and unleashing private sector investment. We predict that the budget will bring forward \$500 billion in additional private sector investment to this country over the next five years, and that is really private sector investment that we welcome throughout the different regions of this country.

I will give some examples from the auto sector, particularly in St. Thomas. The hon. member would be aware of the new gigafactory, which has broken ground there now. There will be 3,000 direct jobs, 32,000 square metres of concrete and 4,850 metric tonnes of rebar. It will be a significant plant that will bring thousands of jobs to the hon. member's riding, and as he is well aware, when we bring

direct jobs into the auto sector, there are all kinds of spinoff jobs, indirect jobs and induced jobs.

The hon. member will know well the mayor of St. Thomas, who was quoted saying, a few weeks ago, "The mayor hasn't stopped smiling since." He is referring to himself. He continued with this: "Generations in the future can...have a job that pays well enough to buy a home in St. Thomas and become part of a really vibrant community." That is some of the positive investment that comes into the next generation of automotive technology in Canada, which we know is increasingly electric.

I invite my hon. colleague to come on over and see the benefits of the growth of EV technology over the longer term. It is something that is being recognized in his community, and it is part of a larger defence of the auto sector that involves also being very attentive to the concerns that have been raised.

The hon. member mentioned Ingersoll. The Minister of Industry has been present in Ingersoll and in Brampton, sitting down with the workers and being very direct and forceful with the companies that are threatening to not honour some of the commitments they have made, not just to this side of the House but to all Canadians, including the member's constituents.

We think this is the appropriate approach to take: to be engaged with the workers, to be engaged with the Canadian sector that is here, and to be very engaged with those who are deploying capital and show them the value of deploying capital here, whether they are the American companies, American-based companies or global companies.

Again, this is all in the context of a budget that we think is an investment budget, but one that actually does not quite do what I think the hon. member is concerned about with respect to fiscal policy. I think he would know if he looked more deeply into the charts in the budget that the budget will, over a three-year period, balance operating spending with revenues and make sure that the capital investments are the ones that we are borrowing funds to make. He would also be aware that it is capital investments that are the pro-economic investments that unleash all kinds of opportunities for people in his riding as well as across the country.

I think the government and the Minister of Industry have been very attentive to the specific needs and concerns in southern Ontario, and we are very active and involved in both securing investment and protecting the jobs that do exist there.

• (1910)

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, I hear the words "investment, investment, investment" over and over. What I do not hear is the more honest framing of "spending, spending, spending". If we want to get private sector investment in this country, and certainly in my region, we need the government to abandon the industrial carbon tax and to reduce costly and burdensome regulations. We need the government to admit that it has been killing jobs over the last 10 years by suffocating companies.

Adjournment Proceedings

We do not attract private sector investment by ballooning and bloating the size of government, which is precisely what this budget is going to do. The Liberals can try to use whatever tricky words they would like, but at the end of the day, this is a budget that is going to create \$320 billion more debt over the next five years, which future generations of Canadians will be forced to bear.

Why is there no path to genuinely balancing the budget, and why are we not able to see what Canadians are going to be getting for this money that is mortgaging the future generations?

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, I have been in the House now for just over six months, and I am still waiting to hear about the positive action that the party opposite wants to take on fighting climate change. I have not yet heard it. I have heard only the negative propositions.

I think that someone who is concerned about investment, investment trajectories and securing more private sector investment knows that it is very important to have policy certainty and policy predictability. We on the industry committee of Parliament have been studying some of these questions.

To have an investment tax regime that is actually four percentage points lower than comparable rates in the United States on average, to have some policies in place that provide certainty around carbon pricing for industry, and to have policies in place that show that we have EI supports, training supports and a series of investment tax credits that support that kind of investment is the kind of investment and the kind of budgetary approach that Canadians are looking for.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would just like to put this on the public record: I want to wish my wife a happy anniversary. Last week, on November 10, we celebrated 18 years of being married. I thank her for putting up with me for 18 years and for being by my side throughout this political journey. It has been quite the ride.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Jeremy Patzer: Mr. Speaker, I thank the members across the way and my colleagues here as well; I appreciate that.

I also just want to give a quick shout-out to the Saskatchewan Roughriders for winning the Grey Cup championship. Obviously, it is a long season with lots of games. It is a gruelling schedule, but they are the ones who came out on top through hard work and great teamwork, so I congratulate the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

I was asking a question of the government about China's tariffs on Canadian canola and on our pulse crops. I also had a follow-up question another time around what is happening with India putting tariffs on us. It is specifically our yellow pea crops they are putting tariffs on now. China has 100% tariffs on that particular crop; India now has a 30% tariff on that crop as well.

I just wanted to work through some of the numbers here. I was reading an article in *The Western Producer*, and when we look at the cash price for peas, it has dropped by about \$15 to \$20 per tonne since the announcement of the tariffs by India.

Let us just look at some of the numbers. In week 12 of the crop year, the exports for peas were 55,500 tonnes. If we do the math on that, at \$15 a tonne, that works out to \$825,000 that Canadian farmers, particularly Saskatchewan farmers, lost in that price. If it is \$20 a tonne, that goes all the way up to \$1.1 million for just one week. That is the kind of loss that farmers are dealing with in the tariffs from India.

Given the total exports in one year, for this year, so far, it is 817,400 tonnes. Let us do the math on that. At \$20 a tonne, that would be \$16.3 million that farmers are losing out on. At \$15 a tonne, that is \$12.2 million that they are losing out on because of the tariffs that have been put on by India. I will let the government do the math on what that means for the impact of the tariffs from China.

The Prime Minister said he was the man for a crisis; so far, when we have seen the Prime Minister leave Canada and go out on trips to talk to other countries about trade, we are seeing worse deals or we are seeing no deals happen. He said he met with folks from China, and they said maybe in the new year they will get to dealing with that. Farmers do not have the luxury of time that the Prime Minister is operating on; they need a deal to be done and dealt with now. Harvest is over. The crop is in the bins. Time is not on farmers' side.

I just gave a brief example of the impact on cash flow it is having for Canadian farmers. If the government continues to sit and wait on this, there is going to be further devastation for farmers. We will see that price continue to go down.

We see the agriculture minister not taking it seriously. The Prime Minister has been ineffective in trying to get better deals or even trying to fix the problems that have been created around the world by other governments.

We know that these tariffs are in relation to other things the government has been doing. The Prime Minister needs to put his best foot forward. He needs to get these tariffs removed from China now. He needs to go to India or have somebody go to India and tell them why they need to be taking the tariffs off, so Canadian farmers and exporters can have access to that market once again. Let them know this is the best crop in the world; Saskatchewan farmers do it the best. The government should be working for farmers, not against them.

● (1915)

Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley for his submission this evening. I see he is basking in the glow of his 18th wedding anniversary and the Grey Cup victory of his favourite team, so that is a good thing.

Adjournment Proceedings

The issue the member raises is an extremely serious one. The agricultural sector is critically important for feeding not only the country but the entire world and doing so in a sustainable way. It is also a key driver of Canada's economy, contributing significantly to our GDP, jobs and exports. That includes, of course, the world-class canola and pulse producers in Saskatchewan, who lead the nation in the production of these crops.

We know they are facing tremendous uncertainty with the punitive tariffs on their world-class products, and the hon. member pointed to some very specific examples and calculations. The budget that was just adopted by this House has committed more than \$639 million over five years for the following measures.

There is \$109.2 million in 2025-26 for the AgriStability program to help farmers cope with large declines in income due to increased costs, market disruptions and other challenges, by increasing the compensation rate to farmers from 80% to 90% and raising the payment cap per farm from \$3 million to \$6 million. That was in the budget.

There is \$75 million over five years for the AgriMarketing program to enhance the diversification and promotion of Canada's agriculture and agri-food products, including canola and pulses, into new markets. That was in the budget.

There is \$97.5 million over two years to increase the advance payments program's interest-free limit to \$500,000 for canola advances for the 2025 and 2026 program years, resulting in interest savings for producers and increased access to cash flow to help cover costs until they sell their products. That was in the budget.

There is \$372 million over two years to establish a biofuels production incentive to support the stability and resilience of domestic producers of biodiesel and renewable diesel.

Taken together, these investments will support Canadian canola and pulse producers as we work around the clock to restore an even playing field with our largest customer.

• (1920)

Jeremy Patzer: Mr. Speaker, I saw the announcement on the funds that were being allocated. As the member will most likely know, AgriStability is actually a cost-shared program with the provincial governments. It is nice for the Liberals to say they have upped it from 80% to 90% and increased the threshold from \$3 million to \$6 million, but can the member confirm here today that the provincial governments are in favour of that? Have the provincial governments signed on to do it? Will they be able to uphold the financial commitment on their end?

I have talked to a lot of producers, and they say that AgriStability does not trigger for them. AgriStability is not going to help them deal with lost market access. There is some money set aside for marketing, as I said, but that does not change the fact that China has 100% tariffs and India has 30% tariffs, and that we are seeing other non-trade barriers across the globe that the government has done nothing to get rid of.

Have the provinces confirmed that they are in support of these measures and have the money to back them? Will the government

commit today to trying to get the tariffs repealed as soon as possible?

Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, I can advise the hon. member that Saskatchewan farmers are absolutely a priority for this government. That has been demonstrated by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, who has met with canola producers on several occasions, including with the Prime Minister.

The Minister of Agriculture recently travelled to China to meet face to face with senior officials. They agreed to restart the technical working groups, which is a critical step, with respect to regulatory barriers. On the heels of the Prime Minister's successful visit with President Xi, we are committed to keeping the conversation going and are looking for ways to support our hard-working canola and pulse producers.

We will always stand shoulder to shoulder with our farmers. We are there for producers and we will continue to be there for them.

FINANCE

Hon. Mike Lake (Leduc—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of chatting about family, I will say that I was elected almost 20 years ago. My kids were 10 and six years old at the time I was elected. It has been a long time. A couple of weeks ago, my son celebrated his 30th birthday. I have talked about Jaden a lot in this place. My daughter, in a couple of weeks, is getting married. Time flies. There is a little bit of applause for our families back home.

What caused me to get involved in politics was a concern for Canada's economic or fiscal situation back then. Of course in the mid-2000s, there was the sponsorship scandal we were facing, but if we go back a little in time, there is a history lesson that I think is really important, which happened under a Liberal government.

After the budget, just recently, Fitch Ratings came out with a statement: "Canada's...proposed budget, announced in Parliament on Nov. 4, underscores the erosion of the federal government's finances." It went on to say, "persistent fiscal expansion and a rising debt burden have weakened its credit profile and could increase rating pressure over the medium term."

This has happened before, under a Liberal government. A generation earlier, under Trudeau the first, Liberal governments ran deficits in 14 out of 15 straight years. Fast-forward to the Mulroney era. A lot of Liberals on the other side like to point to the deficits of the Mulroney era, but I think it is very instructive in this conversation that the deficits of the Mulroney era were entirely interest on Trudeau's debt, the debt that Pierre Trudeau had run up over 14 out of 15 years. It was a crushing amount, and the interest costs alone created some of the biggest deficits in Canadian history.

In 1994, the Liberal government put forward a budget that did not go nearly far enough, and the ratings agencies and other financial experts were highly critical of that budget, to the point where, in the subsequent budget in 1995, the Liberal government of the day, the Chrétien-Martin government, had to cut 32% over two years from the health transfer and the social transfer; it was one transfer to the provinces back then that went to health, social services and education. We can imagine the ripple effect this had across the country.

We are going through a time like that now. We have just come out of Trudeau the second. We have come out of 10 straight deficits in 10 years under Justin Trudeau's government.

The current government came in and said it would be different. It called itself a new government, yet although the current Prime Minister promised he would get spending under control, the deficit in the most recent budget is infinitely higher and is substantially higher than what he promised in the election just six short months ago.

I am hoping that the hon. member across the way, the hon. parliamentary secretary, will stand up and explain to Canadians his concern for the future of all the valuable social programs here in Canada.

• (1925)

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member on watching his children grow. I too have children, both born and unborn. My wife is about to give birth in January to the latest addition to our family, a girl who I am very proud to say will be my third girl. I am very proud to work in the House on behalf of my family and to see the nation's resources stewarded for future generations.

I realize the member opposite probably takes a different view than I do, but let us just review for a second what the former parliamentary budget officer, in fact the first one, Kevin Page, said recently: "In the current economic environment, I'm comfortable with budgetary deficits in the 2.5 per cent range of GDP. Our economy is weak, and we're operating well below Canada's potential growth rate." He also said recently, "We need to deploy significant resources to strengthen Canada's political and economic sovereignty.... We need investment to diversify and boost growth. We need to increase our defence capabilities." Those are exactly the statements I would point out to say that our government is stewarding the nation's resources responsibly.

In order to get through the difficult times we are in, we need to invest in our country. Confident countries invest in themselves. This is a profound time of change, and it is a time to build. It is not a time to backtrack and cower at the challenges ahead; it is a time to invest. We need to reimagine our trading relationships and supply chains, protect and transform our strategic industries, invest in major projects to build a stronger economy and show that we believe in ourselves. I think having confidence in ourselves is key.

To do this, we need to re-evaluate, but also make significant adjustments. That is why we are changing how government works and spending less on government operations. It is so we can invest

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more in Canada's future, creating high-paying careers, building our country and, of course, growing our economy.

As part of that process, we recognize the government itself can become more productive. We will do this by rightsizing the public service and returning to more sustainable levels in the public service, pre-COVID levels; reducing red tape; eliminating wasteful spending; and adopting new and emerging technologies. Of course, artificial intelligence is something we all recognize has great potential for achieving productivity. By doing all this, we will refocus on results and better allocate scarce taxpayer dollars to catalyze private investment and grow a stronger, more resilient Canadian economy.

Our ambitious plan is to save dollars on the one hand while creating fiscal space. The head of the IMF has said that Canada has acted decisively and that we need to invest that extra fiscal space in capital investments that can help grow our industries and economy.

We have done all of this without compromising social programs and federal benefits, including the Canada child benefit, dental care, the disability benefit, child care, pharmacare and many others. This is good news for Canadians. It is a responsible approach, and I firmly believe that our credit rating, being the best in the world at a AAA rating, will be reaffirmed by the two credit rating agencies, Moody's and S&P Global.

• (1930)

Hon. Mike Lake: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member led off his comments by quoting a former PBO, somehow in defence of the government, saying, "Our economy is weak". If the Liberals have a confidence problem, just about the worst advice that I can imagine is to spend their way out of it. They call it investment, but it is really just spending.

Here is what happened in February 1994 according to a Reuters summary:

The...Liberal government brings down what it considers to be a tough budget.... It nonetheless still has spending rising slightly, and immediate public and market reaction is it did not go nearly far enough....

January 1995—A biting editorial in the Wall Street Journal headlined "Bankrupt Canada" calls Canada "an honorary member of the Third World"....

The next month, the Liberal government was forced to make the most vicious cuts to health care and social programs in Canadian history.

We are on that same path. What does the hon. member suggest we do about it?

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Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that we invest in our economy and grow it so we have the revenues to pay down the deficit we have. That is exactly the fiscal anchor we have talked about: a declining deficit-to-GDP ratio, ensuring disciplined fiscal management for future generations.

The Prime Minister recently said that the future benefits those who are able to be bold in times of crisis. We are being bold. We are investing in the future of our country to create jobs, build infrastructure and build defence capabilities.

I know the member opposite has stood in the House with his colleagues asking for productivity to boost investments in this country.

We have offered significant deductions to businesses so they can invest in themselves and increase their productivity. That is the only way to make life more affordable. It will increase real wages compared to the cost of living over time, which is exactly what we are focused on. I do not know how the member opposite cannot recognize that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:32 p.m.)

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