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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk will be leading us in the singing of the national anthem today.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

PACIFIC SALMON

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, coastal communities are running out of time. Key federal fisheries programs that protect Pacific salmon and repair critical habitats are set to expire in March, and the federal government has still not confirmed their renewal. Communities cannot wait until the next budget for answers.

Across the coast of British Columbia, remarkable work is happening. First nations are leading salmon recovery and guardian programs. Local hatcheries and volunteer enhancement groups are restoring streams and rebuilding stocks. The salmon in the classroom program is educating thousands of students, and organizations such as Redd Fish Restoration Society and the Coastal Restoration Society are removing debris, protecting estuaries, and repairing damaged watersheds.

These leaders are showing what real stewardship looks like, but they cannot plan or expand their work without federal commitments. We cannot take our foot off the gas. The government must renew these programs now.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre—Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 29, the United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we reflect on the urgent need for justice, dignity and lasting peace. The people of Gaza are enduring what many international legal experts have identified

as a genocide, with unimaginable loss of life and suffering. In the West Bank, escalating settler violence continues to displace families and deepen fear and instability.

Canada and the international community must demand that the ceasefire be fully respected and that humanitarian aid reach those in need without any delay. Every person, Palestinian or Israeli, deserves to live in peace, security and freedom. Solidarity means action, upholding international law, protecting civilians and supporting a just political solution. We must not look away.

Today and every day, we stand for human rights and a future where all can live in safety and hope.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week, the owners of a small family-owned business in Newmarket—Aurora reached out to me. They have been serving our community of Bayview and Mulock for 50 years with no major theft or crime, but over the past two years, they have been hit so often that they have actually lost count. They have spoken to other businesses in the area and heard the same stories. The incidents are so frequent, their insurance will not even process their claims without threatening to drop them for being too high risk. They have added cameras and floodlights, and they have even considered barbed wire fencing just to protect what they own.

Every week, I hear from residents in Newmarket—Aurora who are telling me that they no longer feel safe. This is the reality under the Liberal soft-on-crime approach, where criminals are released on bail the very same day with no real consequences for their crimes.

To the people of Newmarket—Aurora, I see them. I hear them. I thank them for speaking up. Conservatives are committed to fighting for the legislation and the change that our communities need.

Statements by Members

● (1405)

GURU TEGH BAHADUR

Iqwinder Gaheer (Mississauga—Malton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when Hindu Brahmins from the Kashmir Valley faced persecution from Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, they sought refuge with the ninth Sikh guru, Tegh Bahadur, whose name means “brave with a sword”. Aurangzeb had offered them a cruel choice: abandon their faith or offer a great sacrifice. On hearing this, a young Gobind Rai, who would go on to become the 10th Sikh guru and who was the son of Tegh Bahadur, looked to his father and asked, “Father, what sacrifice could be greater than your own?”

With those words echoing in his heart and mind, Guru Tegh Bahadur set out for Delhi, with the faithful standing firm at his side. They accepted torture and death, but they did not bend and they did not yield. They stood unbroken in their own faith, and in so doing, they protected the faith of another. It is in memory of this that I rise today.

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FRAUD AGAINST SENIORS

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the alarming rise in scams targeting seniors is a growing concern in our communities, with a 300% increase in money being lost to scams since 2020. Across the country, criminals are preying on trust and vulnerability, and seniors are losing their life savings, money they worked for decades to earn.

In Cambridge and North Dumfries, I have heard heartbreaking stories of individuals who believed they were helping a loved one or paying a bill, only to discover they had been deceived. These scams get more sophisticated by the day and often leave victims feeling ashamed and isolated.

We must do more to educate and protect our seniors from these predators. That is why this Saturday morning I will be hosting a community town hall called “Inside the Scam Playbook”. It is focused on raising awareness and sharing practical steps for people to safeguard themselves and those they care about. Knowledge is the best defence. Understanding how these scams work before they happen can prevent devastating loss.

Together, we can stop these criminals and ensure that no one in our community faces this alone.

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*[Translation]***NATIONAL HOUSING DAY**

Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, November 22 was National Housing Day, reminding us of how essential housing is to everyone in Canada being able to have an affordable place to call home.

With Build Canada Homes, we will double the construction of housing, speed up building projects, build more sustainably and make housing affordable for families again. In my riding of Alfred-Pellan, these investments are already taking shape. Le Bleu will provide 149 housing units thanks to \$50.5 million in federal fund-

ing. With over \$11 million in funding, Habitation Bousquet will provide 26 housing units, nine of which are fully accessible

While we are delivering real results, let us remember that only six housing units were built when the Leader of the Opposition was the housing minister. We, on the other hand, have an ambitious plan, a real plan, that is already being implemented. With budget 2025, we are building a stronger Canada.

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*[English]***CHRISTMAS**

Lianne Rood (Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Christmas is the season of hope, a light that breaks through even the darkest of days. During this time, we remember the true meaning of this holy day: the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world. As scripture reminds us in John 1:5, “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

That promise is as real in Middlesex—London as it was in Bethlehem. This is the season to carry the light into our communities through kindness, generosity and cheerful giving. I thank everyone who brings warmth to our towns and villages: parade organizers, church choirs, first responders, volunteers and neighbours who show up quietly and faithfully. They make this season glow.

Let us keep the support going strong. Shop local to lift up our small businesses and, if able, pick up an extra item for our community food bank so that no one is left out in the cold. Every act of compassion, large or small, is an example of Christ.

I wish a merry Christmas from my family to all families. May the peace of Jesus Christ guard their hearts and homes, and may God bless them in the year ahead.

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● (1410)

SLEDGE HOCKEY IN KITCHENER—CONESTOGA

Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an incredible achievement by the Woolwich Thrashers sledge hockey team. At the recent Cruisers Cup tournament, our junior Thrashers struck gold, going undefeated and capping it off with a 4–0 shutout in the finals. Their determination, teamwork and heart were on full display, with Wilder Sutter-Ruston scoring all four goals and goalie Hadley Deckert earning a flawless shutout.

Not to be outdone, the Thrashers’ men and women mixed open team battled through tough competition to claim bronze in their division. From start to finish, these athletes showed resilience, skill and sportsmanship, qualities that make our community proud. I send my congratulations to the players, the coaches and families. Their hard work and spirit inspire us all.

Go, Woolwich Thrashers!

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[Translation]

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FÉDÉRATION DES COMMUNAUTÉS FRANCOPHONES ET ACADIENNE DU CANADA

Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we are celebrating a milestone. We are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, or the FCFA.

Our communities came together to ensure they had national representation. Hundreds of men and women continue to stand up for francophones, their rights and their interests across Canada. The FCFA supports cultural vitality and helps to build resilient, proud and deeply committed communities. This half-century reminds us of everything the FCFA has accomplished, but also of what remains to be done.

Together let us continue to protect, advance and promote Canada's francophonie for future generations.

Congratulations to the FCFA for 50 years of commitment to advancing the francophonie, since it is important and vital to maintain the distinct character of our country, namely French-English bilingualism. I would like to thank everyone who keeps our French language alive every day. Let us keep fighting.

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40TH ANNIVERSARY OF LES RELEVAILLES DE MONTREAL CENTRE

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to recognize the 40th anniversary of Les Relevailles de Montréal centre in La Pointe-de-l'Île. Since 1985, this centre has supported 15,000 families as they transition to parenthood and through their journey of parenting a child from birth to age 2. The centre provides training, support services, in-home respite care and prenatal and postnatal activities in Montreal East. The centre shares its expertise with parents and professionals throughout the greater Montreal area, and even abroad.

I want to commend the executive director, Josée Lapratte, the president, Martine Alary, and the entire Relevailles team. Every day, their respectful work with parents helps support children so that they can reach their full potential and become successful citizens, ready to contribute to the Quebec of tomorrow.

I wish them a happy 40th anniversary. Three cheers for Les Relevailles!

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[English]

MAYOR OF MILTON

Kristina Tesser Derksen (Milton East—Halton Hills South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, hear ye, hear ye: Mayor Gordon Krantz of the town of Milton is celebrating his 60th year of elected office. First elected as municipal councillor in 1965 and then as mayor when I

Statements by Members

was just two years old, Mayor Krantz is Canada's longest-serving mayor, having served under 10 prime ministers.

Mayor Krantz has guided Milton through four decades of managing growth and modernization. His leadership, vision and commitment have positioned Milton as one of the most educated, most diverse and most dynamic communities in the country. I have the distinct honour of having served as one of Mayor Krantz' municipal councillors, which was my first elected office in 2018. Whether it is playing cards on Sunday afternoons at Branch 136 of the Legion or capturing the moment cutting the ribbon at a new business, Mayor Gord is quintessentially Milton.

I congratulate Mayor Krantz and his family on this incredible milestone, a testament to the power of public service that stands the test of time.

* * *

COST OF FOOD

Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, food costs are rising 40% faster in Canada than in the United States, and families in Essex are feeling the pressure. My riding is one of Ontario's most productive agriculture regions, but after 10 years of a Liberal government, the Canadians who produce our food are struggling to pay for it.

Farmers have been clear: Scrap the industrial carbon tax. Instead, the Liberals continue to drive up the price of fertilizer and farm equipment, making it harder for farmers to grow, ship and sell food. When 80.6% of Canadians say that food is their top expense pressure, the government should listen and take action by cutting hidden taxes to bring down costs and make life affordable for families.

Unlike the Prime Minister, who says, "Who cares?" to Canadians, I, along with my Conservative colleagues, care about the families of Essex

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● (1415)

YUKON

Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this fall season brings fresh momentum, new opportunities and renewed energy to the Yukon.

Just last week at Yukon's annual Geoscience meeting, the mood in the room could not have been more positive. Members may ask why. It is because budget 2025 is replete with investments in the north, like the \$1-billion Arctic infrastructure fund, the \$2-billion critical mineral sovereign fund and the expanded critical mineral exploration tax credit. Add to those our government's ambitious Build Canada Homes to ensure that northerners have access to homes they can afford, and so much more.

With the recent referral of the Yukon-B.C. grid connect to the Major Projects Office, we are also setting the stage for the longer term. We know how important clean power is to realize the full potential of Canada's northwest, including the Yukon.

Oral Questions

Before closing, I send congratulations to newly elected premier, Currie Dixon, and his cabinet staff, who were just sworn in on Saturday. I know we will all be working together on priorities and opportunities for the Yukon.

Let us keep Yukon strong and Canada strong.

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EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian taxpayer is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on the European Space Agency. Canadians could be expected to wonder why so much of their money is being spent on the European Space Agency and its private corporation, Harwell, but do not worry, we know the answer, which is that 50% of the Harwell Science and Innovation facility is owned by Brookfield. That explains it.

As always under the Liberal government, if it benefits Brookfield, it happens, but as with so many other projects, from timber to pipelines, if it does not benefit Brookfield, then it goes nowhere.

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FOREST HILL ELEMENTARY

Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for 158 years, Canadians have elected members of Parliament. They have travelled to Ottawa to take their seats in these chairs and make decisions that have helped build the greatest country in the world.

Today it was an honour to turn that work over, if only temporarily, to bright and inspiring grade 6 students from Forest Hill Elementary in Saint-Lazare.

Under the guidance of Principal Larente, dedicated teachers and volunteer parents, 106 students took their seats to become MPs for the day. They shared what Canada meant to them and what issues were most important, and they were proud to share ideas on how to build an even better Canada in the years ahead. The discussion was insightful, and it served as a reminder of our true purpose in this place: to leave a better Canada for our children than the one we inherited.

I want to sincerely thank the Forest Hill teachers and students who joined me today. This is their House; their ideas, energy and thoughtfulness are always welcome here.

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LEADERSHIP

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning at a multi-party parliamentary prayer breakfast, I shared from Mark 4:35 and the moment when the disciples, caught in a violent storm, cried out to Jesus, “don’t you care”. These were experienced fishermen, but even they were overwhelmed by the winds and the waves.

Today, many Canadians feel the same. They see economic uncertainty, rising unemployment, social tensions, immigration pressures and new tariffs creating instability in their lives. The storms are real, and people are looking to their leaders for reassurance and re-

sults, not indifference. When the Prime Minister promises Canadians a deal on tariffs, a response of “Who cares?” is exactly what the people fear in the middle of an economic storm.

In turbulent times, leadership is not just about expertise; leadership begins with compassion, the willingness to see the storm that others are facing and the courage to stand with them in it.

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SOCIAL HEALTH

Vince Gasparro (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a world full of noise, sometimes the most powerful thing we can do is simply talk to one another.

I recently met with Pete Bombaci, a constituent of mine in Eglinton—Lawrence and an advocate for Genwell, Canada’s human connection movement. Genwell champions social health, the idea that our relationships, connections and interconnections with one another are essential not only to our mental and physical well-being but also to the health of our society.

This week is talk to a stranger week, and I want to encourage Canadians to take a moment to look up from their phones and start a conversation with someone new. We never know the difference a simple hello can make.

ORAL QUESTIONS

● (1420)

[Translation]

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, “Who cares?”

The Prime Minister promised to negotiate a victory before July 21. Since then, there has been no deal, no victory. The Americans have doubled tariffs, yet the Prime Minister made concessions by eliminating countertariffs, scrapping the digital services tax and backing down on softwood lumber litigation. He got only one thing in return: an \$80-billion contract for Brookfield from President Trump.

Is the money for his company the victory he promised to negotiate?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King’s Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that Canadians did not trust his judgment when it came to standing up to President Trump and not signing an agreement that was in the interests of the United States.

What did we do? We worked with the United States to find an agreement that will be in the interests of Canadian industries and workers. At the same time, we are taking more measures to support Canadian workers and industries, even today.

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[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do we want the good news, or the bad news? Well, in these times I guess we will have to start with the good news; it is all we have. The good news is that David Eby, the Premier of B.C., has absolutely no constitutional authority to block a pipeline. The bad news is that the Prime Minister does. Under paragraph 92(10)(a) of the British North America Act, works between provinces are exclusively the federal government's responsibility.

Will the Prime Minister stop hiding behind the powerless premier, get out of the way and approve a pipeline to the Pacific today?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would invite the member opposite to buy a ticket to Calgary tomorrow to see how a federal government works with a provincial government to build Canada strong.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Prime Minister will wave around in the air a worthless piece of paper that he says the Premier of B.C. can veto anytime he wants. Here is the political problem he has: Canadians want a pipeline. They know it is the best way to get our resources to market, going around the United States of America, but his "keep it in the ground" caucus is standing in the way.

Why does the Prime Minister not stand up to the U.S.A. and stand up for Canada?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maybe the member opposite should explain to his constituents why the Premier of Alberta wants to stand beside our Prime Minister and talk about how to build Canada strong.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister claimed he did not have the power to approve a pipeline. Well, too bad for him; the Constitution is public. Paragraph 92(10)(a) says it is exclusively a federal responsibility. He happens to be the Prime Minister, and he asked us to pass emergency legal powers in Bill C-5 to give him the personal authority to overturn any regulation in order to get the project done.

In other words, the government has the exclusive power; the Prime Minister has the exclusive legal authority. Will he match that authority with responsibility and approve a pipeline to the Pacific today?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister is doing is leading. He is leading on building national projects. He is leading on building port capacity. He is leading on making Canadian steel, lumber, aluminum and various other commodities more available for homes and big projects, to put unionized people, men and women from every part

Oral Questions

of this country, to work building our great country. This is what the Prime Minister is doing. He is leading.

What is the leader of the opposition doing?

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what am I doing? I am standing in the House of Commons. Where is Waldo? He is hiding. We know he is in Ottawa today. We know he is in the—

The Speaker: We are so close to the line there that we are actually stepping over it.

The hon. opposition leader can continue, but maybe in a different vein.

● (1425)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I think we are finding out that if one is not there, one does not care.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister said "who cares" that Canadian workers are losing their jobs, because he broke his promise to get a deal. We care. Why does he not show up and prove he does too?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would invite the member opposite to buy a ticket and come to Calgary tomorrow to see who cares.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have gone from elbows up to "Who cares?" under the Prime Minister. Do members remember when he said he would negotiate a win and would get a deal by July 21? There is still no win and still no deal. He has made concession after concession. He backed down on countertariffs, on the digital services tax and on the legal action against softwood lumber, and he got nothing in return.

He got one thing. Brookfield, his company, got \$80 billion in contracts hand-signed by the President just 20 days after the two met.

Is that what he meant when he said he would negotiate a win with Trump?

Oral Questions

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know it is an inconvenient truth for the Leader of the Opposition that Canada, right now today, has the best deal of any trading partner of the United States, but do members know what? It is not good enough for Canadian workers and it is not good enough for Canadian businesses.

Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, who would have signed any bad deal put in front of him, the Prime Minister did not do that. We said we would do the work to support Canadian workers and Canadian industries and that we would buy Canadian, be our own best customer and then negotiate a good deal with the United States.

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[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in 1995, a Liberal prime minister pulled a fast one on Quebec by cheating, lying and hiding.

In 2025, is another Liberal Prime Minister pulling another fast one on the provinces and Quebec? He was elected on a platform of tariffs and trade, which he is now using to force an oil agenda onto the backs of Quebec and the provinces to the benefit of American shareholders and himself.

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want every Canadian and certainly every Quebecker to know that I am not focused on past squabbles. I am fully focused on ensuring that our immigration system remains strong and attracts the best talent in the world for Quebec and Canada.

What is more, under the Canada-Quebec Accord, Quebec selects its permanent immigrants.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will need to be more specific in my question. I want to ask the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture, a former executive of Equiterre, this question.

Is he comfortable with the Prime Minister's focus, which involves weakening international relations, flouting Canada's laws and regulations, and siphoning money from Quebec and Canadians, all for an oil agenda that is detrimental to the climate?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois leader's question might be more relevant if he had not authorized drilling on Anticosti Island, right in the middle of the St. Lawrence River, and if he had not allowed the reversal of pipeline 9B, which means that 50% of Alberta's oil is now being consumed in Quebec thanks to the leader of the Bloc Québécois. We applaud him for that.

What is more, his speech might be a little more relevant if, during our budget negotiations, the Bloc Québécois had proposed a single measure to protect the environment. I am not talking about two, three or even four measures, just one. The members of the

Bloc Québécois did not do that. They did not put forward any proposals for environmental protection as part of—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beloil—Chambly.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, had we proposed an environmental measure, at least there would have been one in the budget.

Will the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture, the former environment minister and a Quebecker who served as a member of the Liberal caucus under Justin Trudeau, solemnly assure Quebeckers and the people of British Columbia, on his honour as an environmentalist who scaled towers in Ontario, that no project will move forward in Quebec or British Columbia without the free consent of the province affected and indigenous people, and social licence?

• (1430)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes.

* * *

QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning, we learned from La Presse that the Liberal member for Laval—Les Îles denies being involved in the Quebec Liberal Party leadership campaign even though he was in possession of a certificate authorizing him to solicit—

The Speaker: Is the hon. member aware that his question has to be related to government business?

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I think it is pretty clear that this question pertains to a member of Parliament who is sitting across from me. I think it is relevant.

Now, the question is clear: Can the Prime Minister guarantee that no member of the Liberal caucus broke federal or provincial laws?

The Speaker: I do not see how the question relates to a federal government policy. It is about provincial laws. Quite frankly, I am not sure I can allow this question.

The member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles has the floor to try again.

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, we are here to talk about compliance with federal laws and, on that point, it is important to recall the facts. The former parliamentary leader of the Liberal Party of Quebec, Marwah Rizqy, told Pablo Rodriguez that there was some Liberal “funny business” going on in Ottawa.

The Speaker: I think we are going too far here. We are talking about hearsay that has not been proven. It has nothing to do with the government's policies. Therefore, I cannot allow this question.

Oral Questions

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, after all this “funny business”, we see that the Liberals want to cover it up. That being said—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Barrie South—Innisfil.

* * *

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says Canadians need to sacrifice more and accept a lower standard of living and quality of life, while he says “Who cares?” about critical trade talks with the U.S., acting more like an advance team for Brookfield than standing up for Canadians. Everywhere he goes, a deal for Brookfield follows while tariffs stay in place or go up.

We learned this week that the Prime Minister stands to make millions in bonuses from Brookfield's success. Why does the Prime Minister have his elbows up for himself and his Brookfield buddies, but says “Who cares?” about Canadian businesses and working families affected by tariffs?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since this Prime Minister took office, that is exactly what he has done. In fact, we stood up for Canadian companies and workers all across this country. In just a few minutes, the Prime Minister will do it again. He will stand up for Canadian companies, lumber companies, steel companies and their hard-working union members, who are fighting so hard to protect the economy of their regions.

Why do the Conservatives not get on board and fight for Canadian families instead of for themselves?

* * *

ETHICS

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he shrugs off critical trade talks with a smug “Who cares?” Here is something he cannot shrug off that everyone should care about.

Despite the conflict of interest and ethics screen he has on Brookfield, we found out this week that the Prime Minister met with Brookfield executives behind closed doors in his office in October, proving that his ethics screen is more like a smokescreen. The Prime Minister and Brookfield stand to gain millions from his policies. He knows he cannot have any contact with those at Brookfield, but he met with them anyway.

Why would he meet with Brookfield knowing he is barred from having any contact with it?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, in a few minutes, will be doing his job. He will be standing up for steelworkers. Every infrastructure project in this country depends on one thing: strong Canadian steel and the workers who produce it.

We are strengthening our steel industry and standing by our steelworkers. We are investing in our workers. The Conservatives are investing in division.

• (1435)

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has backed down on countertariffs, he has backed down on the legal challenge against the softwood lumber tariffs and he is saying, “Who cares?” Canadians thought that he got nothing in his negotiations. It turns out that he just got nothing for Canadians. After his last trip to the White House, he got an \$80-billion nuclear deal for his company Brookfield, which will see the Prime Minister's own personal investments increase in value.

Why is the Prime Minister trading our national interests for his own personal financial interests?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is standing up today for workers across Canada and for building affordable housing across Canada with BC Wood. He is standing up to reduce transportation costs across the country so BC Wood can build homes across Canada and to bring steel from central Canada to the east and west more affordably.

The Prime Minister is standing up for Canadians today and we stand with him.

Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands—Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not standing up; he is backing down, like he did on countertariffs and like he did on the legal challenge for illegal softwood lumber tariffs.

It gets worse when it comes to the Prime Minister's record on Brookfield. We learned that the Liberals gave \$500 million to the European Space Agency last week. Guess who owns 50% of the agency's site where the funds are going. It is none other than the Prime Minister's company, Brookfield. Again, he is seeing his own personal profits increase at the expense of Canadians: at the expense of Canadian investment and Canadian jobs.

Why will the Prime Minister not put Canadians ahead of his own financial interests for once?

Oral Questions

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in a trade war. While the members opposite engage in conspiracy theories, our Prime Minister will stand up later today and announce major new supports for the forest products industry, on top of the \$1.2 billion we have already announced. That is how we stand up for Canada.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister talked a big game during the election, but he has since failed to deliver on a U.S. trade deal. He has backed down on every Trump demand, from the digital services tax to countertariffs to softwood lumber. He has delivered exactly zero results for Canadians on the U.S. trade war. To be fair, he is seeing some results with his Brookfield shares, with the Americans coincidentally signing an \$80-billion nuclear deal with his company a mere two weeks after his last U.S. visit.

Why is it that under the current Prime Minister his financial investments are doing so well but Canadian workers are being left behind?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservative leader is busy writing letters and debating himself, we are taking action to support the Canadian steel and lumber industries and workers.

We have great news. This afternoon, we will introduce and announce new measures to further limit foreign steel imports to ensure that Canadian steel products and producers have better access to the domestic market, to become our own best customer by building big with Canadian steel and Canadian lumber and to increase protections for Canadian steel and lumber workers and businesses so they can adapt and thrive in this new global landscape.

I urge the Conservative leader to tune in, get behind these measures and support the—

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Repentigny.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals want a second dirty oil pipeline in western Canada. Even after Trans Mountain, they still want more. This has nothing to do with Donald Trump. They want to sell more dirty oil to Asia. Thanks to Bill C-5, this pipeline will circumvent environmental laws. The pipeline would fill oil tankers that would illegally pass through the heart of a marine protected area.

If there is a single Liberal who still has a shred of conscience, when will he or she stand up and admit that this is nonsense?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I did yesterday, I would like to talk about the projects that our government is putting forward to build Canada strong.

Here is an example from Quebec. The Nouveau Monde Graphite project in Saint-Michel-des-Saints will supply essential components for electric vehicle batteries and energy storage systems. We have

other projects like this one, but for every project brought forward, we will respect provincial jurisdictions and indigenous rights.

• (1440)

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, clearly, they are ashamed. Every time we raise their new pipeline for dirty oil with the Liberals, all they do is talk around the subject. They know it is catastrophic for the climate. They know it is disastrous for biodiversity. They also know that it has the potential to become an economic and financial fiasco, like Trans Mountain.

Tomorrow, they are going to watch their Prime Minister grin alongside Danielle Smith as they announce a pipeline that no one on their side wants to defend. We can see their shame.

The real question is this: Do they know that they are right to feel ashamed?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we are very proud to contribute to building this country and creating opportunities across Canada through renewable energy projects practically nationwide and through major projects like the mine that my colleague just mentioned.

Between the Bloc Québécois, which wants to destroy our economy, and the Conservative Party, which wants to open the floodgates and destroy everyone in its path, the Liberal Party and the Liberal government, as always, find the proper balance.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to keep his elbows up. After failing to reach an agreement on tariffs with the United States he said, "Who cares?" He backed down on the digital services tax, on retaliatory tariffs and on trade action over softwood lumber. We thought he had achieved nothing, but in reality, he just achieved nothing for Canadians.

Then the Americans signed an \$80-billion nuclear deal with the Prime Minister's company, Brookfield. We know that when Brookfield makes money, the Prime Minister gets richer.

Why is the Prime Minister sacrificing the interests of Quebecers and Canadians for his own personal gain?

Oral Questions

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister makes a decision, it is in the interest of all Canadians. That is why we have made several trips abroad, which the Conservatives are not big fans of, to secure investments. That is why there will be a very important announcement this afternoon. I advise my colleagues to pay attention, because there will be announcements regarding lumber and steel, to support our industry and our economy.

That is what we are doing every day.

* * *

ETHICS

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the conflicts of interest involving Brookfield are not easy to manage. The Clerk of the Privy Council said that it practically required full-time teams to manage the Prime Minister's conflicts of interest. The Clerk even sold his own shares in Brookfield to focus on doing his job properly. The Prime Minister's chief of staff revealed that he has to speak to the Ethics Commissioner every day to ensure that everything is on track.

Tariffs go up every time the Prime Minister leaves the country because he is unable to negotiate on behalf of Canadians. What is more, it takes dozens of people to manage his conflicts of interest. Could he at least follow Mr. Sabia's lead and sell his shares to stop being in conflict of interest every day?

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every time the Prime Minister leaves the country it is to drum up contracts with other allies and to find new markets and new clients for our products. Canada has what the world wants and we will have partners to work with.

The Conservatives pretend to not understand that, but they do understand. I am very sad to see the petty games they are playing. They understand full well, but they do not want to understand.

* * *

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to trade with the Americans, the Prime Minister went from "elbows up" to "Who cares?" He backed down on countertariffs and on legal challenges to softwood lumber, but he got nothing in return when he went to Washington in October; well, he got nothing for Canadians. Days later, the Americans signed an \$80-billion nuclear deal with the Prime Minister's company, Brookfield.

When is the Prime Minister going to get a deal for Canadians, not just a deal for himself and his company?

• (1445)

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, "Conservatives care" is like an oxymoron or some pathetic joke, because we know those two terms are like oil and water; they just do not mix.

Who cares? Our government cares. We are the ones standing up for our industry. We are making more announcements today. The Prime Minister is stepping up with increased protections for our domestic market, with new support for our industries and workers in steel and softwood lumber and additional commitments to buy Canadian, so we ensure that our workers and industries will thrive for generations to come.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been reported that the government's MOU with Alberta includes a multi-billion dollar investment in carbon capture with Pathways Alliance. The premier carbon capture company connected with Pathways Alliance is none other than Entropy, which is owned by none other than Brookfield.

Is the reason it has taken the government so long to get a deal with Alberta that the Prime Minister has been busy getting a deal for Brookfield?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hate to break up the Conservatives' conspiracy theory, but Pathways is actually owned by six large oil companies, not Entropy.

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the very Brookfield fund that the Prime Minister stands to make millions of dollars from in future bonus pay invested \$300 million in Entropy. In the face of that, can the government provide the assurance that the deal negotiated by the Prime Minister will in no way benefit Entropy and, by extension, the Prime Minister's financial portfolio?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here we go again with conspiracy theories. We are focused on building Canada. We are focused on working with Alberta to grow our natural resources in a responsible way in consultation with first nations. That is how we build, not with conspiracy theories.

* * *

YOUTH

Fares Al Soud (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, young Canadians are ambitious and ready to build Canada's future. Budget 2025 makes generational investments in youth, from Canada summer jobs and the student work experience program to expanded training and apprenticeship opportunities. These are not short-term fixes; they are building blocks for a lifetime of success. While the opposition talks about cuts, this government is investing in the next generation.

Oral Questions

Could my good friend and colleague, the Minister of Jobs and Families, tell us how these programs turn ambition into opportunity for youth across Canada?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to meet with youth from across the country about the investments we are making in budget 2025: \$1.5 billion for youth skills and training. However, there is a very specific program. I met with some members of youth from that member's riding, who talked about their excitement and enthusiasm about seeing the youth climate corps in this budget.

Youth are worried about the climate, and now they have something to look forward to: participating in a program that allows them to use their skills and get paid for them.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, Canadians are finding out that the Prime Minister is all sizzle and no steak. It turns out that his big pipeline announcement will not actually build a pipeline. He is going to have a meeting to set up a plan and then sign a piece of paper that talks about maybe one day putting shovels in the ground. Now he is handing veto power to the NDP in British Columbia, allowing it to block the whole thing.

The Prime Minister is in Ottawa. We know he is having trouble with his own caucus on this issue, and now he is ducking the only question that Canadians have: Was yesterday the start of a real pipeline or just the latest episode of “announce now and deliver never”?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would invite that member to get a ticket to Calgary tomorrow as well, and they can see why the Premier of Alberta thinks that things have never been so good in Canada.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was not the Liberals' answer yesterday. In fact, that is not what the government said at all when it gave B.C. the veto in this House. Maybe the Liberals need to brush up on the Constitution, because section 92 explicitly gives them the power to build pipelines, whether David Eby likes it or not. He also got the legal authority from this House when the Liberals asked us to pass Bill C-5 to circumvent their own regulations, and the only thing holding them back now is the same gutless paralysis that has kept our oil buried and Canadians with less money over the last 10 years.

Instead of hiding behind the premiers, will the Prime Minister get up and announce that he is going to build a pipeline?

● (1450)

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives seem determined not to want to see any development in this country. What we understand is that it is federal government jurisdiction to approve a pipeline. We also understand that if a proponent wants to take it to the Major Projects Office, we expect them to work in conjunction with the affected jurisdiction and to consult first nations. The Pre-

mier of Alberta understands that; unfortunately, the members of the opposition do not.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is all set to stage a fake pipeline photo op. What he will probably do is hand the veto power to kill that pipeline to the B.C. premier so that he does not have to do it himself. Subsection 92(10) of the Constitution says that the federal government has the sole power to approve inter-provincial projects and get shovels in the ground.

The only person blocking the pipeline today is the Prime Minister. Will he stand up today and commit to repealing the tanker ban, axing the industrial carbon tax and actually getting this oil pipeline built?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we learned, in the course of the last election campaign, that the Leader of the Opposition had in fact never spoken to the Progressive Conservative Premier of Ontario, Mr. Ford. Now, I know the Leader of the Opposition to be someone who will look back, maybe looks back too often, but he looks backwards. He will want to learn from that mistake, and I really suggest he not make that mistake again with the Premier of Alberta.

The Leader of the Opposition should please call Danielle Smith.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with the amount of hot air coming out of that member's mouth, I am surprised the Liberals have not slapped a carbon tax on it. That answer was as fake as the Prime Minister's promises. Tomorrow, he will make this grand show and pretend that he wants to get a pipeline built, but he will hide behind someone else and get them to cancel it so that he does not have to do it himself.

The only person who can get this pipeline approved is the Prime Minister. Does the pipeline need to be sponsored by Brookfield so that it actually gets built?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, that plane is going to get pretty full. I invite the member across to buy a ticket and come to Calgary to see how the federal government can work with a provincial government to build Canada strong.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister promised to build Canada strong, yet when it comes to a pipeline to the coast of B.C., a pipeline that could end the U.S. monopoly on Canadian oil and bring billions of dollars into Canada, he transforms into a helpless bystander, hiding behind the NDP premier in B.C., ceding responsibility and abdicating leadership.

Oral Questions

The Constitution is clear: National pipelines are the sole jurisdiction of the federal government. Failing to act is a betrayal of our national interests; it is a betrayal of our workers, and it is selling out to the Americans. Will they build the pipeline, yes or no?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today there is good news for the many companies around the country that are working so hard to stay in business in the middle of this trade war. Whether it is steel or whether it is lumber, we have their backs. Today, we are going to talk more about what else we can do, not only to make sure that we protect these companies but to help them grow their footprint, to sell their product to Canada and around the world.

These guys cannot get their heads out of the sand for the sake of the companies right now who need our support. We will do that work.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, maybe if Brookfield proposed a pipeline we could actually get one backed by this Prime Minister.

Let us be clear: a majority of Canadians support this pipeline. A majority of British Columbians support this pipeline. As long as the world needs these resources, as long as the world needs oil and gas, until that last barrel comes out of the ground, as much of those resources as possible should come from right here in Canada.

Why will the government not take up its mantle of leadership, deliver on what it promised and get this pipeline built?

• (1455)

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, here is a news flash: We are in a trade war.

We are in a trade war, and we do not get to choose the attitude and the response of other countries. We get to choose what we do in response to protect our industries here in Canada.

Tariff-impacted industries across Canada know that this government is standing up to protect their interests at every step along the way. Whether the Prime Minister is overseas securing new investments to open up other markets or whether he is offering new liquidity support and a package to help their businesses get through challenging times, we are steadfast in supporting Canadians.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on a pipeline to the Pacific, the Prime Minister finds himself in a dilemma of his own making. He, his ministers and his MPs say one thing in British Columbia and another in Alberta, and now he is perched squarely on the fence.

Under subsection 92(10) of the Constitution, the decision is his government's alone, so will he side with the national interest to build a new pipeline, or will he bow to President Trump and keep us supplicant to American interests instead of diversifying our energy exports?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maybe we should come at this another way. The member is a British Columbia member. Is he really suggesting, even given the constituents he represents from first nations, that the Government of Canada, without the consent of the Province of British Columbia and without consultation with first nations, is in a position to do that?

I think he does not really mean that. He has not thought this through, and I think the member, once he does, will come back here and agree that the Government of Canada is pursuing the right path.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I note the arrogance of that answer. He has not spoken to my constituents like I have on this issue.

Right now, the only thing that is crossing provincial borders is this Prime Minister's indecision. A pizza shop is more productive than the Prime Minister because at least it knows what business it is in and knows it needs to deliver in a competitive marketplace.

Subsection 92(10) is clear. The power to act is his, so will the Prime Minister stop hiding behind premiers and process? Will he finally stand up for Canada, repeal the shipping ban, axe the industrial carbon tax and build a new pipeline to the Pacific that is in the national interest?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we want to thank our colleague in the Conservative Party for that manufactured indignation. We want to remind him and his colleagues in the Conservative Party that our government made a commitment to Canadians in the last election. It was an election campaign that perhaps they would prefer to forget. We made a commitment to build the Canadian economy the right way and to build major projects again in a way that respects environmental commitments and our obligations to indigenous peoples, working with provinces and territories.

They do not like it. We like it, and we are proud to continue to do it.

David McKenzie (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has stated that he wants to make Canada an energy superpower. Well, here is the good news. The Prime Minister has the power to approve—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I could see that coming. In the business, it is called an applause line.

The member may start from the top.

Oral Questions

David McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has stated that he wants to make Canada an energy superpower. Well, here is the good news. The Prime Minister has the power to approve a pipeline to the B.C. coast.

Subsection 92(10) of our Constitution gives the Prime Minister jurisdiction over interprovincial projects like pipelines, not premiers. Will he stop passing the buck and approve an oil pipeline to the coast so that we can get this nation-building pipeline built?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister so far has referred \$117 billion of projects to the MPO. Maybe the member can join us tomorrow in Calgary and see how this government, with the provinces, is building Canada strong.

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● (1500)

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week, as we begin the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, and with today marking Economic Abuse Awareness Day, we are reminded of the countless women, children and families whose lives have been forever changed by abuse, and we are reminded that this violence does not always leave visible scars. It is often hidden behind closed doors, taking the form of control, isolation and economic abuse that can trap someone in a dangerous situation.

Could the Minister of Women and Gender Equality speak to how our government is working to recognize and combat economic abuse and to support those who are living through this painful and often invisible form of violence?

Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we mark the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, we recognize the women who built this movement and the work that lies ahead.

On Economic Abuse Awareness Day, we recognize that gender-based violence can be physical, emotional and psychological. That is why in our budget, we committed to working with financial institutions on a code of conduct to prevent economic abuse, helping them identify it and intervene safely. We will keep working together to end gender-based violence so women can live safely and free from fear.

It is unfortunate the members opposite voted against this very measure.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister was asked this weekend whether he had spoken to Trump about trade, he said, “Who cares?” Apparently, there is not a “burning issue”. Well, Conservatives care, and so do the thousands of Oshawa auto workers at the GM assembly plant who are losing their jobs because of the trade war.

How can the Prime Minister look Oshawa auto workers in the eye and tell them he does not care and that their jobs do not matter?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is great news for the Conservatives. We care. This afternoon, we are going to announce new measures to further limit foreign steel imports to ensure that Canadian steel products have better access to the domestic market, to become our own best customer by building big with Canadian steel and Canadian lumber and to increase protections for Canadian steel and lumber workers and businesses so they can adapt and thrive in this new global landscape.

The Conservative leader only cares about himself and squashing a caucus revolt.

The Speaker: We have unfettered freedom of speech in this chamber, and I recognize that, but I think both sides have to refrain from provocation. I think that can lead to disorder, which is unparliamentary.

The hon. member for Oshawa.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that instead of negotiating deals for Canadian auto workers, what the Prime Minister cares about is being more interested in negotiating deals for Brookfield. Oshawa is set to lose thousands of jobs this January, even though the Prime Minister promised to negotiate a win.

This is a burning issue for Oshawa auto workers, so why is it not a burning issue for the Prime Minister?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that I just recently met with those at Unifor Local 222, the local chapter at the GM Oshawa plant, and they are happy with what our government is doing to support them. They have said that no deal is better than a bad deal. They have acknowledged our remissions framework and how we have adjusted it, and they are looking to us for leadership and more support. That is exactly what the Prime Minister is announcing later today for tariff-impacted industries.

Our government stands steadfast and strong in support of our workers all across Canada. We will not stand down and we will not take any lessons from the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight months, the Prime Minister has gone from elbows up to “Who cares?” when it comes to trade issues with the United States. These comments spark concern in my community, particularly with the thousands of current and former GM workers in St. Catharines who worry about the future of their auto plant. GM has been in St. Catharines since 1929. I can say that Conservatives care, Canadians care and the workers at these plants who depend on these jobs care.

What is it going to take? Does Brookfield have to buy General Motors for the Liberal Prime Minister to finally care?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were elected on a plan to build big. I have met with auto workers from across the country, and they know that we have their backs. In a few minutes, the Prime Minister will be announcing more supports for the auto sector and more supports for the steel industry because we have their backs.

More than that, we are building big. We are going to build projects in the national interest and homes, with skills that workers will use to build across this country. Will the Conservatives get on board?

* * *

● (1505)

TRANSPORTATION

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 2011, the Harper Conservative government created the conditions for Driver Inc., an illegal scheme where trucking companies misclassify drivers as independent contractors to avoid paying payroll taxes. This has hurt workers, distorted competition in the market and deprived the federal government of important revenue that it should be able to use to invest in Canadians.

In budget 2025, our new Liberal government took action to end this scheme. Can the Secretary of State for the CRA please inform the House of the measures our government has taken to end Driver Inc.?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this historic budget, we are investing new resources to restore fairness to Canada's trucking industry after the Conservative Party broke it. We will lift the moratorium on penalties for unreported fees for service, launch a dedicated compliance program and expand information sharing with Employment and Social Development Canada. These measures will end the illegal Drivers Inc. scheme and level the playing field for companies that follow the law.

The Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois both voted against budget 2025. It is a shame that they did not support tax fairness—

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Oral Questions

EMPLOYMENT

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know that the Prime Minister is very familiar with Brookfield, but is he familiar with Paccar?

Paccar is truck manufacturing company in Boisbriand that has been around for decades. As we speak, 300 workers at Paccar are losing their jobs. Parents, men and women, are losing their jobs, basically because of the new tariffs Trump has imposed since the Prime Minister took office.

I understand that Paccar is no Brookfield, but could the Prime Minister go see the workers at Paccar and tell them what he said recently, “Who cares?”

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rather surprised that the member would phrase his question that way.

Yes, we are in the midst of a trade war.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Carlos Leitão: Are you surprised by that?

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we keep our cool and not just sign any old contract with the United States.

With regard to Paccar, we are in contact with the company. We will find solutions by also working with the Government of Quebec.

The Speaker: I would remind the member to address his comments through the Chair.

The hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

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[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before he was elected, the Prime Minister claimed to care about the climate crisis and protecting our lands and waters. B.C. Liberal MPs all said they supported the tanker ban in northern B.C. Now we see them stealing pages from the Conservative playbook. Without consulting the Premier of British Columbia or first nations, Liberals are reversing 50 years of protection for sensitive coastal waters, overriding the law and risking billions of dollars of economic activity.

Why are Liberals sacrificing the B.C. coast and betraying the voters who sent them here?

Tributes

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our Prime Minister was very clear yesterday, and it is important to highlight that we will make sure, with any of the major projects that move forward, that we work with affected jurisdictions. That means all of the provinces. We will work with indigenous rights holders, respecting their positions and their rights.

We will make sure we continue to build Canada as a strong country, with a strong future for our country, and we will make sure we do it well.

[*Translation*]

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. With all due respect, you prevented me from asking questions about government operations. With your permission, I will ask my question.

• (1510)

The Speaker: Your question had nothing to do with government operations. It had to do with a provincial election law and hearsay. It has nothing to do with the federal government's policies or programs.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière.

Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, twice today you have prevented a member from continuing during the period of—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Luc Berthold: I would ask that I be allowed to finish. It will not take too long. Twice now, Mr. Speaker, you have prevented the member from finishing his questions and comments when he actually had questions for the government.

The Speaker: I did so with good reason. I feel for the member. These things happen sometimes.

The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, with all due respect, I would like to say that we still have the right, in our opinion, to take information that is in the credible news media, like CBC/Radio-Canada and TVA, and bring it to the House to ask legitimate questions.

The Speaker: In my opinion, it was not a question that had to do with the policies or programs of the federal government or cabinet. That is why I did not allow the question.

The hon. member is rising on another point of order.

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion: That, for the duration of the tribute that will be paid to him in a few moments, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak be allowed to sit in the seat of the member for Mirabel.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak may sit in another seat.

[*English*]

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

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could clarify the rules around a question, 30 seconds in duration, that begins with a preamble that may seem unrelated to government business but that concludes on a matter that is related to government business. In the past, members have been able to finish—

The Speaker: I would allow a bit of a preamble, but I did not think that the second part of the question respected the rules in this case, so I ruled it out of order.

[*Translation*]

I have heard enough to reach a conclusion.

It being 3:12 p.m., pursuant to order made on Monday, November 24, the House will now proceed to tributes to the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

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THE MEMBER FOR BÉCANCOUR—NICOLET—SAUREL—ALNÔBAK

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to acknowledge another record set by the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

Yes, another record. He is basically the Céline Dion or Mario Lemieux of Parliament. Eventually, after so many records, people like that are no longer eligible. At some point, they have to step aside and make way for others, except that no one will ever beat my friend's records in Parliament.

The first reason is that 41 years is a long time. The second reason is that Quebec will be independent long before another 41 years go by. One record that no one talks about is the fact that he presides over the House. After all, he presides over the election of the Speaker at the beginning of each Parliament. As a result, my friend may not have been the Speaker for long, but God knows he has been Speaker often.

My friend is also a paradox. On one hand, he has beaten Wilfrid Laurier's record for longevity. On the other hand, he has been campaigning for Quebec sovereignty since 1990. Apparently Canada still does not understand: The only way to get rid of the tenacious MP and the Bloc Québécois crew is through Quebec's independence. However, everyone likes the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak, even the federalists, so it is complicated.

The member, whose riding name has changed quite often, has been through a lot, from his impetuous youth to his apparent serenity today. He served for four years under Brian Mulroney after the 1980 referendum. He served under Lucien Bouchard during the 1995 referendum, after becoming one of the founding members of the Bloc Québécois. He travelled all over Quebec with Gilles Duceppe to keep the flame alive, and he will be with us at our next rendezvous with history.

Tributes

The member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak was there when the Bloc Québécois won 54 seats and formed the official opposition. In a way, he has already been the party leader. At 82, it might be appropriate to talk about his wisdom, but that would be to misunderstand my friend completely. Is he wise, calm, polished and a stickler for the rules? Come on, not for a second. He still has a mischievous glint in his eyes like a young man looking for trouble.

What my friend is, however, is an encyclopedia of anecdotes. Above all, he is known for his kindness, generosity, advice, warm laughter, and unifying words of wisdom. He is a respected unifying force within the caucus. No, I will not lend him out to other parties.

His secret is that he loves his people. He loves politics. He loves to serve. He represents an era that should never end. My friend, my dear friend, has collected years the way others collect treasures and jewels, except that his treasure is worth more than all the riches in the world. He shares that treasure and will continue to share it with Quebeckers, whom he loves more than anything else in the world.

• (1515)

L'hon. Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

I am not sure if it is a good sign for the future of our country that a sovereigntist has broken the record of as great a Canadian as Sir Wilfrid Laurier, but such is reality. Although the former prime minister sat for 15,056 days in Parliament, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak sat for 15,059 days as of today. He has been elected consecutively in the same riding since 1984.

He outlasted prime ministers Mulroney, Campbell, Chrétien, Martin, Harper and Trudeau. However, his longevity as Speaker of the House of Commons lasted barely seven days. Still, let us hope that he will be offered a nice portrait here in this building, as parliamentary tradition dictates for all former speakers, whether illustrious or not, but especially given today's record, which will certainly remain unparalleled in our lifetime.

The member's political career is remarkable. There was even a time, in the first quarter of his career, when he was a member of a federalist party. This might have been easier to do at the start of his career, when he sat with the patriot Louis-Joseph Papineau. I took a shot.

While we may have a hard time forgiving him for his decision to establish the Bloc Québécois in 1991, no one on this side of the House can fault his intelligence, especially since he was leaving the Conservative Party. I will continue.

The member has always been quick witted and his career, which is not yet over, has been marked not only by his wisdom, but also by his independent spirit. He is a sovereigntist after all. He is a deeply compassionate person, as evidenced by his dedication to progressive causes; for example, he opposed attempts to restrict services for women who were exercising their right to abortion and attempts to bring back the death penalty. It also goes without saying that his staunch defence, in the House and across Canada, of bilingualism, and French's place in the country makes him, in my eyes, not only a great Quebecker, but yes, I dare say, a great Canadian.

I recently read an article about him where he said that he planned to stay in politics. That is good news. The article also shared some surprising details about his perseverance. The article quoted him as saying: "I think it is the best job in the world. I'm hooked. It's a bit like a drug. For some people it's alcohol or weed, for others it's sports. But for me, it's...politics."

It is clear that the member is passionate about his work. Another illuminating point in this article is, again, this man's humanity when he talks about his loneliness. I hope he gets to have that rare coffee with a good friend and, if not, there are at least 300 MPs gathered here who would jump at the chance to sit down for coffee with him.

Although he has been more discreet in recent years, since I have known him—or since most of us have known him, judging by the quality of the debates—his discretion is once again undoubtedly a profound mark of wisdom. It seems he has been following his own advice, which he shared with us in his speech as the dean of the House when the parliamentary session began. That advice was to keep our mouths shut unless we wanted to end up like a stuffed fish mounted on a wall. God knows we have seen plenty of stuffed fish in the House in recent years.

Another piece of wise advice that I have followed closely is the advice he gives to newly elected officials who are tempted to run for office for recognition. He said to buy a dog instead. I can tell the member that I am delighted with my yellow Labrador.

I will conclude by quoting one of his former leaders, the illustrious Lucien Bouchard, who shared these words with me.

When my friend [the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak] became the all-time dean of the House of Commons of Canada, it was not mere chance, and it was not bound to happen given enough time.

His unwavering loyalty to his constituents deserves full credit for that.

Everyone saw him as an elected member who is keenly aware of the respect owed to parliamentary institutions and to his colleagues of every political persuasion.

Congratulations to [the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak]!

Long live the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

• (1520)

Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we are marking a feat of longevity unprecedented in Canadian political life. On September 4, 1984, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak won his first of many elections, the culmination of which would earn him the title of dean with the longest uninterrupted career in the House of Commons.

Through all these years, he has remained an endearing individual who, against all odds, managed to weather every storm along the way. We are all witnessing a historic moment for our democracy. Few manage to achieve such a loyal connection to their constituents. For our dean, this achievement did not happen by accident or by luck. What drives our dean's work is a passion to serve his constituents to the very best of his ability every day.

Tributes

He is not after glory or titles. He simply wants to be the kind of member who listens to his constituents. He tries to help them using his own secret formula. I remember bits of advice he gave me, and I listened and put them into practice. He told me to stay close to my constituents. He said that votes are not won in Ottawa; they are won by taking care of our constituents. I can confirm that this is excellent advice.

Our dean proves that in life, as in politics, one must have a goal. His goal was to be an MP who was close to his constituents. He treats everyone with the importance they deserve, and it pays off. He has earned his record and it is to his credit. He will leave a mark on the history of this place. He has witnessed the progression from typewriters to smart phones and now the age of artificial intelligence. Nevertheless, he remains the same man we have come to know and respect, the man we enjoy spending time with and whose advice is so important to us younger members.

In closing, Canada's history will forever be marked by the proud dean from the Quebec nation, a worthy representative of our democracy.

• (1525)

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in congratulating and honouring the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

I was first elected in 2008, and even then, the hon. member was already the dean of the House, overseeing the election of the Speaker at the opening of Parliament. Surprisingly, he played the same role just a few months ago, when I myself became dean of the NDP caucus.

He was first elected with Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives in 1984. He was re-elected four years later, when the election campaign focused on our trade relations with the United States, so what is happening these days should feel like familiar territory.

During our years of working together, I have appreciated the humour and the passion with which he represents his constituents. He has been re-elected 12 times, which is remarkable, so his constituents obviously appreciate those things as well. His ongoing presence in the House enriches us all and shows how hard he has been working for his constituents for over 40 years.

On behalf of the NDP, I want to congratulate the member on his achievements.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to rise on this occasion to pay tribute to our dean, my dear friend.

In 2011, when I was elected, we formed a very small team. People here may not be aware of that. At the time, I was the only Green Party MP, which comes as no surprise. However, there were only four Bloc Québécois MPs. We formed a team because five members could request a recorded division. We did things together. With his immense expertise, he helped me from time to time. I love him.

We are paying tribute to him right now because he is the longest continuously serving member of Parliament. I can attest to the Leader of the Bloc Québécois's claim that our friend is the "Céline Dion of Parliament". He has an unparalleled record. He is the dean,

a respected member and someone who is always here to work hard for the people of Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

I am very happy that we are taking the time to pay tribute to him because he is an extraordinary person. I hope we will have opportunities to meet like this more often to pay tribute to an extraordinary individual.

I want to mention another one of his accomplishments. When he took the Speaker's chair in his role of presiding over the election of the Speaker, he always maintained order without having to raise his voice because he kept the situation calm and clear leaving no room for misbehaviour by the members. I think that is thanks to the strength of his character.

I just want to say to my extraordinary friend that before he decides to leave the House, there is still a chance for him to add one more thing to his extraordinary record: becoming a member of the Green Party. I hope he will keep his options open.

• (1530)

Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by sincerely thanking you for your work, your patience and your remarkable ability to remain calm.

I would also like to thank all the members of the political parties for their tributes, which I thought were almost too generous.

I want to thank my leader, the member for Beloeil—Chambly, the member for Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs and the member for Lévis—Lotbinière, whose riding is next to mine and who is also a friend. I also want to thank the member for Vancouver Kingsway and the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. I thank them for their kind words. They were very generous. I was genuinely moved by all the fine speeches. I thank them for their kindness, which will remain engraved in my memory.

I also want to thank the members of the Bloc Québécois team, with whom I have the privilege of working. Their diligence, creativity, sense of duty and, above all, their ability to tolerate stories from a veteran politician like myself, deserve special recognition. I want to thank them for standing with me, for advising me, and sometimes, I admit, for bringing me back on topic.

Today, I am speaking not only as a member of Parliament, but also as a witness to a journey that, I admit, even exceeds what I could have imagined at the start of my career. Here is what my 42 years as a member of Parliament represent: more than 15,059 days of parliamentary service, majority governments, minority governments, governments that were defeated, governments that were rebuilt, 12 federal prime ministers, reforms, economic crises, impassioned debates, thousands of speeches, a historic referendum, major reforms and, quite likely, enough red tape to cover the Champlain Bridge twice.

Tributes

I have seen the House at its best, and sometimes at its loudest, but I have always been witness to the fact that democracy, although imperfect, remains essential and invaluable. When I arrived here in 1983, some of the current members were learning their colours, others were starting their first day of school and some were not even a twinkle in their parents' eyes. I say this with humour, but also with deep humility. Having the honour of serving for so long is a privilege that I have never taken for granted. I will not hide the fact that when I started, many people told me to serve my term and then move on as best I could. They thought I would get tired of it and not stay very long. A few years turned into a quarter of a century, then three decades, and I will let my colleagues finish that list. However, I can say without hesitation that I have never been bored. What is fascinating about a political career is that the years go by, the debates change, governments come and go, but the passion remains.

I would say that I still have the energy, the will—and the enthusiasm, even—to get up every morning to serve the people of Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak because this role remains, even today, the greatest honour of my life. Being elected for a year is a gesture of trust. Being elected for a decade is a responsibility, but being elected for 42 years is an honour that words cannot describe. If I have persevered, it is first and foremost thanks to the people of Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak, thanks to their trust, renewed year after year; thanks to their advice, sometimes gentle, sometimes very direct; and thanks to their devotion to a representative who has always tried to be warm, accessible and down to earth. I owe it all to them.

• (1535)

Serving as a member of Parliament for four decades means witnessing the change in our people, debates, institutions, and technology. When I first arrived, we had no cell phones, no email, no fax machines, no social media. We only had typewriters and notepads. Today, everything moves faster, but the essence of the job remains the same. It involves the duty to listen, understand and represent. When I think back to my early days, I remember a Parliament where speeches were still typed on typewriters. Some of my colleagues were not even born yet, and the press gallery was packed. Since then, I have seen caucuses form, transform, split up, and sometimes heal. I have seen colleagues become friends, and others become history. I have witnessed Quebec struggle, grow, assert its rights and showcase the richness of its French language.

Over the years, I have become the dean of the House of Commons and the longest-serving member of Parliament in Canadian history. This fact still surprises me because it was not a goal of mine. Being the dean of the House is also a strange position. It comes with certain responsibilities, like opening the new legislative session and, above all, recounting memories that no one else remembers but me. It is also a privilege to witness the cycles of our democracy and the continuity of our institutions. The young members who arrive each year remind me of two things, that time passes very quickly and that the next generation is bright, idealistic and determined, which reassures me tremendously.

I am often asked what keeps me going after all this time. I always answer that it is the people, the folks back home. I have never forgotten that behind every debate, every vote and every speech,

there is a farmer who gets up before dawn; a single mother who works miracles to make ends meet; an entrepreneur who risks it all for the sake of a dream; a young person who wants a greener, prouder and fairer nation; or a senior who wants what he is owed after a lifetime of toil and hard work. These are the people who guided me, encouraged me and got me through 15,059 days with the same unwavering conviction that a member of Parliament is never greater than the people they represent. There is also something profoundly human about this job: We age together.

I want to emphasize the important role that Quebec has played in my political career. Since the Bloc Québécois was first established, I have had the immense privilege of helping to defend the interests, values and aspirations of the Quebec nation here in Ottawa. I have watched our party grow, reinvent itself and welcome new generations of elected officials. To promote the French language all these years, to pass it on, defend it and hear it resonate in the House is something that I have always considered to be my highest calling.

I still remember my early days and my first caucus meetings, where we had more passion than knowledge, where we built a party with conviction as our main fuel and with hope as our compass. Today, I look at my colleagues, the new generation of the Bloc Québécois, and I know that the flame is still burning. The torch has been passed on, but the flame never goes out.

I would like to think that these 42 years have made me wiser. That is partly true. I have learned that listening goes further than anger, that bridges are often more useful than walls, that humour can save nearly any situation and that respect, even when two people disagree, is the key to a healthy democracy. I have also learned that it is important to remain true to oneself and to always be authentic, consistent and faithful to those who elected us to this place.

I will conclude by saying that I have never taken this job for granted. I see every election, every speech and every intervention as a renewed privilege. As long as the people of Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak place their trust in me, I will continue to serve with passion, consistency, humour—sometimes a little too much, some might say—and, above all, with unwavering loyalty to our democracy.

• (1540)

Today, as we mark these 42 years of service, as we acknowledge this record of 15,059 days, I want to make it clear that this is not a personal accomplishment. It is a tribute to the collective work of my staff, my Bloc Québécois colleagues, my family and the people who supported me. It is also a tribute to this institution, the House of Commons, that I deeply respect. It is not perfect; no parliament is. However, it remains a place where the will of the people is expressed, where ideas are debated and where the future is built. I have had the privilege of participating in this process for over four decades.

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I want to thank the citizens who elected me. I thank my Bloc Québécois colleagues, past and present, who have supported me. I thank everyone here, from all parties, with whom I have shared debates, disagreements, compromises and sometimes real friendships. I thank my family, who have agreed to share my life with politics, which requires more patience than anyone can imagine. I thank my team, my employees who have helped me with my office work and in Parliament, including Rita, Carole, Michel, France, Jocelyne, Maxime, Caroline, Jacqueline, Denis and Charbel. I thank the House of Commons staff, the security and transportation staff, the interpreters and everyone who keeps our democracy running smoothly. I want to thank my former leaders, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Duceppe, Mr. Paillé and, of course, my current leader, the member for Beloeil—Chambly.

Thank you for allowing me to keep doing today what I love the most, that is, representing my constituents with heart, pride and determination. Despite my 42-year long career, I do not see myself as reaching the end of a chapter; I see myself at the centre of a book still being written. As long as I have the strength and the trust of my constituents, I will keep rising proudly, day after day, as a member of Parliament. Thank you for the past 42 years, and for being here with me to mark these 15,059 days that have marked my entire life.

• (1545)

The Speaker: Dear colleagues, Thank you for your words, your kind thoughts and the deep respect you have shown our dear colleague, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak.

Every member of the House knows that uncertainty and change are the hallmarks of politics. Being elected and serving as a member of Parliament is usually a relatively short chapter in a career, a matter of a few years, if we are lucky. Well, our dear colleague is making history with a career of political service that shatters all records. History will tell the story of the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak's longevity, spanning 13 parliaments, seven prime ministers and 11 speakers since he was first elected to the 33rd Parliament in 1984.

What is the secret of his success? In fact, it is quite simple: To make serving his constituents a priority. Our colleague explained it well last March when he said, "I feel just as motivated as I did when I was first elected. I am all the more determined not to drop the ball so that I can keep this wonderful partnership with my constituents going while I do the work I love."

His constituents have, of course, heard this call to work in partnership many times. He serves as a great example of dedication. All MPs know that weekends and weeks spent in their ridings are often very busy times. If we do the math and figure out how many meetings and events our colleague has attended in his riding throughout his career as a member of Parliament and the number of exchanges he has had with his constituents since 1984, the numbers are staggering.

Far from his riding, here in the House, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak has always spoken eloquently on the major issues of the past four decades. He has always shown great respect for his colleagues and for democracy. Through his ex-

ample, we have learned a great deal about how to conduct ourselves and work as members of Parliament, and we continue to learn.

I want to congratulate you and sincerely thank you for your service. With your generosity of spirit, your kindness and your wonderful smile, you have taught us that politics is about connection, dedication, empathy, compassion and, above all, service. Thank you, my dear friend, and well done.

Now, I invite you all to the Speaker's dining room to celebrate our colleague in style.

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Pursuant to order made on Monday, November 24, I wish to inform the House that, because of the tributes, the time provided for Government Orders will be extended by 37 minutes.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) and subsection 85(1) of the Official Languages Act, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the draft regulations on administrative monetary penalties for official languages.

Also, pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), the proposed regulations should be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs entitled "The Experience of Indigenous Veterans". Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

[*English*]

Blake Richards (Airdrie—Cochrane, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the supplemental report of the Conservative members of the committee. Our supplemental report is entitled "Conservatives Demand Action Instead of Just Words for Indigenous and All Veterans".

While we agree with much of the main report and the points that were heard from many of the witnesses, who feel left behind by the government, there were a number of concerns that were raised by many veterans in the committee that were left out of the main report, so we have tabled this supplemental report to highlight those issues: the all too familiar stories of the current cost of living crisis and the housing crisis, and what they are doing to our veterans. More and more veterans than ever are on the streets and relying on food banks.

We are recommending that the Liberal government get their out-of-control spending in order and stop ignoring the homelessness crisis amongst our veterans. We have tabled this supplemental report to highlight those issues.

* * *

[*Translation*]

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities entitled “Putting Passengers First: Improving Via Rail’s Emergency Response Effectiveness”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

[*English*]

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 104 and Standing Order 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, regarding membership of committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 10th report later this day.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Terry Duguid (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, entitled, “Supplementary Estimates (B), 2025-26”.

HEALTH

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Health, entitled, “Women’s Health in Canada: Closing the Gender Gap”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a supplemental report from the Conservative members of the Standing Committee on Health. We welcome the report, the study on women’s health; however, we believe that the report did not fully reflect all issues raised during the study.

First, Canada’s worsening shortage of doctors, nurses and health care professionals is denying women the timely care they need. With 6.5 million Canadians without a family doctor, delays in diagnosis and treatment are putting women’s health at risk. Second, ris-

Routine Proceedings

ing crime rates, including sexual assault and intimate partner violence, continue to harm women at alarming rates. This reality cannot be ignored in any serious discussion of women’s health. Finally, Conservatives emphasize the urgent need to address the increasing rate of violence against health care workers, a workforce largely made up of women. People who dedicate their life to caring for others must never fear for their safety at work.

We urge the government to act on these concerns and deliver real results for Canadian women.

● (1555)

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): All those opposed to the hon. member’s moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to table a petition on behalf of Canadians who are deeply concerned about the future of indigenous languages.

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the fact that reconciliation requires urgent action to address the devastating loss of language and culture that indigenous peoples have experienced. Petitioners note that while more indigenous people are seeking to learn their languages, the number of fluent speakers continues to fall. They further raise concern that recent changes to federal funding, especially in British Columbia, put language preservation and revitalization at risk.

Petitioners are therefore calling on the Government of Canada to ensure fair, adequate and long-term funding for indigenous language programming so this vital work can continue before it is too late, and to fix the changes that affect indigenous languages, indigenous language speakers and preservation needed in British Columbia in particular.

Government Orders

INSECTICIDES

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands who are concerned with the global issue, which is also local, of the threat to our pollinators, including honeybees, which are an essential part of our food system.

We know that without pollinators, agriculture would crash, yet as petitioners point out, there continue to be extreme declines in pollinator populations across North America and Europe, particularly among bees. It is no surprise that this has been linked to insecticides that are particularly toxic to bees. The particular class of insecticides that the European Union has taken action to control but Canada has not are the ones called neonics, which is a short form; they are nicotine-based insecticides, neonicotinoid insecticides.

The petitioners ask that Canada follow the European Commission's lead, apply the precautionary principle and restrict the use of these dangerous chemicals to protect our bees and our agriculture.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

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MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUDGET 2025 IMPLEMENTATION ACT, NO. 1

The House resumed from November 25 consideration of the motion that Bill C-15, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to join everyone here in the discussions on the budget and the budget implementation act. It is a budget that I proudly voted against. I voted against it for many reasons.

We know that the Prime Minister continues to run up the deficit and the debt in the country. He is using Canada's credit card to finance this very costly and unaffordable budget. The budget continues to drive up the cost of living for Canadians on everything from groceries to housing, new equipment and cars. All of that continues out of control.

We know that since October 2024, the cost of groceries, according to the inflation data that is available, has gone up 3.4%. Year after year, month after month, day after day and week after week, there are more and more costs, yet Canadians' paycheques are not rising. When they do rise, the government Liberals of course are putting their hands into Canadians' pockets, with more and more taxes.

The Prime Minister has broken so many promises since he was sworn in eight months ago. I know that just in the last six months, one promise was that he said he was going to keep the deficit at \$16 billion. Guess what. In the budget implementation act, the deficit is \$78 billion.

The Prime Minister promised to lower the debt-to-GDP ratio. Guess what. He is raising both it and inflation at the same time. He promised to spend less, but the budget is costing \$90 billion more. That is \$5,400 more per household across the country in inflationary spending, and that means less money in the pockets of Canadians.

The Prime Minister promised to help municipalities with housing by cutting down house-building taxes in those municipalities. With the budget, he breaks that promise.

The Prime Minister promised that there would be more investment here in Canada, but as we just witnessed when he was in the U.A.E., he is actually taking money out of Canada to invest over there rather than attracting money from the U.A.E. into Canada. Again, that is a broken promise. Investment in the country continues to collapse.

What the budget forces Canadians to do is spend more on debt interest servicing than on health care transfers to the provinces. It is more than what the government actually collects in GST. We also have to remember that the big deficits and the great big debt we have, which is now \$1.35 trillion, are money borrowed from bankers and bondholders. It is money that should be in the hands of Canadians. It is not going towards investing in more doctors and nurses in our health care system.

One of the reasons I am opposed to the budget is that it is going to increase our federal debt by over \$321.7 billion. That is twice as much as what Justin Trudeau promised he would do, and it means that the budget will borrow \$10 million every hour, which will be added to our debt. Our national debt continues to grow, as I said, to \$1.35 trillion, costing us \$55.6 billion on interest to service that debt. Just to put it in perspective, that is more than the Canada health care transfer to the provinces, which is \$54.7 billion.

Government Orders

As the shadow minister for national defence, I do have to talk about the money that is in the budget. As the budget says, Canada will meet the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's 2% spending target. I am just wondering how the Liberals are going to get there. The budget proposes that they are going to have \$81.8 billion over the next five years on a cash basis. That is over \$9 billion more than what the Prime Minister promised in June. There is going to be over \$30 billion in capital investments. The Liberals have not said what those capital investments are.

Where are the Liberals actually finding the money, and is it actually increasing the lethality and capability of the Canadian Armed Forces? We know that one place where they are finding money is that they are cutting veterans' benefits by \$4.23 billion in the budget. The government whip can sit there and laugh, but it is actually in the budget. As much as Liberals are saying that it is coming out of medical cannabis programs for veterans, that is only \$100 million a year, \$400 million over four years. They are still at \$4.23 billion. Where is the transparency? What services are our veterans losing?

• (1600)

As we know, the government has failed our veterans at every turn. The Minister of Veterans Affairs did not understand that Memorial Day was on July 1 in Newfoundland and Labrador. She did not understand that every memorial service we have on Remembrance Day across Canada on November 11 needs wreaths. The Liberals wanted MPs to have only two, even though in my riding there are 20 Remembrance Day services. They did not think that was important, because as long as they had enough for their big-city Remembrance Day services, that was fine.

This has all been unacceptable. We need the minister to come clean as to where these cuts are coming from. The budget is vague, and the dollars just are not there.

We also question whether or not the government can actually spend this money. We know that in the Department of National Defence, over the last 10 years of the Liberals, over \$10 billion in defence spending has lapsed. Whether it has been Mr. Sajjan, the former minister of defence, or someone else, the Liberals always get up and say that they will make sure any money that is not used in one fiscal year will be repurposed for use in the next year or the year after that.

I can tell the House that, in subsequent years, of the dollars available of the \$10 billion that lapsed, they have been able to earmark only \$110 million. Only 10% of the dollars that have lapsed have ever gone back to be invested in the defence budget. The rest of the money of course was turned back into general revenue and used on other Liberal pet projects. Therefore for defence, if there is \$9 billion there, maybe \$4.2 billion is coming from Veterans Affairs, but I can tell you that if they do not spend it, they will claw it back, because that is what the Liberals do with respect to defence.

The other way the Liberals are going to try to get the numbers up, and we already know this, is through creative accounting. They are great at creative accounting when they start talking about how they are going to get to 2%. We know that in 2017-18, when they first started doing creative accounting, all veterans' pensions be-

came national defence spending, so there is nothing there in capabilities.

We know they actually moved some Coast Guard spending over, as well as some Global Affairs Canada spending. I can say that in 2017-18, they moved \$47 million from the Coast Guard into national defence. That then increased to \$759 million just a couple of years ago. This year, they moved the entire department of the Canadian Coast Guard, which does icebreaking, navigation, search and rescue, ocean mapping and environmental research. Now, all of a sudden, that is all defence spending. They have moved over \$2.4 billion into national defence, while adding no new defensive capabilities for the Canadian Armed Forces.

We also know that in this budget, the Liberals are transferring aviation services from Transport Canada. We do not even know how much that is yet, but it is still more of the shell game. They are going to take from this department and from that department and move it over, so there is absolutely no transparency. The reason they can do that is that there has been a new change at NATO, which is that any spending under the Department of National Defence, whether civilian salaries or anything else, can count toward NATO spending.

I am just waiting for the government to say that the national child care program is going to national defence or old age security pensions will go to national security. That is how we are going to get to 2%. We know the Liberals cannot be trusted to make the investments we need.

In the budget, the Liberals talked about retiring some of our older fleets that are costing too much money to maintain. The deputy minister of national defence and the chief of the defence staff said in a release, "We are reviewing these savings to assess what they mean for our organization. Work to implement them will only begin if the Budget has the support of Parliament, so we will share additional information with you once the House of Commons' debate and vote take place."

They do not even know what the government is doing, what fleets we are going to retire and how we are going to fill any capability gaps that are occurring. Are they parking our old Victoria-class submarines even though we will still be waiting years before we get our next new submarines? Are they going to park the rest of our Leopard tanks, which are in poor condition, and then not have any tanks here in Canada for training or for getting ready in case there is a conflict? Are they also retiring the Cyclone helicopters, which are abandoned?

There are so many questions about this budget and how it is not making our Canadian Armed Forces stronger and better able to protect Canada.

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• (1605)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not about what the member said; it is about what he did not say. He spent a lot of time talking about NATO and military infrastructure but spent absolutely zero time talking about the actual men and women who are in our Armed Forces.

I was on the defence committee with this member for four years. We toured bases together throughout Canada. Can he look into the camera over there and tell the folks who work at CFB Kingston and other bases throughout the country why he voted against, and plans again to vote against, a 20% pay raise for them? I do not expect him to do that; after all, this is the former parliamentary secretary who oversaw defence spending in Canada when it fell below 1% for the only time in recorded Canadian history.

James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, we actually have on record from the Library of Parliament that last year, when we take out the creative accounting of the Liberals' expenditures, apples-to-apples actual defence spending was 1.01%. The Liberals have not been making the investments.

If this member can sanctimoniously stand here and say to look in the camera, I will look in the camera. I have always been fighting for our Canadian Armed Forces.

An hon. member: Tell them why you will not vote for it.

James Bezan: Has he looked at the budget? The budget sucks.

Mr. Speaker, let us just say this. At CFB Kingston, the housing is terrible and we hear about rat infestations and frozen water pipes; we need to make sure that they are actually putting the money into housing. If this member is so much in favour of supporting the troops, especially at CFB Kingston, why are the Liberals building only 32 new houses this year?

• (1610)

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was just hoping that the hon. member could comment a bit more about how members of the Canadian Armed Forces have to line up at food banks in this country.

James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, when it comes down to it, we are seeing way too many members of the Canadian Armed Forces in that.

We welcome the raise that the Canadian Armed Forces members are getting. They need it, but guess what. The government is not investing in all the other avenues they need. Housing is unaffordable in most of the places where our bases are, such as Halifax, Esquimalt, Toronto and Kingston. Because of that, a lot of these guys are living rough. They are having to live in campers; they are couch surfing, or they are staying in their cars because there is not enough housing out there for them. Actually, there was a story that just broke this week from *Western Standard* and from *Blacklock's Reporter*. According to research that was done, 10% of our troops are leaving the forces in under 10 years because of the cost of living crisis and the lack of available housing for them.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on its website, the College of Family Physicians of Canada cites that over

250,000 hours of family physicians' time, equivalent to about one million patient visits, is spent doing the disability tax credit form.

In this budget, the Liberals would put \$10 million aside to help pay for that. Would it not be easier if, instead of wasting \$10 million of taxpayer money and a million hours of doctors' time, they would just honour somebody on disability in their province and territory to actually get the Canada disability benefit? It would be much simpler. Would it not make sense?

Why do they not do that? The Liberals know that people do not have the energy and time, and they struggle to navigate the system, so they are denying them the benefits they deserve. Maybe my colleague can speak about this simple fix.

James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague from the NDP with respect to that statement. All too often we have constituents come in who have to jump through all sorts of hoops to get the disability tax credit. The Liberals have allowed the CRA to go out there and make life more difficult, rather than making it easier. Burying people in red tape and bureaucracy and making them jump through endless hoops is not the way to be compassionate as a society.

I want to make sure that we are there for those people who need those tax credits. Instead of making it more difficult, let us make it easier. Instead of wasting so much money running up increasing deficits, let us get those deficits under control so that we can put more money into health care.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy and excited to rise to speak in support of Bill C-15, the budget implementation act, and explain why this legislation matters to communities such as London West and the broader southwestern Ontario corridor.

We came off a campaign in April 2025 with an ambitious plan to respond to pressures that Canadians sent us to resolve in this session. In the last election, I spent many hours speaking to many Londoners, asking them what the most important issue was for them. I believe that, in this election, the most important issue was actually responding to the tariff pressures and the economic pressures that Canadians were feeling. The tariff pressures came on top of the extra economic pressures that Canadians were already feeling, which were due to many external pressures, such as COVID-19 and the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine. These were all factors in why Canadians were experiencing pressure on their pocketbooks.

Families were scrambling to feed themselves. There was a lot of price gouging in food prices, and Canadians were feeling real pressure, whether it was with finances, putting their kids into extracurricular activities or even putting their kids in day care. We have been a government that has constantly responded to these pressures.

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On this side of the House, we believe that Canadians want a government that functions, that responds to pressures, and that can also withstand external pressures, such as these global issues that impact us all here in Canada. As we have seen, there have been many global challenges that continue to impact us economically. Even when we have economic plans, we can always plan to see other pressures come into play, and we have to be ready to respond to those pressures. We have to be ready to support Canadian families and Canadian workers, which is why they sent us back in April 2025 to this House, to make sure that we can respond to tariff pressures, respond to issues in which young people are unable to access homes that are affordable to them and respond to Canadian family pressures around affordability. This is where I will frame my speech, but I wanted to start by saying that the budget really did respond to a promise we made in April 2025 when we were campaigning.

I believe that budget 2025 comes at a really important time, because it makes concrete changes to how Canada responds to global economic pressures and how we equip our workforce. It also responds to how we ensure that young people can build stable lives in the communities they come from, and my remarks are going to focus on these areas: how Canada is responding to the tariffs and external economic pressures, the support of businesses and communities, innovation, job creation through retooling and skilled trades, and the connection between youth opportunities and housing.

Budget 2025 reflects a clear shift in how we think about economic strength. It does not assume that markets will organize themselves. It does not assume that workers can absorb endless disruption. It does not assume that housing will magically fix itself. Instead, it is built around three practical priorities: strengthening Canada's response to global pressures; investing in innovation and workforce capability; and rebuilding opportunity for Canadian families and young people through affordability measures, housing and employment pathways. This matters for areas such as southwestern Ontario and my community of London West, because these are measures that are experienced through job stability, rent payments and whether young people can stay close to home to find meaningful work.

Canada, along with many countries in the world, is operating in a world that is changing really fast and becoming very unpredictable. The global trade rules that have powered our prosperity for decades are being rewritten, which is creating real pressures on Canadian small, medium-sized and large businesses; real risk for workers; and real uncertainty for families. In that context, our focus has to be clear. We have to strengthen what we can control here at home, which means growing our economy faster, building more of what we need here in Canada and making sure that we never overly depend on one single country. It also means that we have to make disciplined choices. We have to cut waste where it exists, and we have to invest with purpose in the infrastructure, housing, skills and industries that will carry us forward and create immense opportunities for Canadians.

● (1615)

This is a moment for serious leadership, practical action and long-term thinking, and this is exactly how we are going to build a stronger and more self-reliant Canada. Canadians did not send us here to sit on the sidelines while the world changes around us; they

sent us with big, bold ambitions. They sent us with a clear expectation that we will act to protect their jobs and that we will position our country to compete and win big. That is exactly what we have seen so far.

Since the Prime Minister became Prime Minister, we have secured major investments and trade commitments that are strengthening our supply chains; we have opened new markets for Canadian businesses, and we are bringing real capital into our economy. These are not symbolic announcements; these are real investments that will result in real jobs in the country, in real economic power, in strengthening our businesses and in making a stronger country. These are practical steps that are already leading to new facilities, expanded production and well-paying jobs in communities across the country. This is about doing the work that Canadians wanted us to do when they sent us here in April 2025.

We have an opportunity to work together with the entire House to make sure that we can protect Canadian jobs; that we can create real, meaningful opportunities for Canada; and that we can continue to position Canada as a real partner around the world. Canada has exactly what the world needs; the world is calling on Canada to step up, and that is what we are doing. We are opening up opportunities for trade.

The Prime Minister has already signed trade deals in the U.A.E. and Indonesia, and there are many more to come. This is really important for the agriculture sector and the innovation sector, and there are real opportunities here. When the tariff pressure came, it was both an opportunity and a pressure for Canadians. It was an opportunity for us to grow as a country and to continue to show that we are a strong middle power that can stand on the world stage. It was also an opportunity to protect our jobs and to build the future that we want to see for our young people.

Building a stronger economy only works if the people who power it are equipped to succeed, and that is why our government is investing in people. We are rolling out large-scale re-skilling supports so that workers can transition into growing industries, modernizing employment insurance to make it flexible and responsive and launching the digital job-matching tools that connect Canadians to their careers faster. At the same time, we are bringing employers, unions and industry together through new workforce partnerships to align training with real labour market needs. These are practical steps that will ensure that growth is not abstract but shows up as stable, well-paid jobs.

Through major infrastructure investment, we are already unlocking tens of billions of dollars in economic activity that will support thousands of well-paying jobs and strengthen our productivity in the long term.

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Housing is a core part of our economic plan. Workers cannot build stable lives and businesses, and show up to work, if they do not have an affordable place to live. As Canada faces a real housing supply gap, our response is focused on speed, scale and coordination, and through budget 2025, we are taking direct action to bring more homes online faster by removing barriers for first-time homebuyers, by launching Build Canada Homes to drive larger-scale public-private construction and by modernizing how homes are built.

We will do this by using Canadian products. This means that we will work with industry, provinces, municipalities and indigenous partners to deliver affordable and co-operative housing at scale and using new building technologies, securing long-term investment and prioritizing Canadian material and supply chains. The goals here are very clear: more homes built faster; restored affordability and real pressures relieved for families, workers and young people trying to build their future in their own communities.

I can give a London West example of how we are doing that. Just a couple of weeks ago, I was in my riding announcing \$11 million that will create 50 affordable units in London. That is 50 more people who will not have to be homeless, who can have a home that they can call their own and then begin to think about their work opportunities.

It looks as though my time is up, so I look forward to being able to answer more questions and talking more about the things I care about in the budget. I hope the entire House can understand that these are real pressures Canadians are feeling, and they are looking for us to pass this bill as quickly as possible.

• (1620)

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have been in power for over 10 years now and have failed to secure a softwood lumber deal. They have been in power while there have been three different presidents of the United States, and they have failed to diversify our markets around the world after Stephen Harper left them with a legacy of 42 free trade agreements having been signed.

Our energy is still landlocked in Alberta. I am wondering what my hon. colleague has to say about getting our resources to market.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I think we have some great news. Prime Minister Carney just announced new supports for the steel and lumber industries for Canadians.

I just finished telling the House how Canadians sent us here because they want us to find real solutions for the real problems they have, and that is what we are doing. It is important to note for the people who elected the member that he has voted against all those measures. He asks me these questions, but this question should be asked of him: Why does he vote against Canadians?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I would remind the hon. member for London West not to use the last name of the Prime Minister or any hon. member in the House.

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

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of my colleague and friend today on the budget, which are really encouraging. If we go back, as she pointed out, to the last election, we talked about how important Trump's tariffs and trade were. The Prime Minister highlighted that we need to be able to expand opportunities beyond the Canada-United States border.

My friend referred to a number of different countries. We heard in the last little while of the potential agreements between Canada and the Philippines and between Canada and India. These are the types of things that are going to have a profoundly positive impact on all Canadians.

I wonder if the member could pick up on the point of why it is so important that we build Canada strong.

• (1625)

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. I just talked about how important it is for us to position Canada to continue to be a strong nation that can build other partners and not rely on one single country. My colleague talked about the importance of building relationships across the world. We are doing that.

The member is a strong supporter of the Filipino community here in Canada. He has worked on this file for a long time and knows how important it is for us to build those relationships. He knows how important it is for us to build a relationship with Indonesia and other partners, where we can find common ground with people who share the same values and be able to trade together. That is what the government is doing, and will continue to do so.

Most importantly, there is so much good news that we cannot even keep track of it. As I was speaking, I was trying to catch everyone up on the newest announcement the Prime Minister is making to support Canadians.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, the members opposite continue to laugh and heckle as I speak, but they are forgetting that Canadians sent us back to the House to protect their jobs—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain.

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, farmers in Saskatchewan and across western Canada are suffering under these unfair and unjust Chinese tariffs on our canola. The Prime Minister went on a trade mission to China, and there was no resolution. He went to India, and the only thing he came back with was more tariffs.

Can the hon. member name one thing in the budget that would actually help Saskatchewan farmers?

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite's party has not been in government for a long time, so I think the members might need to refresh their memories on how diplomatic conversations are conducted around trade and the agreements that we can bring to our country. Those are not things that happen overnight. There is a lot of work that goes into it.

While the Conservatives continue to talk down Canada, we will continue to build. We will continue to secure deals that are meaningful for Canadians. The specific question the member asked is something that many colleagues on this side of the House have continued to engage on. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister was involved in those discussions, and they are ongoing. In the meantime, the member can maybe tell his electors why he continues to vote against Canadians.

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have witnessed a number of budgets over my 20-year parliamentary career. Some of them were good, such as the first 10, and some of them have been pretty bad, which are the ones since then.

What makes a bad budget? Generally, it is a Liberal. To the average Canadian, a bad budget may be one that fails to balance what one wants with what one needs and leads to a shortfall. A bad budget leaves one open to unpredictability and makes it difficult to adapt to changing circumstances. In contrast, a good budget allows one to address current needs but still have some money left over to plan for the future. It allows people to invest in the things their families need the most. We can classify these kinds of budgets as either a responsible budget or an irresponsible budget.

These same budgetary patterns can be observed in Parliament, usually following along party lines. My time in the Harper government showed me what a responsible budget actually looked like, while my time in opposition has taught me what an irresponsible budget looks like. Those irresponsible budgets were usually presented by the Liberal Party, the Liberal government, and mostly Justin Trudeau. They all had varying degrees of severity. One could argue that, under the last prime minister, this level of carelessness reached new heights. These were, for all intents and purposes, tax-and-spend, NDP-style budgets that turned our national debt into a national albatross burden around our neck. That burden has become an ever-increasing liability.

Our federal debt has reached over \$1.28 trillion. That is \$1,280 billion, which is an incomprehensibly large sum to the average person. For context, when the St. Lawrence Seaway was constructed in 1959, which is one of the most important infrastructure projects in our history, it cost \$470 million, or nearly \$5 billion in today's currency. I do not believe we have received the same economic benefits as the seaway for much of this new debt over the last 10 years. In fact, the Liberals have doubled the national debt in this country in the last 10 years, and I cannot think of a single significant nation-building infrastructure project that we received for that money.

The debt is so large, it is now impacting our finances. In 2025, Canada's federal government is projected to spend approximately \$54 billion on servicing just our debt. That is nearly as much as the \$54.5 billion spent on the federal health transfers to our

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provinces. Our debt is so large now that servicing the debt is equivalent to one of the core functions of our government, yet the government keeps wasting money on vanity projects such as its current gun grab, which will not do anything at all to address public safety. We know this to be true because the minister said so when he thought no one was listening. He basically said it was all to get votes in certain parts of the country.

If members do not believe me, if the Liberals do not want to believe me, they can just ask the Toronto Police Association, which just today put out a tweet saying that the confiscation program is "ineffective" and asking the government to instead use that money toward funding frontline policing.

Over the past 10 years, we have witnessed budget after budget of ballooning deficits. The prime minister who presented those atrocious budgets then resigned, a good riddance. The man who replaced that prime minister, the member for Nepean, told Canadians that he was the so-called reasonable guy. He said that he and only he could address Canada's challenges. He said he would be more fiscally responsible than his predecessor. He promised economic prosperity. He said that he was best qualified to deal with President Donald Trump, yet with his first budget, which was delivered late, of course, and I am very much looking forward to the fall economic statement in April, we see he is not the man he said he was.

The budget is nothing short of reckless, and it is proof that he misrepresented himself to the Canadian electorate in the spring. With a projected deficit of \$78.3 billion, this budget gets us nowhere closer to reaching fiscal balance. To add insult to injury, no trade deal with the United States has materialized.

For those listening at home, I want to give a snapshot of what is happening here in Ottawa. The Liberals have created generational debt over the last decade under the banner of generational investments, yet these investments have not paid off. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has indicated that GDP growth is stagnant and will remain below 2% for the remainder of the decade. This will make it difficult to manage rising debt levels.

• (1630)

The previous fiscal dogma espoused by the previous finance minister was that our debt-to-GDP ratio was a marker of fiscal sustainability. We disagreed. We thought they were spending too much money. Remarkably, the new finance minister has presented a budget that will grow our debt-to-GDP ratio rather than shrink it.

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How can we grow our way out of a crisis if our debt is growing proportionally faster than our economic growth? We are robbing a future generation of Canadians of their wealth to shore up our present economic frustrations and considerations. This is the same generation that is already struggling to pay for food, pay off their student loans or even buy a house and start a family. We should be ashamed of the debt we are leaving to future generations. More worrisome still is the fact that the Parliamentary Budget Officer has stated that the Prime Minister has “limited room to cut taxes” as the debt-to-GDP ratio continues to grow.

When I spoke of households and budgets, I said that a good budget allows for some manoeuvrability. This idea of being able to pivot in a crisis is paramount for governments of all political stripes, yet by stripping our cupboards bare of essentials over the past ten years, we have left ourselves as a nation very vulnerable. In plain language, we are lacking the fiscal discipline to pivot in a crisis. Furthermore, our economic woes have created a culture of dependency in which the economy is now reliant on the government and not the other way around.

Business needs certainty and a reliable fiscal environment to thrive, yet under the Liberal government, Canada has anything but. To get anything built in this country, one must navigate an intricate web of bureaucracy. This has created a situation in which businesses are fearful of taking the risks they should not be afraid of taking. As a result, they are not investing in Canada.

A recent OECD report indicates that the Canadian business landscape is currently facing a significant challenge due to lack of investment. For example, Canada invests less in machinery and equipment than other OECD countries. Furthermore, the investment gap between Canada and the U.S. has widened at a time when our neighbour down south is waging a trade war against us.

I would like to conclude by asking members and all Canadians this very simple question. Passing a budget is an act of stewardship. It is about being disciplined today so that we have a brighter tomorrow. A Greek proverb reads, “A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit.” To think of the future is to be altruistic. If we are to be honest with ourselves, do we want our children and our grandchildren to inherit the economic future that we have right now, or do we want to gift them with a flourishing economy in which they can prosper, buy a home and invest in their families?

I know the residents of Ponoka—Didsbury very well, and I see the frustration on their faces. I see the frustration in the faces of the young people in their twenties and thirties who are still living at home, who wish they could buy a home in central Alberta. I see the frustration in my friends and colleagues of my generation who started very successful and prosperous businesses in the oil and gas sector, just to watch those businesses disappear and go bankrupt and watch all of their assets disappear over the last ten years because of a government that simply does not understand the consequences of the actions it has taken.

I would submit that had the government not cancelled the northern gateway pipeline, the energy east pipeline and all but one of the various LNG export terminals on both the east and west coasts of this country, that Canada would be in a better position today. For

one pipeline and one LNG export terminal, it would take approximately 10 years to build each of them.

Could members imagine the fiscal power that this country would have right now if we unleashed the potential of our natural resources? As an Albertan, I know very well what our contribution is, as 10% of the population contributes 15% to 16% of the GDP to this country, because we have a different attitude. One where the government does not control everything we do and we unleash the potential of our entrepreneurs, investors and workers to do the things that build our country and make it great.

Until the government retracts and repeals the legislation that has stymied this development, we are going to be in the same place where just Liberals, and Liberals alone, get to decide what happens in Canada. It is like living with the mafia.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): 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 Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Public Safety; the hon. member for York—Durham, Border Security; the hon. member for Calgary Crowfoot, Housing.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing that the Conservatives do not have a vision for Canada other than just being negative all the time. At the end of the day, what we have is a Prime Minister and a government that have been very proactive in looking at the benefits of expanding trade opportunities. That is why it is good to see the Prime Minister doing the travelling he has been doing. All sorts of potential investments will be coming to Canada as a direct result.

If we take a look at the budget, we will find numerous supports, whether for our lumber industry or for Canadians as individuals, yet the Conservatives continue to vote against these types of initiatives. Can the member provide his thoughts in regard to why the Conservatives do not have a vision for Canada beyond just clicking their heels and hoping something good might happen?

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, we have a completely different philosophical view on this side of the House. We believe in and trust Canadians to look after themselves.

I remember a time in this country when my parents and grandparents could afford to put food on the table for their families. They did not need a school lunch program and did not need food banks in order to provide food for their families. If I was the member, I would be embarrassed to announce a program for the 400,000 kids in Canada who now need a school lunch because their families cannot afford to pay for it.

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This is the whole idea of the Liberals. The Liberals want to create a culture of dependency. They want to be in absolute control and insert themselves in every way into our lives. They want to control absolutely everything that happens from an economic perspective. They want to control the social fabric. We just have to look at the legislation they put in to curb speech and control basically everything Canadians do every single day.

Canadians can no longer afford the government. We need a Conservative government that unleashes opportunities and that unleashes the talents Canadians have.

• (1640)

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague covered a lot of great topics, but one I want to ask him about is how the Liberals continue to talk about imaginary taxes and the impact they are having on Canadians, whether that is at the grocery store shelf or in their ability to grow their businesses. If this tax is so imaginary, why does their own budget have comments about increasing and strengthening the industrial carbon tax?

As he is from a rural riding that has energy, agriculture and a number of small businesses, I would like to ask my colleague what impact the industrial carbon tax is having on the businesses in his riding.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, my esteemed colleague from Foothills, Alberta, knows very well what we are capable of in this country and what we are capable of as Albertans. As I said in my speech, we are 10% of the population and 15% to 16% of the GDP, because we have a culture in Alberta of getting things done. We have had years and years, decades even, of Conservative-minded provincial governments that have kept taxes low and created investment, wealth and prosperity for the people of Alberta, which we have shared happily, for the most part, with the rest of Canada. That is unless we have a Liberal government, of course, which puts its boot on our neck, taxes us into oblivion and makes it so we cannot even afford to buy homes, buy groceries and pay for a roof over our heads.

The policies of the current government, including the industrial carbon tax, are not a path forward to prosperity for this country. The carbon tax is going to drive away investment, and it is going to create more problems for our nation.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am curious to know what the member opposite thinks about what his colleague called the food program, which is going to be made permanent through budget 2025. One, it feeds children in schools and is requested in a lot of schools, and two, it is creating job opportunities. His colleague called it “garbage”. Does the member opposite agree?

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, she just has to look to her right to her colleague who just asked me a question, who called natural health products garbage in the last Parliament.

Garbage is garbage: garbage in, garbage out. We can have these conversations all we want. As I said in my speech, 400,000 kids in Canada are the target for the school lunch program. I would be embarrassed to stand up and say that we as a government for the last 10 years have created such an economic mess in this country that

we now need to borrow more money we do not have to feed kids whose parents used to be able to feed them on their own.

Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is nice to stand in the House to talk about the budget implementation act, but before I do, I would like to briefly remember a good person, a great Canadian, a champion and a fine friend. Yesterday, athletes at the 2025 Canadian Olympic curling trials in Halifax took a moment away from their competition to honour Colleen Jones and reflect on her legacy. The world champion curler and trail-blazing journalist from Halifax passed away at the age of 65 on Tuesday following her battle with cancer.

Brad Gushue, Canada's 2006 Olympic gold medallist in curling, said, “I remember being a young curler and watching her and looking up to her and she was always so helpful to me.” In 2014 and 2018, I had the opportunity to work with the great Colleen Jones a bit as a broadcaster with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Sochi and at the Pyeongchang Olympics. She was so kind. She was so nice. She was so welcoming and encouraging. I was an athlete who wanted to spread my wings a bit and do something different from my sport, and she said she was doing the same thing. She was still a curling competitor and an athlete, and such a kind person.

Canada will miss Colleen Jones. She was a world champion, a Scotties champion and a hall-of-famer. Everybody in Nova Scotia will miss Colleen Jones being on television across Canada. I would like to send a special note of condolences to everybody who works at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as her colleagues, her friends and her teammates remember the great Colleen Jones.

Now I would like to talk about budget 2025. Budget 2025 truly has something for every single Canadian. It is the largest-ever investment in non-market housing. This is close to my heart.

As a proud co-op kid, I have stood in this House to talk about my experiences growing up in non-market housing and my mother's contributions to the sector as a builder in the sector for over 35 years. She used to work at Homestarts, ran Briarview co-op and provided so many Canadian families with a safe and affordable place to live. I went to her retirement party last year, and I am proud to say that a number of young families came to me to say they currently reside at Briarview co-op and that my mom made it possible for them to thrive in the economy.

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For hard-working families who may be new to Canada or not, non-market housing fills a much-needed gap in the housing sector. It does not take an economist to recognize that when we provide families with affordable rents, it also provides them with the opportunity to engage in the economy. When the federal government steps up to build non-market housing, it should be recognized by every member of this House as a great investment in the prosperity of our nation.

I grew up at Chautauqua co-op, and I can say that I had access to guitar lessons, the canoe club, after-school activities and even a Nintendo growing up because we had affordable rents. Families still do. However, back in the mid-nineties, governments gave up on building non-market housing.

Just recently, I was at the groundbreaking for a new co-op in Toronto, the first of its kind in 20 years. I want to thank Options for Homes and CMHC for this really big step forward in non-market housing and co-op housing in our country. I am thrilled that the federal government is back in the business of building co-operative and non-market housing across our country.

Build Canada Homes is going to change the game. I want to thank the Prime Minister for his leadership and the Minister of Housing for his leadership in championing non-market housing. This is a solution for the affordability crisis. This is a solution for affordable housing. It is a solution for young families and students. The vast majority of people who move into co-op housing will only move out when they are ready to purchase a home. While they are staying in and living in community housing like Chautauqua co-op, they are more capable of engaging in the economy and providing the basics for their families. I am thrilled with the largest-ever investment in non-market housing. It is truly a good reason for everybody to vote for budget 2025.

Something that has been spoken about in the last couple of minutes here in this House, but also over the last few weeks, is the national school food program. I was a huge advocate for it. That is because as a kid, I had access to healthy snacks in school because I went to a school with a school food program. Not every school has one, and not every province is providing that, but the federal government has stepped up and provided transfer payments to the provinces to ensure that every province can implement healthy snacks in schools for kids.

Every single study that has been done on school food programs indicates that these programs, when well managed, provide young people with opportunity. Grades go up. Young people are more likely to attend class. It is just a win-win-win for society. There is also the edible education course, and when food is on the curriculum, grades go up.

● (1645)

It is a really great investment in the quality of education across this country. I am very proud of it. I want to give all the teachers who came to the House of Commons to advocate for it a big high-five, and I thank the Coalition for Healthy School Food for its advocacy. It is astonishing that some members of this House are so staunchly against healthy snacks in schools for kids. They need to pick their battles. It is really strange that people are so against healthy snacks in schools for kids.

We have also seen, in budget 2025, the most generational investment ever in sport and community infrastructure facilities, something that members of the Conservative Party are in my inbox asking me about right now. It is an interesting thing to watch a Conservative member criticize budget 2025 and then reach out to ministers to identify where they can receive funding for their own communities. It is great that they are champions for their communities. It is great that they are looking to have community sports facilities built in their ridings. However, it is astonishing to see the Conservatives criticize the budget, vote against the budget and then ask for some of the money in the budget.

Thankfully, our government is going to invest across the country in facilities, in infrastructure and in community sport. This is the largest investment ever in community sport infrastructure, with a \$51-billion contribution over the next 10 years, with different streams for provinces and territories and community sport organizations.

I often say that sport, physical activity, recreation and play are preventative medicine. They are a great way to knit our communities together and to bring folks together who might not meet at school, work, church or a mosque. It is a really great way to ensure that our communities are well connected. Studies also show that when there is good, high-quality, low-cost and no-cost sport programs in communities, we see safer communities. It is a solution for public safety.

As I was somebody who was probably getting into a bit of trouble after school in grades 7 and 8, my mom found the canoe club. She sent me down to the canoe club because I was too young to take care of myself and too old for a babysitter, and the canoe club was the perfect place for me. It kept me out of trouble in my teenage years. It got me to the Olympics in my twenties. I could not be more grateful for the awesome community sport programs right across the country, but certainly in Oakville at the Burloak Canoe Club. It served me well.

I know that building more community sport facilities is a solution for affordability, for ending anti-social behaviour, for public safety, for health and for mental health. Every pediatrician I talk to says that sport is a great solution for a lot of those things. Once again, the Conservatives can keep emailing me to ask about sport infrastructure in their communities, even though they voted against the budget and are vocal opponents of these investments when they are in the House of Commons. Certainly, when they are in their communities, they welcome the investments.

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The last issue that I will highlight in budget 2025 is the transformational investment in the Canadian military. It is well deserved and a long time coming. There is a well-deserved salary increase for the Canadian Armed Forces, and I am proud of that. As every MP from every party did in this House, I recently attended Remembrance Day ceremonies in my riding and laid a wreath at the base of a cenotaph that commemorates the profound sacrifices that brave men and women made and continue to make for this country.

It goes without saying that these days, the world is more uncertain and potentially even more dangerous than in previous generations. Having a strong military is a necessity. Making our NATO commitments is an obligation. It is also important for our economy, to ensure that we are self-sufficient and reliant. We are moving away from reliance on the United States and other partners for these types of investments. We are also fortifying our own economy and our own reliance. Moving away from reliance and more to resilience is a priority for budget 2025.

Budget 2025 will build Canada strong. Whether we are talking about important programs like the national school food program; the generational investments in non-market housing; the investments in sport, community, physical activity infrastructure and facilities; or the well-deserved increase in salary for the Canadian Armed Forces, I am proud of budget 2025. I am proud of the Prime Minister and all the ministers engaged on these files, and I am proud to take some questions too.

• (1650)

Roman Baber (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the member with respect to housing and the housing plan the Liberals put forward, so I have a few very specific questions for him.

First, why did the Prime Minister have to create a whole new office, the Build Canada Homes agency, instead of running this program from the Ministry of Housing?

Second, the total budget for this program is apparently \$13 billion, and the estimate is roughly 4,000 homes. Why does it take three quarters of a million dollars to build a 600-foot shoebox when we factor in the cost of the bureaucracy?

Finally, there is some relationship, from what I understand, between the company doing the modular homes and Brookfield. What is that relationship and how much will Brookfield benefit from this arrangement?

Hon. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, there was so much misinformation and conspiracy theory jargon in that little question that I do not even know where to start.

Let us start with the obvious. A \$13-billion investment in non-market housing over the next five years is precisely what this country needs. Currently, our co-op and non-market housing stock is too low a percentage when compared to other OECD nations. This should be welcome news to the Conservatives.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, even as I am being heckled by the member who asked a question in good faith, I will continue to answer.

Four thousand homes is just the beginning. The member has multiplied an ongoing denominator, or divided it, by the total amount we will invest over the five years by the current allocation. That is not just bad math, it is disingenuous. He knows that is not the case. He can do math, I presume, but that is just not how this works.

The first tranche is 4,000 homes, which is a good start, but the member knows that those 4,000 homes will not cost \$13 billion. It is farcical and unnecessarily trivial for the member to be pretending so.

• (1655)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will give a specific example, and it is a continuation with regard to the Conservatives, which is the national school food program that the Conservatives have labelled as garbage.

I was first elected back in 1988 when Sharon Carstairs was the leader. At that time, in the Manitoba legislature, we talked about the too many children in school who were learning on empty stomachs and said that we needed to support children in schools. For the first time ever, we now have a Prime Minister and a government that says it should be a permanent program.

Can the member explain to the Conservatives why they should change their attitude toward that program?

Hon. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, I will make a recommendation.

I think it is abhorrent that the Conservatives continue to double down on the notion that healthy snacks for kids in schools is garbage. This supports local agriculture, supports farmers and communities, supports education and edible education, and puts food on the curriculum. It also makes sure that regardless of who forgets their lunch or who does not have a lunch, whether it is for economic or time-based reasons, the healthy school food program that this government has championed is a solution for all those things. There are a million reasons why a kid might not have lunch at school.

Every single kid in class is going to learn better knowing that there are snacks. All the Conservatives need to do is go to a school, talk to a teacher, visit a parent and recognize that a healthy school food program is a solution for affordability. I know they might not believe in public education, as many of them have recently said they do not believe in public health care anymore. The program will save an average family \$800 a year.

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[Translation]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is one measure in the budget that did not get much attention. This measure allows the federal government to exempt itself from the law in the name of innovation or economic growth. Power is quietly being given to the minister, who can temporarily exempt anyone from any federal law based on promises of innovation or economic growth.

It seems to me that this opens the door to a number of possible abuses. Would the member not agree?

Hon. Adam van Koevorden: Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember that Canada is at economic war with the United States and that we need to take action now. We need to consider the tools available to our government to protect all sectors, workers and families in Canada and to give them confidence.

In my view, the people of Canada, Canadian workers and families, can trust our leadership.

[English]

Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, “Spend less, [earn] more”, they said. “Build Canada strong”, they said; “generational investment”, they said.

Objectively, the Liberals would spend more on operating expenses, not less. Objectively, they would build more bureaucracies, not actual projects. Objectively, they would build generational debt that would deny an entire generation of Canadians, all of our young people, the future they were promised.

Imagine never paying one's credit card bill. Imagine opening up a statement and seeing charges piled up, with no plan to ever pay them down. Imagine being told that the decisions we take, the sacrifices we make and the future we hope for no longer matter because somebody else is running up our tab. That is exactly what the budget does. It would create a nearly \$80-billion deficit with no credible plan to balance. Every Canadian family is on the hook. Every dollar borrowed today will have to be repaid tomorrow with interest.

When the government members say our younger generation must sacrifice more, they are not speaking in abstract terms. They are speaking about real Canadians who now face real consequences. They are speaking about my neighbours, the students starting their career, the couple hoping to buy their first home and the young family saving a few dollars each month to make ends meet. It is a government asking people to make sacrifices today, all while it continues to spend as though there is no tomorrow.

Let us be clear: This is not a minor miscalculation. It is a deliberate decision to spend beyond the means of Canadian families and pass the bill on to the next generation. Every additional dollar borrowed today adds to inflation. Every additional dollar borrowed today adds to the costs of housing, groceries, heating and sending a child to school. Every dollar borrowed today will be paid back in greater amounts tomorrow by the very people the government claims to protect.

The message of the budget is clear: Canadians are being asked to sacrifice so that the government can spend more on itself. Canadi-

ans are asked to tighten their belts so that the Liberals can waste their future. This is the harsh reality of a budget that puts numbers before people, ideology before families and spending before responsibility.

Two million Canadians now rely on food banks every month. The Calgary Food Bank is seeing record increases in the number of individuals who are relying on it. In 2019, the food bank was distributing food hampers to 250 families every day. Now, it is up to 800 households every single day. We can let that sink in. In one of the richest countries in the world, in 2025, working Canadians with full-time jobs are lining up at food banks because they can no longer afford to feed their kids on what they earn. It is not a recession; it is a national disgrace. One in five Canadians is skipping meals to make their food last longer.

Canadians are choosing the pay-later option on Amazon or Afterpay for essentials. This is a single mom in Bridlewood, unsure if she can keep her home. It is a senior in Shawnessy whose pension is being eaten away by inflation. It is the newcomer or young couple in Millrise whose dream of home ownership is slipping further out of reach.

What does the government say to these Canadians? When asked about President Trump's tariffs, the Prime Minister shrugged and said, “Who cares?” This is not leadership; it is indifference. The Liberals are only saddling people who are currently struggling and future generations with insurmountable debt.

Bob Cochlan, down the street from me back home, wrote this morning with a way to think about what a billion actually is. He said, “If I give you \$1 billion and you stand on a street corner handing out \$1 per second, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, you would still not have handed out \$1 billion after 31 years.... The next time you hear a politician use the word 'billion' in a casual manner, think about whether you want the 'politicians' spending YOUR tax money.”

Bob is 100% right. The government promised a deficit of \$62 billion. The reality would be \$78.3 billion. That is \$16 billion more than promised.

Spending is out of control. The Liberals would be adding \$990 billion in new commitments, costing the average Canadian family \$5,400 more a year. How many families have \$5,400 kicking around to spend on the Prime Minister's best friends and pet projects?

The interest on our debt would be more than the amount transferred for health care to all the provinces combined. Here is another way to think about it. The next time people buy something, they can look at the GST on their receipt. The GST on every single payment they make all year, and the GST of every Canadian for the whole year, would still not cover the Prime Minister's deficit.

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• (1700)

Every GST dollar now goes directly to Bay Street bankers and foreign bondholders rather than hospital beds, nurses' overtime or family doctors. Families are paying for spending, not services. The government calls these numbers manageable or necessary. What they are is simply a tax on hard work, with nothing being provided in return. Canadians are being asked to bear the cost of spending they did not vote for and cannot afford.

Private sector business investment is collapsing. High taxes, red tape and corporate welfare have driven \$500 billion, half a trillion dollars, south of the border. In Washington, before President Trump, the Prime Minister shamelessly announced this as a Canadian investment. It is capital flight from an over-regulated market that he presides over. Businesses are leaving because the country is no longer stable, predictable or competitive.

It is not just businesses hurting. It is the listener at home who is paying the price for the government's failure to manage the economy. Opportunities are shrinking. Jobs are disappearing. People are leaving the country because the environment for business is hostile and expensive. Along with our dollar, our talent drains south. It is one thing to have a deficit. It is another to destroy the very foundation of a productive and growth economy that creates jobs and opportunity. Every Canadian who works, saves, invests or dreams of starting a family is paying a price.

Conservatives have offered a clear, practical path forward. We have said that we will work with anyone from any party to make life affordable and to restore Canada's promise. We would end the industrial carbon tax in all its forms. We would cut wasteful spending to lower inflation, debt and taxes. We would restore investment and make Canada competitive again. We would put money back into Canadians' paycheques and pensions. Above all, we would use what is in the ground beneath us to unleash our natural resources through national corridors and major infrastructure that would change the game for every single Canadian.

This is how to make life affordable again, not with expensive slogans, such as "generational investment", but with an affordable budget and a bold plan that rewards work and restores opportunity.

I just want to take a step back and place the budget in the context of the last decade. This was supposed to be a historic budget. The country needed a historic budget with big, bold decisions that would unlock our potential, decisions that would break the mindset of middling and declining thinking and replace it with the ambition of a major and rising power, a nation pitched to meet the test of this age.

Canadians are managing the emotional weight of having lost the only period in recent memory when they felt financially secure and felt a sense of security. This was a decade ago, after Stephen Harper rebuilt the economy, built corridors for trade to every part of the planet and restored a self-confident country at peace with itself. The pandemic gave people a temporary, albeit false, sense of stability. The return now to a more expensive and unpredictable world has only intensified a mindset that was already growing well before COVID.

With the Liberals, costs will not retreat to those levels. Work will not return to that simplicity. The sense of control Canadians once felt is fleeting. Unless something fundamental changes, the forces driving their insecurity will remain.

The budget was supposed to give Canadians back control over their lives. Liberals spent the entire campaign harvesting Conservative ideas as their own and are now failing to deliver on any of them, despite having the support of Conservatives. The budget was a wasted opportunity. At a moment when the country needed seriousness, ambition and leadership, Canadians were handed more spending, more debt, more excuses and more government.

Conservatives will deliver the fundamental change that restores control for Canadians. We will reward hard work and create the conditions for higher wages, stronger paycheques, affordable homes and renewed confidence.

The promise of Canada is not gone. It lives in the single mother keeping her family afloat. It lives in the seniors who built the country. It lives in the newcomers and young people who still believe in what Canada could be. They deserve a future they can count on, a country that works harder for them and a government that respects the sacrifices they make every single day. Conservatives will deliver that.

• (1705)

Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we get it. We do not agree on the issue of spending, but does the member not agree that the reality is that President Trump is going to be here for a while? The tariffs exist, much as we are trying to fight them. They are going to affect our economy. There is going to be a downturn in the economy. There are going to be more people on EI and more people relying on social assistance, which costs us money. Is this really a good time to start cutting spending, which would otherwise create those jobs that will stimulate our economy?

Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Speaker, not only is controlling spending, and doing it responsibly, critical for every taxpayer; growing the economy is a critical part of our own sovereignty, our self-reliance and our independence, irrespective of whatever government is in Washington. Canadians need a government ready to make transformational decisions, from pipelines to ports and energy corridors. They need investment facilities to invest in that are tax-free, in order to build this country.

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Canadians need the big ideas that the Conservatives ran on and the Liberals tried to replicate, so irrespective of the Liberals' using Washington as a drama and a smokescreen to hide and shield their ideology and indecision, Conservatives would deliver a government that would actually unlock the potential of this country.

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a fundamentally different opinion from my colleague on several points, particularly the idea of forcing and imposing energy projects without public support.

However, I do agree with him on one point, namely that visits to Washington are a smokescreen, ultimately yielding no concrete results and leading nowhere. For example, during the much-touted televised meeting, the Prime Minister was simply congratulated for not being humiliated live on air. That is pretty much it.

What more could my colleague tell us about the fact that this party was elected on the promise of resolving this issue? No one here can fault him for not being the saviour we needed. After all, he is dealing with Donald Trump, who is a tough negotiator. The problem is that it was he, the Prime Minister, who presented himself as a saviour and even set a deadline for resolving the tariff crisis.

• (1710)

[*English*]

Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Speaker, I understand that my friend, my hon. colleague, and I have our disagreements about how we can make our country prosperous by unleashing our natural resources. I want to unleash natural resources to help Quebecers and to help the province of Quebec succeed in this country and this world. Their ports, their energy, their infrastructure and their industriousness are incredible and should play a bigger part in our country's self-reliance and sovereignty.

However, I also agree with our colleague about the smokescreen in Washington. It is interesting that the Prime Minister put up a strong front during the campaign about how he was going to challenge Donald Trump and achieve a trade deal, but within minutes he took a different position altogether. In fact he has conceded to the President and to the United States on tariffs, on investment in America and on everything the President really wants, but he is not driving toward concluding a deal. In fact he is weakening the Canadian position by not definitively delivering the resources this country needs to be independent of American leverage.

Canada wants a good partnership with the United States ultimately, and we will always focus on negotiating a good deal, but we can do so only from a position of strength.

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about something that is a real concern in Canada right now, which is capital flight. Over \$1 trillion has left Canada and gone to the United States because of the overregulating and overburdening government in Ottawa right now. Recently we heard of a potash company that is building an export terminal in the United States, which puts at risk economic sovereignty and food security in Canada.

I am just wondering if my hon. colleague could expand a little further on the risks Canada is now facing because of the Liberal government.

Shuvaloy Majumdar: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the incredible work he does on behalf of the great people he represents.

The United States and Europe are obsessed with building critical economic and energy infrastructure, not just the stuff to extract from the ground but also stuff to provide value to it and then export it abroad. Canada cannot get its act together on the basic number of projects it must approve, while the United States and the European Union are moving ahead at lightning speed with pipelines, ports, rail, road and everything else that is needed.

That is the kind of determination our government needs to bring. That is the kind of determination the government has never delivered.

Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, is it a time to invest or a time to be frugal? Maybe the right answer is that it is a bit of both.

First, we are in the fortunate financial position of being able to invest, create jobs, build infrastructure and stimulate the economy. According to the IMF, Canada's net debt-to-GDP ratio in 2025, if we look at all levels of government, is by far the best in the G7. In addition, our deficit-to-GDP ratio is second only to that of Japan. As a result, the director of the IMF has said that Canada and Germany alone in the G7 are in the fiscal position to be able to invest in order to spur the economy, in what is otherwise a time of global economic downturn.

Our government also wants to decrease spending while at the same time investing more. We want to invest in order to create jobs, both directly and indirectly. We want to invest in building local infrastructure for things like roads, sewage and water, in order to build the homes Canadians need and want. We also need investment in road, rail and ports so we can efficiently get goods to market, which is increasingly important as our best trade partners have enacted all of their trade barriers. The budget projects that our capital investments will rise to nearly \$60 billion in 2030, nearly double the \$32 billion this year.

Let us talk about some of the investments I like and that are good for my riding. Over 10 years, \$51 billion will go toward the build communities strong fund to build local infrastructure. I will certainly try to use this money to build some of the things I would like built in my riding, for example, Fort William First Nation's chronic care home and a toll-free bridge between International Falls and Fort Frances. I would also really like some of the money to go toward things like hockey rinks. I, like a lot of Canadians, spend the winter watching my kids play hockey and drinking Tim Hortons coffee in aging arenas that need upkeep.

Ports are also important. Thunder Bay is a port city, and as my favourite teacher in high school used to say, we owe our existence to the fact that we are an entrepot, which means a place where goods go from rail and trucks to boats, or vice versa. I am happy to say that the budget provides \$5 billion to create the trade diversification corridors fund, which is money for ports, rail and roads.

On a related note, the budget announced over \$600 million for CBSA. This is in addition to the previous \$1.3 billion, and it allows CBSA to hire 1,000 new officers, which will in turn allow it to open new custom facilities in a number of ports along the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway. Currently, the only port on the seaway that allows customs clearance of container traffic is the port of Montreal, which creates a bottleneck: Boats go from Europe to Montreal in 10 days and then may end up waiting 10 days in order to clear customs. In addition, the lack of other inspection stations results in thousands of trucks on the 401 to the Trans-Canada Highway carrying containers that could be brought far closer to the destination directly by boat.

I have spoken to the port authorities in Hamilton, Picton, Windsor and Goderich. They are all ready and eager to start handling more container traffic, the big obstacle being a lack of CBSA facilities. I know that the port of Thunder Bay is in a very similar situation.

Critical minerals are also something near and dear to the hearts of the people in my riding. Frontier Lithium and Mitsubishi are looking to open the first lithium mine in northwestern Ontario, with the refinery to be in my riding. In a recent speech to the mining community, the Minister of Natural Resources made a statement that I think is worth repeating; he said that we all remember the awful situation President Zelenskyy found himself in a few months ago at the White House, where he was told, "you have no cards to play". We as a country have lots of cards to play.

We have a lot of natural resources, including critical minerals that are needed for the defence industry and for the green transition. Developing these resources will create jobs. It will also mean that, to the degree possible, we will no longer be as dependent on fair-weather friends. A priority for the government will be to help more critical mineral projects get to a final assessment decision within a two-year window. The budget proposes to provide \$2 billion to create the critical minerals sovereign fund. The fund will make strategic investments in critical mineral projects and companies.

In addition, the budget includes \$370 million to create the first and last mile fund, which is a fund that would support the development of critical mineral projects and supply chains with a focus on getting near-term projects into production as soon as possible. The

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fund would also absorb the critical minerals infrastructure fund, providing \$1.5 billion to support clean energy and transportation infrastructure projects related to critical minerals development.

● (1715)

Forestry is a sector we all know is hurting. I grew up outside Thunder Bay in an area where most of my friends were the children of Finnish Canadian bush workers. Forestry is practically in our DNA. Last October, the U.S. imposed a 10% tariff on softwood lumber, which is in addition to the pre-existing duties, bringing the total tax on Canadian softwood lumber to over 45%.

Our forests are one of our most valuable assets. In the long term, I think things look good for the industry. We and the Americans will continue to need lumber in order to build homes. In addition, our government will seek to use more wood in government-funded projects; encourage the development of things like cross-lamination, which would allow more building with wood and less reliance on concrete and steel; and encourage the development of novel uses for wood fibre, for example, biofuels.

Although in the long term things look pretty good for the sector, the problem is obviously the short term and surviving the existing tariffs and duties. To help with that and to get the sector through this period, our government has created the \$5-billion strategic response fund and regional tariff support measures.

Also in the budget is, as of today, up to \$1.2 billion in loan guarantees administered by the Business Development Bank of Canada to provide financial support to help companies maintain and restructure their operations; \$500 million to renew and expand existing programs for the sector, focused on market and product diversification; and \$50 million for re-skilling and income supports for affected softwood lumber workers.

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Alstom is currently involved in negotiating a single-source contract for the purchase of Toronto's line 2 subway cars, which will be built, I am happy to say, primarily in Thunder Bay. To some extent, the decision to have the cars built in Thunder Bay paved the way for the commitment the government has made, in the budget, that with federal procurement, we will as much as possible buy Canadian. There is no damn way the cars should ever be built in the United States, and I trust that when we replace the existing Via Rail fleet outside the Quebec-Windsor corridor, those trains will also be built in Canada, primarily in Thunder Bay, with some work also going to La Pocatière and to Kingston.

I am a doctor, and I still practise once in a while, so what is in the budget for health care? There is \$5 billion for health infrastructure, as well as money for, and this is important, credentialing. When I was an intern in Toronto in 1986, I used to joke that if I had a problem, I should ask the person mopping the floor, because they were probably a doctor from Brazil or Guatemala. Really, not a lot has changed in the intervening years with respect to credentialing, despite the fact that a lot of Canadians do not have a family doctor, particularly in rural areas.

That has begun to change, and with the budget, we propose to provide \$97 million towards establishing a foreign credential recognition action fund to work with the provinces to improve foreign credential recognition and bridging programs to help foreign-trained professionals, particularly in health care, meet Canadian standards.

In this context, I would like to acknowledge two provincial programs that I think have been particularly successful in churning out doctors: PACE, the Physician Assessment Centre of Excellence in Halifax, and a one-year bridging program for foreign trained doctors run by the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons and the University of Manitoba. These are programs we ought to emulate in other areas like northern Ontario.

Last, Canada has historically underfunded research and development in comparison to other places. The international talent attraction strategy and action plan will go a long way to address underfunding. Every cloud has a silver lining. This is absolutely a time to start poaching top-notch American talent. The budget provides \$1.7 billion for a suite of recruitment measures, including \$400 million for a complementary stream of research infrastructure to be used by this new talent.

In conclusion, I like the budget. It is good for Thunder Bay—Rainy River. I suggest that it is also great for Canada.

• (1720)

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

Before I begin, I want to recognize the life of Ziya Gul Zalmai, mother to Alex. Alex came to Canada from Afghanistan and settled in Kamloops because it reminded him of Afghanistan. He witnessed so much in Afghanistan. I was really saddened to learn that his mother recently passed away. Therefore in recognition of a life well lived, I will say, “May perpetual light shine upon her.”

I listened to my colleague's speech. He spoke about the credentialing of doctors. A couple of medical students have reached out to my office. They are training overseas in other Commonwealth nations, and they say that they cannot get residencies here. What do we do about that?

Marcus Powlowski: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for mentioning two things.

One is Afghanistan. I, too, have worked a lot on that file. I think it is still an open file, and we have a lot more to do on it. A lot of people in Afghanistan who worked with our forces are still trying to get into this country, and I would certainly like to work toward that.

In terms of the people, especially Canadians, who have been educated overseas, the health committee is currently studying that. We are looking at it, and we want to get those people here. They are Canadians and want to work in Canada. We have the need for it. We have to help, and with this money, hopefully we will open the doors to allow those people to work in Canada, which is what we all want on all sides of the House.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in his speech, my colleague talked a bit about the forestry industry.

We saw the Prime Minister's announcement today. Unfortunately, although there is a program that provides liquidity support, it is struggling to get up and running. People in the forestry sector do not want more debt. What they want is a program that would allow the countervailing and anti-dumping duties to be bought up, which is not necessarily the case today. The fact that there is no such program does not help the forestry sector in the short term. I do not know whether my colleague has forestry companies in his riding, but this clearly does not meet their needs.

I would like to hear his comments on that.

• (1725)

[*English*]

Marcus Powlowski: Mr. Speaker, I think I know what my colleague is referring to. When there is a trade dispute with the United States, particularly with respect to forestry and dumping, and companies have paid money, which is sitting in the United States Congress, they would like to access that money. I can certainly appreciate that, but I think our government has announced a whole range of measures allowing companies to borrow money, which will hopefully help them get through the next few years. We realize that it is worth loaning money to these companies, partly because we believe that, hopefully, some of that money will eventually come back to them.

Government Orders

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the member is very passionate about our softwood lumber industry and the importance of trade. I am wondering if he can reflect on one of the two issues that he likes to talk about. I see trade as critically important, and I see lumber, given today's announcement by the Prime Minister, as very important. What would he highlight as his important issue over the coming weeks?

Marcus Powlowski: Mr. Speaker, overwhelmingly, what our government wants to do is come to an agreement with the United States in order to reduce the tariffs on softwood lumber. That is absolutely critical. However, in the meantime, I think we have put a lot of measures in place, including some of the things that were announced by the Prime Minister today.

For example, one thing the Prime Minister announced today was working with rail companies to try to reduce freight rates for Canadian steel and lumber by 50%. He also talked about the importance of using Build Canada Homes to use more Canadian lumber to try to offset the fact that we are not as able, obviously because of tariffs, to sell lumber to the United States. As much as we have tried to provide an alternative market for building with wood in Canada, the reality is that the United States is 10 times the size of our economy, and it is very difficult with the domestic market alone to make up for the deficit caused by the United States not buying as much Canadian lumber.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to speak to Bill C-15. This bill is part of the government's efforts to respond to the current tariff crisis with the Americans. I would say that it is a very weak, very lukewarm response.

The negotiations with the Americans are currently on hold, and I do not believe anything in the budget will help meet the needs of Quebec. I do not think that it will help meet the needs of Canadians either. I will try to explain why.

There was one aspect of Bill C-15 that was very off-putting to the Bloc Québécois, and that was the addition of several billion dollars in new subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. Our leader indicated from the outset that this was a non-starter. If the government added tax credits or subsidies to the fossil fuel sector, which has greatly benefited from such measures, the Bloc Québécois could not support the budget. In fact, we voted against the budget without hiding behind the curtains.

Bill C-15 includes an increase to the carbon capture and storage tax credit. The period currently goes from 2031 to 2036, but it is being extended to 2041, which will negatively impact the energy transition. We know that the principle of carbon capture and storage is mainly aimed at carbon-neutral oil production, which is a pipe dream.

It also expands the clean technology investment tax credit to include small nuclear power plants. A year and a half ago, we learned that the main objective for developing small nuclear power plants was to support the oil and gas sector by supplying the heat needed to extract bitumen and to enable it to export more gas rather than using other types of energy to process oil sands.

The budget also includes incentives for the conversion of liquefied natural gas power plants. Once again, massive support is being offered to fossil fuels.

Then there is the whole hydrogen component. In the last two or three budgets, there were considerable tax benefits for green hydrogen. There is no hiding the truth any longer: More flexible tax credits means that the gas and oil sector will be able to produce hydrogen from gas and oil and benefit from a tax credit.

The thing that bothers me the most is what the budget says about pathways plus, which is a project of national interest, according to the government. I will come back to the oil companies that make up the Pathways Alliance.

The purpose of the pathways plus project is to capture and store all emissions from the oil sector in order to achieve, as I was saying earlier, the infamous pipe dream known as low-carbon oil. The best analogy I can think of to explain what low-carbon oil means is as follows. Trying to make oil low-carbon is like going on a diet. Everyone knows not to eat poutine when dieting. There is no such thing as low-calorie poutine. There is no such thing as low-carbon oil either. This government pipe dream has found its way into the budget as a way to indirectly support the oil and gas sector. In the end, low-carbon oil will never be produced, and Quebec taxpayers' money will once again have been used to support the greedy oil and gas sector.

There is a precedent. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I remember the government saying that we had to keep our economic sectors going, so it launched the infamous emissions reduction fund. This fund was intended to reduce emissions from the oil and gas sector. After a year and a half, we realized that this was far from being the case. Production was allowed to increase, but emissions were never reduced. An unequivocal report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer demonstrated, with supporting evidence, that the government had not accomplished its mission. It was another fossil fuel subsidy in disguise. I am afraid that history could repeat itself today.

● (1730)

Why does that bother me? It bothers me because the purpose of this budget is ostensibly to develop infrastructure so Canada can break away from the United States. The government has repeatedly said that there will be trade corridors and infrastructure that will allow us to develop more trade with Europe. That is how we are going to sustain our economy and break away from the United States.

Government Orders

However, if we look at the energy sector, particularly the gas and oil sector, we see that the four members of the Pathways Alliance represent 80% of all oil sands companies. They are Canadian Natural Resources, Cenovus, Imperial Oil and Suncor Energy. These companies are 73% foreign-owned and 60% American-owned. There will be investments in carbon capture strategies. The government may announce a new pipeline project tomorrow. We have already paid \$34 billion for one. Whose interests will these funds serve? They will serve 60% American interests.

Worse still, even my Conservative friends are talking about the affordability crisis. Everyone knows that it is the cost of energy that is putting pressure on inflation. We know that the cost of energy has been rising sharply since the pandemic. Why? It is because the cost of refining fossil fuels is rising because the industry's margins are appallingly high. When we take a closer look at this, we realize that—I am warning my colleagues, their hair might stand on end—from 2021 to 2024, the big oil and gas companies made \$131 billion in profits. That is a record.

These companies did not use their profits to buy infrastructure with. They did not use it to pay for carbon capture or storage. What they did was give dividends to their shareholders. They gave almost \$80 billion in dividends to their shareholders. Three-quarters of the profits made by the oil and gas sector went to the United States.

Today, the government is telling us that three-quarters of \$80 billion is not enough. It is going to try to help them a little more and pay for their infrastructure too. Tomorrow, the government is going to announce a pipeline project. The budget talks about the infamous pathways plus project, under which we will collectively pay for carbon capture strategies only to watch six-tenths of the money from the oil sector's profits slip right through our fingers. It will not be reinvested in our health care system or our education system. No, it is going straight to the United States. This project is supposed to be the centrepiece of the government's plan to break away from the United States by developing Canada's own energy infrastructure. I do not know if any of that is the least bit coherent to anyone else, but I am having a hard time understanding it.

Meanwhile, the forestry sector is going through some very tough times. We had a debate on this yesterday. The government announced a \$700-million liquidity support program in August. Today, it increased that amount to \$1.2 billion. However, people in the forestry sector are saying that more loans are not what they need. What they need is a plan to help save the forestry sector.

Clearly, what the government announced does not address this issue. It cannot even reach an agreement with the big banks to implement this process. The only solution available to the government is one that I have been talking about for three days now. The only solution is the proposal made by the forestry sector itself to buy back the countervailing and anti-dumping duties to enable it to survive. When I look at the budget, the government seems to be far more interested in the oil and gas sector than in the forestry sector.

That evidently explains why the Bloc Québécois voted against this budget.

• (1735)

Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if I may switch gears, we created the Major Projects Office this year. We have announced three major projects in Quebec.

The first is the container terminal in Contrecoeur, which will generate economic spinoffs worth \$140 million a year. The second is the Alto high-speed train, which is expected to inject \$35 billion into the GDP and create 51,000 jobs between Quebec City and Windsor. The third is the eastern energy partnership, which will see Quebec invest in Churchill Falls and Gull Island to bring clean energy to Quebec.

I would like to hear my esteemed colleague's thoughts on these three projects.

Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, I assume there will be a committee study of Bill C-15. The Bloc Québécois believes that it gives ministers far too much power. Now, there is a lot of hype in this bill. What I expect from the government is not to announce its intentions that will only have an impact 10, 15 or 20 years down the road. I expect it to do for the forestry industry what it is doing for the oil and gas industry. What the government is proposing to the forestry industry is to go into debt. What it is offering the oil and gas industry are unprecedented tax breaks.

I hope that my colleague, who is from Quebec, understands that there is a double standard. When it comes to oil and gas, our government is there. When it comes to the forestry sector, it is nowhere to be found.

[*English*]

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

Before I begin, I was recently approached by a member of the community who informed me that his mom had passed away. I would like to express my condolences and respects to the family of Kamaljit Cheema. I know that Kamaljit will be very much missed. I extend my deepest condolences. May perpetual light shine upon her.

I do not believe the Liberals take the forestry industry seriously. In question period yesterday, the President of the Treasury Board laughed and suggested we were lying about mills that were shut down. When I raised that during the take-note debate yesterday, the member for Calgary Confederation laughed. I asked what his riding is, and he gleefully told us Calgary Confederation. I do not know that I would be gleefully telling anybody that when I am laughing about mill closures.

These are people's livelihoods. Forestry fed my family. My dad came from Italy with nothing and forestry fed us.

Does the member agree that the Liberals have to not only take it more seriously but also show us that they are prepared to take it more seriously?

• (1740)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, the first part of my colleague's question had to do with the death of one of his constituents. I offer my sympathies even though I do not know what this has to do with my speech.

For the rest, I will simply say that I was criticizing the government, but I can also criticize the leader of the official opposition. In his speech yesterday, the leader of the official opposition was unwilling to take a position on a legitimate request from Quebec's forestry sector. He would not say whether he was willing to support a program to buy back 50% of the countervailing and anti-dumping duties. He stayed mum.

Honestly, what I want is for the entire House to take the situation in the forestry sector seriously and help us work toward a potential solution that would be viable for everyone and that would not cost the government one cent. That is what I want, and I invite my Conservative friends to join in this effort.

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, I presume that my colleague is also in favour of a durable resolution as part of the renegotiations of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement and would agree that we can no longer allow endless lawsuits that bankrupt industries.

Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, that is an interesting question. We have been getting ripped off since 2017. The American government uses every trick in the book to avoid the outcomes of the rulings from trade tribunals. No one in the Canadian government has the courage to stand up to it. That is what is disappointing. I would really like to see this change in the future.

[*English*]

James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6:07 p.m. to begin private members' hour.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

SERGEI MAGNITSKY INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC) moved that Bill C-219, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law), the Special Economic Measures Act and the Broadcasting Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Private Members' Business

He said: Madam Speaker, I want to thank all members of this House for their understanding of the personal situation I am going through right now and for accommodating me tonight by moving up my time slot so we could start the debate on my private member's bill. As most of my colleagues who have been here for a while know, it sometimes takes a long time to get up in the draw and get a private member's bill into debate in the House and into committee so that maybe at the end of the day, it can be successfully adopted, become law and appear in the statutes of Canada.

I am very proud to present my new private member's bill, Bill C-219, the Sergei Magnitsky international anti-corruption and human rights act. I want to thank my seconder from Peterborough—

Philip Lawrence: Northumberland—Clarke.

James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I was close enough. I should have written that down.

The hon. member brought forward a bill in the last Parliament, as I did. In this Parliament, we have stuck them together and expanded on them to deal with corrupt foreign officials and kleptocrats from the many different theocracies and dictatorships. In these regimes, especially Communist regimes, people continue to use their powers and positions of influence to be kleptocrats, be corrupt and commit atrocities against their own people.

This bill would make amendments to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act and the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, also known as the Sergei Magnitsky Law, which Senator Raynell Andreychuk and I brought in back in 2017 and became law. The bill would also update the Special Economic Measures Act to rename it to the Sergei Magnitsky global sanctions act. It would also amend the Broadcasting Act.

Just so everybody knows who Sergei Magnitsky is, in case they have not been exposed to his story, a gentleman a lot of members might know, Bill Browder, wrote a book called *Red Notice*. He was American and was the largest foreign investor in Russia until 2005. In 2008, it became evident that kleptocrats in the Kremlin were using his former company to commit tax evasion and tax fraud, so he hired a lawyer and accountant by the name of Sergei Magnitsky, who uncovered the largest tax fraud in Russian history. He was then arrested, detained, tortured and killed. It was a horrific thing that happened. He died in detention in a Russian prison on November 16, 2009.

None of the individuals who were responsible for the fraud, the false accusations and the criminal charges that were brought against him, and none of the individuals who enriched themselves from government coffers through the tax fraud they committed in the name of Bill Browder, were ever sanctioned and brought to justice. We cannot allow Canada or our allies to sit on the sidelines while gross human rights violators and corrupt foreign officials continue to commit atrocities, enrich themselves, abuse their citizens and ultimately walk away. Canada cannot be a safe haven for that.

Private Members' Business

Parliament started engaging with this back in 2012. Bill Browder, former Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov and Vladimir Kara-Murza of the People's Freedom Party were here in Parliament to call on the government of the day to adopt Magnitsky sanctions to protect human rights activists in Russia and make sure that pro-democracy activists around the world were better protected, because we were going to name, shame, sanction and ban those individuals from allied nations.

In 2012, the United States adopted the first Magnitsky legislation. It was followed by the European Parliament in 2013. As we all know, on February 27, 2015, Nemtsov was assassinated just outside the Kremlin, on the bridge right beside it.

In March 2015, here in Canada, both the House and the Senate brought forward resolutions, which were passed unanimously, calling on the government to install Magnitsky sanctions. In 2017, the Sergei Magnitsky Law was adopted unanimously after it was brought forward by Senator Andreychuk in the Senate and me in the House.

● (1745)

Using the name of Sergei Magnitsky in our sanctions regime delivers a strong political message against Putin's brutal dictatorship and his equally corrupt allies. In the bill's preamble, it asks the government to continue to engage with our friends around the world to establish the international anti-corruption court at The Hague. This is something that has been advocated for by Integrity Initiatives International. Canada, the Netherlands and Ecuador issued a statement back in November 2022 to work towards getting it established. I was on a call just last week, and that process continues.

We need to have the international anti-corruption court with the purpose that, if we can arrest and prosecute those corrupt foreign officials, we would be not only reducing the crimes against citizens in those countries, but probably also decreasing the number of crimes against humanity. Before anyone ever becomes a genocidal maniac, they always start off as a corrupt foreign official. First, they get stuff and money out of the treasury and into their own pockets, and then they start abusing their citizens. That is when we see genocides happen, war crimes happen, human rights violated, and political prisoners and people of conscience thrown in jail.

I will go through what this bill would do. First, it would require the Minister of Foreign Affairs to publish an annual report on what the Government of Canada is doing to advance human rights internationally, as well as include the names and the status of prisoners of conscience around the world, especially Canadians who are being held in other countries. This is important, and we now have a definition of what a prisoner of conscience is. I will get into it later.

We would also amend the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, the Sergei Magnitsky Law, and the Special Economic Measures Act, also known as SEMA, so they would better align with each other and the legislation would no longer be in conflict with each other, as well as align ourselves with what our allies are doing.

We would define what transnational repression is and sanction foreign nationals who commit it in Canada and elsewhere. We would ban immediate family members of sanctioned foreign na-

tionals so Canada cannot be used as a safe haven, or as a way to hide their children, their spouse, their concubines and their girlfriends, as we often see, and use them as a way to illegally move their illicit funds into Canada, as well as protect their families from the very people they are abusing back in their own countries. The bill would require the government to table in Parliament the names of foreign nationals and entities that are added to the sanctions list to ensure there is better transparency. We would have that tabled back here in the House so we can look at it as parliamentarians.

It would require the RCMP and FINTRAC to report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the making, administering and enforcing of sanctions. I will get into that a little bit later. It would allow parliamentary committees to recommend names and entities to be sanctioned, and require the minister to report back to the House on that decision, or to the Senate if the committee and the Senate should undertake these studies.

This is an opportunity for those in the diaspora communities across Canada to have direct input into the process of why people should be added to lists, or maybe why they should not. It would also amend the Broadcasting Act to immediately revoke licenses for media outlets that are operated by sanctioned entities, individuals or states that the House or the Senate has recognized as having committed a genocide. Immediately, those states would have all their media banned from the Canadian airwaves.

The definition of transnational repression involves the tactics used by a foreign state to intimidate, harass, surveil or threaten individuals or groups located outside the state borders, or to physically harm such individuals or members of such groups, including elected officials, political dissidents, human rights defenders, exiled journalists, diaspora communities, civil society activists and refugees for the purpose of silencing dissent and stifling activism.

We know the corrupt regimes of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party, of Iran and of Russia are doing this in Canada right now. We hear these stories all the time. Just on November 13, the Globe and Mail reported, "CSIS director warns that China and Russia continue to target Canada". When I meet with diaspora communities, they have story after story of somebody who is tied to the government of their nation, or the embassies and consulates they have located across this country, out there intimidating the families.

Private Members' Business

● (1750)

In the last election, Joe Tay, who was the Conservative candidate for the riding of Don Valley North, was told by the RCMP and by CSIS not to go out and door knock, because his life was in danger. This was based upon the intelligence they received from other individuals who were informing them about foreign agents working against him. Joe, of course, has celebrity status within the Chinese and Hong Kong community, and as an advocate for Hong Kongers, has now been targeted by both the Hong Kong executive council and the regime in Beijing.

We know the story of the Chinese police stations that were set up all across Canada to intimidate Chinese Canadians to ensure that they were not doing things China was not in favour of.

We have a very small Uyghur community in Canada; I had a number of them in my office just last week. One young woman told me that she came to Canada and started to speak out against the genocide and atrocities being committed against the Uyghur people, such as forced labour camps, sterilization and reprogramming, which is the brainwashing of children, taking away their faith and their language. The woman has a very sick mother, who is still in China, and she is being denied treatment because of her daughter's activities here in Canada in fighting for human rights and freedom.

I was in Halifax at the International Security Forum this past weekend, and I was talking to the executive director of the World Uyghur Congress. She said that she started speaking out against the Chinese government and the Communist regime in Beijing, and her sister was arrested in 2018. She has had no contact with her for the entire seven years.

We always have the Falun Gong practitioners and their activism; their families are also being targeted. We have the Hong Kong Watch patrons.

We also know about the Iranian community here and how it is being targeted by agents of the theocracy in Tehran. They are also driving around with police cars that are painted up just like the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The one thing that we are going to require is for the minister to publish this report once a year on what they are doing on prisoners of conscience and on human rights activities. A prisoner of conscience is an individual who, in contravention of international human rights standards, has been detained or otherwise physically restricted solely because of their identity or their conscientiously held beliefs, including religious or political beliefs.

Again, we have heard from many different diaspora communities and families of prisoners of conscience that this is happening. Jimmy Lai is another one we hear about. He is a media mogul; he is 77 years old. He went through a show trial that lasted for months on end, and he has been held in solitary confinement for over 1,700 days without access to his medications. His health is failing, and he is being held there because he is an advocate for democracy within Hong Kong. Of course, they will not have any part of that in Beijing or in Hong Kong through the executive council.

Vladimir Kara-Murza, who is a supporter of this bill and has been here before, has been targeted and poisoned twice by Russian

agents. He was left in a coma at one time, and then he was imprisoned recently, in 2022, because he criticized Putin and his war machine for invading Ukraine. He stood on the side of Ukraine, and he was arrested and held. Luckily, through a prisoner swap, he was able to get out and is now free again. He told me that the only thing that works is public attention. If it wasn't for public attention, he says he would be dead in Siberia now.

We kept on talking about Vladimir Kara-Murza. The House passed a unanimous motion, brought forward by my friend from Calgary, the current Deputy Speaker. He brought it forward to give honorary citizenship to Vladimir Kara-Murza. Because of that, he is free today, and it is the same for the two Michaels. When we can shine the spotlight on this type of corruption, these atrocities and human rights abuses, people go free and democracy, human rights and liberty are better served.

● (1755)

Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for introducing this bill. My personal view is that it is really important that Canada has a sanctions regime that allows us to not only uphold human rights, but also enforce the international rules-based order. That is not just the right thing for countries around the world to do; it is essential to protecting Canada's security and sovereignty.

Based on discussions I have had with colleagues and folks outside of this House, many folks have ideas or thoughts about how the bill could be further improved to further strengthen our sanctions regime. Is the member open to working with members of other parties in this House to amend the bill to make it even stronger and more effective?

● (1800)

James Bezan: Madam Speaker, yes, I am always open to ways to make legislation stronger. I have already had a conversation with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on ways we can strengthen the bill. I am always open to anything we can do to make it better.

There is one thing I never got to in my speech. My friend from Etobicoke Centre and I are very active with our Ukrainian communities. We want to make sure that any frozen assets, and I am thinking about Russian frozen assets, are forfeited in a reasonable amount of time for the benefit of Ukraine or any other victims, as with the shooting down of PS752 and the Iranian families that are still waiting for justice. When we think about the big Antonov plane that has been sitting at the end of the Pearson runway for the last two years, this bill would make it so the minister has to act within 12 months to forfeit assets and make sure the financial benefits are given to the victims of the aggressor.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his bill and his very interesting speech, and I am pleased to know that he is willing to work together to improve his bill.

Private Members' Business

I know that one aspect was particularly important to my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean, namely the fact that the bill introduces the concept of transnational repression. The Bloc Québécois had been calling for this.

However, we do have some concerns. One thing that comes to mind is the request to publish the names and status of political prisoners, which could evidently have an impact on their immediate family members for a number of reasons. I would like my colleague to talk about that aspect.

[English]

James Bezan: Madam Speaker, we are going to work with all members of this House to make sure we are not putting at risk anyone who is in a delicate situation. However, from what I am hearing from those who have been political prisoners, like Michael Kovrig and Vladimir Kara-Murza, it is the extra spotlight shined through the media and through statements made in this House and elsewhere that puts the governments holding these people falsely in a very uncomfortable position.

I know there are sensitivities around some prisoners of conscience and some families. We definitely do not want in any way, shape or form to disrupt any negotiations and discussions taking place that will result in their safe release.

[Translation]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this bill is clearly based on very commendable and noble ideas. Furthermore, we truly believe there are some elements that are interesting enough to warrant closer examination, but certain details still need to be worked out.

This idea seems to be inspired by the Americans and directly drawn from the 1990s. We know that when the Americans tightened sanctions against several countries, in the name of fighting corruption, for example, that was accompanied by the extraterritoriality of law, meaning that the Americans forced sovereign nations and companies in other countries not to do business with countries that the United States wanted to boycott.

Is my colleague concerned that with such a bill, Canada would be replicating this form of imperialism to some extent?

[English]

James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I would just say that this is not about trying to force other governments to change their regimes. This is about changing the behaviour of individuals. This is about going after those who ultimately go and rob from the people they are supposed to be serving and then commit atrocities against them. We want to make sure that they are held to account. If we do not do that, they will turn into even worse criminals, worse human rights abusers and, ultimately, monsters.

• (1805)

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am honoured today to speak to Canada's active efforts to advance human rights; combat corruption, including through the use of sanctions; and continue to explore the possibilities of the bill.

Canada is committed to upholding the legacy left by Sergei Magnitsky in establishing a global framework to combat corruption and human rights violations. Whether by holding states accountable for violations, championing the rights of women and girls, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups or by countering the threat of transnational repression, human rights remain at the core of our Canadian identity. These are values that are central to our foreign policy, as articulated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. They are foundational and necessary for a secure society and to make a society prosperous.

I want to begin by thanking the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for presenting this private member's bill, Bill C-219. The bill underscores a common objective that we share in the House, which is to work together to promote and protect human rights internationally and to modernize how Canada enacts sanctions.

[Translation]

I also want to acknowledge the work of the member for Northumberland—Clarke, who introduced a similar bill in the previous Parliament. Like its predecessor, Bill C-219 highlights the important ways in which Canada protects international human rights.

[English]

Bill C-219, at its core, seeks to amend four laws, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act; the Special Economic Measures Act, known as SEMA; the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, or the Magnitsky law; and the Broadcasting Act.

Bill C-219 is very well intentioned and includes important measures to modernize our approach. However, some provisions, as currently drafted, could inadvertently undermine individual or public safety and hinder the effectiveness of sanctions. We believe that the foreign affairs committee is absolutely necessary and is the right place to delve into this piece of legislation to make sure that it mirrors Canadian values and the objectives that we all share in the House regarding human rights and the protection of individuals and society.

I will summarize some of the key elements of the bill and identify areas where consideration in committee could add some important and significant value. While the government plays a central role in the protection of human rights, as governments around the world do, we are not alone in these efforts. Day after day, human rights defenders, activists, journalists, lawyers, community leaders and everyday citizens are the backbone of accountability and progress. Their insights, their lived experiences and their grassroots connections strengthen policy and democratic institutions around the world. Supporting them is not optional. It is an imperative. We need to especially stand by them when they are in peril.

Private Members' Business

[Translation]

“Voices at Risk: Canada's Guidelines on Supporting Human Rights Defenders” reflects the government's commitment to supporting their essential and courageous work. Canadian officials abroad adapt these guidelines to the local context and specific needs of each individual and each case. They do so to provide the most effective support and defence possible, often in close collaboration with our partners.

[English]

When a human rights defender who is at risk is a Canadian, regardless of whether they are a dual citizen, Canada considers this to be a consular case. These cases are monitored closely by Canadian officials providing consular assistance on a, usually, daily basis. This is part of the Vienna Convention.

While the bill seeks to protect human rights defenders, we have concerns that some of the specific elements could put the safety and security of human rights defenders, including Canadian citizens, at risk. I know that the safety and security of these defenders are paramount to all of us in the House, and I look forward to exploring these issues in greater detail at committee.

The government recognizes and values Parliament's role not only in studying sanctions but also furthering our sanctions regime, the tools to protect human rights and the tools to take on corruption and other crises.

• (1810)

The passage of a Senate public bill, Bill S-226, in 2017, was one example of Parliament's working to improve our sanctions regime as a response to human rights violations and acts of significant corruption. Two reports, tabled in the Senate and in the House in 2023 and 2024, respectively, showed how significant our work in this House is to make sure that government is responsive to the desires, the will and the aspirations of Canadians.

Sanctions are a key component in Canada's approach to protecting the rules-based order and in advancing human rights. Recently, we have seen the use of sanctions increase significantly as conflicts escalate in nature, such as in the case of Ukraine. Canada has sanctioned nearly 2,300 individuals and over 1,000 entities or vessels since 2022. It is an exponential increase in the number of sanctions that we have been doing. However, at the same time, we want to constantly re-examine our sanctions regime to make sure it is fit for purpose.

[Translation]

Our government remains firmly committed to ensuring that Canada plays a leading role in preserving and strengthening a rules-based international order. Sanctions are a critical tool for advancing this approach.

[English]

However, as I said, we need to update the sanctions tool box. I am very pleased that the member has added the concept of transnational repression, and I reflect on the fact that the Bloc Québécois has also seen this as an important new trigger for sanctions. We respectfully accept this and think it is an important addition.

However, we think the bill can be strengthened by adding some other triggers, such as migrant smuggling, foreign interference, cyber- and hybrid attacks, organized crime, undermining democracy and arbitrary detention. These are things that should also trigger the use of sanctions, as well as transnational repression.

I want to underscore that in all of this, we need to be evidence-based and thoughtful as we push on the sanctions to make them effective. We do not want to add cost to the system. We want to ensure that we find an effective way that is both profound and important, to ensure that the Canadian taxpayer is able to stand up and say, “These are dollars that are being well spent.” Therefore, I challenge the committee as well to look at the bill from that lens to ensure that we have an effective use of Canadian dollars as we promote human rights and as we defend our world against corruption. Transparency, accountability, parliamentary engagement, inter-agency co-operation and information are all things that could add costs but that could also be very effective and could be part of a tool box that would both be effective and save taxpayer money.

One section of the bill that, very frankly, I am less familiar with, because it is not in my wheelhouse, is the Broadcasting Act section. However, I understand, as we all do, that media is critical and important in the promotion of human rights. The broadcasting-related provision of Bill C-219 seeks to curtail the proliferation of broadcast content from licensed broadcasters found to be susceptible to influence from foreign actors, foreign persons or foreign entities, especially ones who have committed genocide or are under Canadian sanctions. This is something we all agree on. However, we want to test all the recommendations in the bill, which would become law, to ensure that they would actually accomplish this while preserving the freedom of the press.

In conclusion, we are eager for further debate on Bill C-219. We are ready to take it to committee. We want to support the member in his aspirations to look at the bill, but we also challenge and commend the committee to do its due diligence on the bill, to find out the way a parliamentary committee can make it more effective, to make it better to defend human rights and better to fight corruption, and to make it effective and sustainable to attack not only today's issues, but tomorrow's issues. This would be a piece of legislation that will last, so we want to make sure it is fit for purpose not only for today, but also for tomorrow.

Again, I want to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for his ongoing co-operation and conversation about the bill. I look forward to getting it to committee and having all members of the House, through their committee, be sure to make it the most effective bill possible.

Private Members' Business

• (1815)

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am really pleased to be able to give this speech this evening because what I have to say is very important to me.

Since the new Parliament began, many of my colleagues in the House will certainly have noticed, as I have, that the importance of parliamentary and committee work seems of little interest to the Prime Minister of Canada. He seems far too busy meeting with leaders of what I would call dubious countries, to put it politely, including China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

In the meantime, parliamentarians are working hard in committee to improve bills or collaborate on drafting reports and recommendations, often involving complex files, based on testimony that is frequently heart-wrenching or hard to hear. On this point, I am thinking more specifically of the colleagues I have the honour to serve with on the Subcommittee on International Human Rights or my friends on the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, with whom I recently studied Bill C-3 on lost Canadians, and whose amendments, though supported by the majority of committee members, were defeated once they arrived in the House.

Today, I feel I must highlight the importance of the work carried out by parliamentarians in committee. I know that this aspect of our work requires thoroughness, precision and, above all, a willingness to collaborate and improve things. Unfortunately, as we know, committee proceedings are not the most exciting thing to watch on television. However, committees are where the most important work is done for the future. Committee work has a concrete impact on people's lives.

Unfortunately, as I said at the outset, I do not believe that this government fully understands the legislative implications or the scope of the work involved. Without wanting to make puns like my Conservative friends do, who cares about committee work? That is probably what the Prime Minister would say. I say this because, while the bill before us today incorporates several aspects of Bill C-281, some elements are quite different.

Bill C-219 was introduced by our Conservative colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman. I would like to send him my thoughts because he is an extraordinary person and a pleasure to work with, and he is going through some difficult times these days. Bill C-219 is similar in some ways to Bill C-281, which died on the Order Paper in the Senate after receiving unanimous support in the House of Commons at third reading, including support from the Bloc Québécois.

As I was saying, Bill C-219 incorporates some aspects of Bill C-281, but with a few significant differences. Committee work will therefore be essential—as I think my Liberal colleagues have said—to verify the scope and impact of the bill and to propose amendments as necessary. More specifically, as my colleague from Jonquière mentioned in a question earlier, I am thinking that the request to publish the names and status of political prisoners may not sit well with immediate family members for a number of obvious reasons. For example, a family could be afraid of reprisals from the country in question and could be totally opposed to making the in-

formation publicly available. This point was raised by the Bloc Québécois during the study of Bill C-281.

The bill also introduces the concept of transnational repression, a request that was also made by the Bloc Québécois. We even included it in our election platform. I would like to thank my colleague, the sponsor of the bill, for including this concept in his bill. It is extremely important and it is certainly very timely. The world is changing at breakneck speed, and transnational repression is happening here, in Quebec and Canada. My Uyghur friends, my Tibetan friends, my friends from Taiwan, my friends from Hong Kong will attest to that. It is pretty obvious. In that sense, what would this bill actually do?

Bill C-219 amends several laws, including the Sergei Magnitsky Law, to provide that “transnational repression be sanctioned”, which is very positive, and that “visas or other documents must not be issued to immediate family members of a foreign national who is the subject of an order or regulation”. The enactment amends the Special Economic Measures Act to change that act's long title and shorten it to the “Sergei Magnitsky Global Sanctions Act”. Mr. Magnitsky wound up in a Moscow prison where he was tortured for 358 days for alleged tax evasion. He succumbed to untreated pancreatitis in a grim way in 2009 at the age of 38.

• (1820)

The bill proposes a definition of “prisoner of conscience”. It reads as follows:

an individual who, in contravention of international human rights standards, has been detained or otherwise physically restricted solely because of their identity or their conscientiously held beliefs, including religious or political beliefs.

As I said earlier, the bill also adds a definition for transnational repression. I want to reiterate that this was a Bloc Québécois proposal made during the last election campaign. Since we have fewer members that can introduce bills, we appreciate when our colleagues incorporate our ideas into theirs.

The bill defines “transnational repression” as follows:

tactics used by a foreign state to intimidate, harass, surveil or threaten individuals or groups located outside the state borders or physically harm such individuals or members of such groups, including elected officials, political dissidents, human rights defenders, exiled journalists, diaspora communities, civil society activists and refugees, for the purpose of silencing dissent and stifling activism.

As I speak these words in the House, I am thinking of several members of various communities who, here in this very place, day after day, week after week, bear the burden of foreign repression, of transnational repression. They are human rights defenders, refugees and civil society activists. These people, who were once acquaintances, have now become friends. I do not want to identify them by name, but I know for a fact that they know who they are. I am thinking of people who care deeply about democracy and justice and who, simply because they believe in a better future for their loved ones, are subjected to intimidation, harassment, threats and even imprisonment and torture.

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I am thinking of people like Jimmy Lai, a human rights defender who has become a prominent figure in the fight for freedom and democracy. Right now, Mr. Lai, who is 77 years old, is languishing in appalling conditions in a Hong Kong prison. His crime was that he supported journalism and freedom of the press. Obviously, my thoughts are with his son, Sebastien, to whom I once again express my solidarity.

Repression can be insidious, so insidious that it can be hard to see at times. Anyone who encourages repression must be held accountable for their actions. Bill S-219 therefore adds something to the legislation. It adds the fact that sanctions can be imposed in cases of transnational repression. The bill would also force the minister to respond to a parliamentary motion calling for sanctions against a corrupt foreign leader.

This means that I, along with my Bloc Québécois colleagues, will support Bill C-219 introduced by my colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman. While the provisions of the Sergei Magnitsky Law and the Special Economic Measures Act both allow for targeted sanctions, only the Special Economic Measures Act is currently used for this purpose. The Sergei Magnitsky Law has not been used to implement targeted sanctions since 2018. My colleague's bill also helps reignite discussions on this subject, which I think is extremely positive.

I will conclude my speech by commending my colleague's work and confirming that the Bloc Québécois will support Bill C-219, which will, however, have to be studied in committee. We will be thorough and we will collaborate, as usual. I am more than ready to work with my colleagues. This bill is likely to be studied by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, of which I am a member. We will be there. I believe this is a bill that can truly make a difference and have a real impact on people who are fighting for the freedom of their loved ones.

I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to deliver this speech tonight.

• (1825)

[*English*]

Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Madam Speaker, from my days as an adviser for the Harper government to today, I have had the privilege of working alongside the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman on several files, observing firsthand his steadfast commitment to human rights, accountability and the rule of law. Throughout his career, he has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of international affairs, a tireless work ethic and a principled approach to defending Canadian values. I have seen it up front as we walked the cobblestone streets of Kyiv amid jubilant protesters, and then later amid burned buildings and the same stones ripped from the ground in self-defence.

He does not act for political convenience; he acts with clarity, conviction and a sense of responsibility to Canadians and those whose freedoms are imperilled. To stand with him on this legislation not only recognizes the urgency of the issue before us, but also honours the dedication and leadership he brings before this House. He has championed measures to protect Canadians and to confront the very real threat posed by authoritarian regimes that seek to project their influence into our own communities. This bill would

enable the Canadian government to confront, in addition to human rights abusers, dictator corruption and transnational repression.

Across our country, people who have fled persecution and violence rightly expect to be safe. They expect their homes to be sanctuaries, free from the nightmare of the dictator they now deny, yet reports show that authoritarian regimes are following their citizens into Canada to intimidate, to coerce and to silence them. This is real; it is ongoing.

Current laws have not kept up with the tactics of these regimes. Bill C-219 provides clarity, accountability and enforcement mechanisms. It would prevent Canada from being used as a safe haven by individuals responsible for corruption and human rights abuses.

Let me cover three parts of this issue in my remarks: the context, why this legislation is critical and our duty as parliamentarians.

Sergei Magnitsky was tortured to death for exposing Kremlin corruption and, from his grave, gave the free world its most potent weapon against the new authoritarians: targeted sanctions that strike the torturers, the kleptocrats and their enablers where it hurts most, their bank accounts and their visas.

Today, the long arm of Beijing, Tehran, Moscow and their proxies reach into Canada itself. There are death threats, bounties, covert police stations and intimidation of dissidents, all on our soil. This is not mere crime; this is transnational repression, the export of tyranny into the heart of the free world.

Thanks to the persistence over a decade by the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, we already had established human rights violations as Magnitsky powers almost a decade ago. We must now sharpen them into a dedicated tool to confront transnational repression with swift, automatic and merciless consequences for any regime that dares hunt its critics on Canadian streets.

In the Cold War, we drew a line and said “not one inch further”. Today, we must say the same. Canada will never be a hunting ground for dictators. We will find them, we will freeze their assets and we will make them pay.

Magnitsky's story is not simply a tale of courage; it is a reminder that one person armed with the truth can expose an entire system of lies. His murder was meant to frighten others into silence, but instead it triggered an international movement that forced democracies to confront a hard question about themselves: Do we still believe in moral consequence, or are we willing to let power excuse anything?

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That is what makes today's debate more than a matter of policy. It is a statement about who Canadians choose to be in an age when authoritarian regimes think the world has grown too tired, too distracted or too divided to stand up to them. Our answer must be calm, clear and confident. Canada will not retreat from its role as a defender of those who risk everything to speak truth in countries where truth is treated as a crime.

We cannot talk about this without talking about the world we now live in, a world in which authoritarians are emboldened by new technologies. What once required secret agents crossing borders now only requires a phone, a television, a consulate or a proxy group operating quietly in our communities. Transnational repression is not abstract theory. It is happening in cities across the country, and it targets the people who trusted Canada to give them what their homelands denied them: safety, a voice and freedom.

If authoritarian states can reach into our cities to intimidate their critics, then we no longer control the space we claim as our own. That is why the response cannot be symbolic or slow; it must be predictable enough that dictators understand the cost before they act and swift enough that victims understand they are not alone.

● (1830)

Renaming the Special Economic Measures Act to the Sergei Magnitsky global sanctions act is part of that clarity. There is power in naming something after a man who died telling the truth. It signals that the purpose of the law is not hidden behind technical language or bureaucratic jargon; it is a law built around a moral line that should never have been blurred. The name teaches every Canadian what the law stands for and tells every authoritarian what it means when Canada acts.

The Cold War had a clarity that many in our era have forgotten. It drew a line between the world of fear and the world of freedom. Today the battle lines are not marked on maps, but they are just as real. They run through the phones of dissidents who receive threats at midnight. They run through the inboxes of activists who are told their families back home will suffer. They run through the hearts of communities of people who came to Canada believing they had escaped the regime, only to find that the regime had followed them here.

If we do not draw a line now, we teach these regimes that Canada can be bent, that our values can be shaped by intimidation, and that our borders are something they can violate. This is why we strengthen Magnitsky powers. This is why we direct them at transnational repression. This is why we sharpen the law into something that cannot be evaded with excuses or hidden behind diplomatic language.

Magnitsky's legacy is not only about his death; it is about the world that responded to it. Democracies came together because they recognized that a system that allows corruption, torture and murder to flourish unchallenged is a system that eventually threatens us all. The legislation before the House carries that same spirit; it connects the struggle of one man in a Moscow prison to the safety of a Canadian family in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary or Montreal.

When we act, we are not only honouring Magnitsky's courage but also reminding the world that Canada is not passive in the face of cruelty. We are reminding people who fled oppression that this country takes their safety seriously, and we are reminding people who inflict oppression that they will face consequences even if they believe their borders protect them. This is the heart of the legislation: a line drawn clearly, without drama and without hesitation, a country's stating that its sovereignty is not for negotiation and its people are not for intimidation.

Transnational repression is a direct threat to the safety and dignity of people living here in Canada. It is carried out by regimes in Beijing, the Kremlin, Tehran and beyond. Our intelligence community documents that these governments have conducted operations across Canada, including intimidation; surveillance; harassment of activists, students and journalists; and persecution of diaspora communities. Whether people are Sikh, Hindu, Christian, Muslim or Jew, and whether they come from Hong Kong, the Donbass, Tibet or East Turkestan, or are among the Iranians who stand against their regime, all who come here to live in freedom now must contend with the designs of the dictators they fled.

Immediate family members of the very people we have sanctioned have lived in luxury in Canada while their relatives engage in corruption, theft or violent repression abroad. The tragedy of flight PS752 is a stark example. Families of the victims have waited years for compensation, despite frozen regime assets that could have been used to provide justice.

Russian assets could and should be directed to supporting Ukraine in its defence. Frozen funds should contribute to justice and accountability for people whose war for existence is waged this very day.

When foreign governments intimidate or threaten individuals on Canadian soil, it is not only a violation of the rights of the people affected but also a test of the strength of our laws and our institutions. Bill C-219 would ensure that Canada responds firmly, transparently and consistently. To people who have sought refuge in Canada, to those who live in fear of foreign regimes, and to Canadians who expect their government to defend their sovereignty, the bill would deliver clarity, protection and accountability.

It is now the responsibility of the House to act. Support for Bill C-219 is support for the rule of law, for victims of oppression and for Canada as a safe and principled country. May the bill not be a partisan one but pass as a parliamentary one instead.

● (1835)

Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to this bill.

For generations, people around the world have looked at Canada as a champion of human rights, of democratic values and of the international rules-based order. These principles define who we are as Canadians, but they also help keep us safe. They protect our sovereignty and security, and they shape how we engage with the world.

Today, as we consider Bill C-219, we are examining how Canada can continue to confront authoritarian aggression, defend human rights and protect those who are targeted by oppressive regimes, whether they live abroad or within our own borders here in Canada.

We are having this debate at a time when the global landscape has changed dramatically. Russia's unjust and illegal war on Ukraine is one of the clearest examples of why effective modern sanctions tools are so important. Throughout the brutal invasion, Russia is attempting to eliminate Ukraine as a sovereign nation. The invasion has been marked by mass atrocities, forced deportations of Ukrainian children to Russia, political repression, transnational intimidation of diaspora communities here at home, deliberate destruction of Ukraine's culture and identity, and more.

Canada has responded by deploying one of the strongest sanction regimes in the world to hold those who are responsible accountable. Canada has responded with concrete action, not just with sanctions, but with military, financial and humanitarian support to Ukraine to help Ukraine defend itself and help hold Russia accountable.

Since 2022, Canada has committed over \$22 billion in support for Ukraine. I want to outline some of the support we have provided, because I think it is really important.

We have provided about \$6.5 billion in military assistance. This includes air defence missiles, M777 howitzers, Leopard 2 tanks, drones, armoured vehicles and other critical equipment.

Canada's military training mission, Operation Unifier, has trained more than 44,000 Ukrainian soldiers, and over 300 Canadian Armed Forces members remain deployed in support of this mission. When I think about 44,000 Ukrainians who have been trained and prepared to fight to defend their country by Canada, it makes me proud. Canada has also committed \$389 million to train Ukrainian F-16 fighter pilots and more than \$140 million to support Ukraine's domestic drone production.

On the financial side, Canada has provided over \$12.4 billion in direct financial assistance, which is the highest contribution of financial aid per capita of any country in the world. This includes more than \$6.75 billion in loans through the IMF, \$500 million in direct bilateral loans, Canada's \$5-billion contribution to the G7's new extraordinary revenue acceleration loans for Ukraine and much more. Canada has also played a leadership role in strengthening Ukraine's economy and long-term resilience, including with the modernization and parliamentary ratification of the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement.

These are some of the things we have done to support the people of Ukraine since 2022. It is not an exhaustive list, but my point is that Canada is a global leader in supporting Ukraine on a number of fronts, with financial, military and humanitarian aid, diplomatic support and a whole range of measures.

Private Members' Business

There are also sanctions. Since 2022, Canada has sanctioned nearly 2,300 people and more than 1,000 entities in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. In total, about 4,900 people and entities are currently sanctioned under Canada's autonomous sanctions laws. These actions matter; they really do. They restrict financial networks, freeze assets and signal that Canada will not tolerate violations of international law. They also impose consequences on those who violate human rights and the international rules-based order that protects countries around the world and protects Canada's sovereignty and security.

I outline this because it shows the scale of the challenge before us and the importance of sanctions as one of the tools in Canada's response to authoritarian aggression of any kind. Bill C-219 speaks directly to this. Its intent, I believe, is to strengthen Canada's sanctions framework, improve accountability and modernize the tools we use to confront human rights abuses and authoritarian influence.

I want to acknowledge the sponsor of the bill for bringing these important issues forward. There is much in this bill that I believe deserves careful consideration.

Bill C-219 proposes some important and necessary changes that I believe are important for Canada to make. The bill proposes adding transnational repression, for example, as a trigger for sanctions under both the Special Economic Measures Act and the Magnitsky act. This is increasingly important. Around the world we see regimes harassing, threatening or even attacking dissidents living abroad, including here in Canada. Russia, Iran, China and others are using these tactics to intimidate communities, suppress free expression and extend their reach beyond their borders. Canada must have the tools to respond decisively.

● (1840)

I believe there are ways that Bill C-219 could go even further on transnational repression by broadening the scope of this provision to include additional triggers. The bill suggests that it would strengthen enforcement by increasing penalties for sanction violations and improving information sharing between the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the RCMP and FINTRAC. On its face, these would be constructive steps that I believe align with Canada's intention to combat corruption, cut off illicit funding flows and protect the integrity of our democratic institutions.

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The bill would update the long and short titles under the Special Economic Measures Act to better reflect the seriousness of the threats we face. These changes bring greater coherence to our legal framework and mirror developments in the approaches taken by many of our allies. These elements reflect good intention and respond to some very important global challenges.

There are, however, important concerns that some folks have, that some of my colleagues have and that I have with what is proposed in Bill C-219. It is our duty as parliamentarians, every time a bill is brought forward, to examine carefully whether every aspect of the bill is workable and responsible. There are elements in the bill that, as currently drafted, may undermine public safety or hinder the effectiveness of the very sanctions on regimes that the bill seeks to strengthen.

First, the requirement for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to publish a detailed public list of what are called “prisoners of conscience”, including the number of access requests and foreign responses, raises some important risks that we really need to consider. Publicizing sensitive information about detained individuals could jeopardize diplomatic efforts to secure their release. Many governments that arbitrarily detain dissidents retaliate on those people when information becomes public or when those governments are publicly shamed. I do understand the intent behind this provision. However, I hope that, through working with colleagues and all parties across the House, we can achieve a result that shines a spotlight on important cases while protecting the safety of the human rights defenders and Canada's ongoing work to secure their release through various channels. I look forward to continuing this work and these conversations with colleagues in the months ahead.

The bill would also place new operational requirements on the RCMP and FINTRAC. From my perspective, it is important that we reflect on this and examine it. Before we impose new duties, it is important we make sure that these things are actually feasible, that they are executable and implementable, and that they do not compromise existing enforcement requirements or responsibilities. Several provisions would impose rigid procedural timelines or require actions that do not align with the machinery of how government works today or with ministerial authorities. These issues are fixable, but it is important that we reflect on them. They may require amendments to ensure that the bill is practical, enforceable and consistent with our existing laws and statutory requirements.

Additionally, on the proposed changes to the Broadcasting Act intended to prevent foreign influence from sanctioned states, we have to be careful that the language is drafted carefully to avoid thresholds or unintended impacts on media freedom and have the bill achieve what the member is trying to achieve, the intent of which I, of course, support.

None of the concerns I have raised detract from the core purpose of the bill. In fact, they reinforce the importance of getting this right, and that is what I want to do. The global context makes modernization of sanctions important, but getting it right through our work in committee and working with all parliamentarians to make the necessary amendments is critical.

Let me be clear: I support the intent of the bill. I think we support the intent of the bill. We support strengthening sanctions, im-

proving accountability and standing firmly with those who are targeted by oppression, whether they are in Ukraine or anywhere else in the world. However, we have to ensure that the bill achieves its goals without endangering prisoners, putting in place requirements on enforcement agencies that cannot be executed or creating legal frameworks that do not work in practice. At the end of the day, we want this to be effective, and we want it to work. That is what I would like to achieve.

The next stage of committee study will allow MPs to examine each provision in detail, to hear from experts and to reflect on how we can improve the bill. I am looking forward to that and to working with the member opposite and all colleagues in the House to make our sanctions regime even stronger so we can continue to protect human rights and protect our security and the safety of Canadians.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

● (1845)

[*English*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, does “Peace, Order, and good Government” have a familiar ring? It is in the Constitution Act, 1867, and that was just part of what Canada was: A place where there was order, good government and peace. Compared to the big, bad U.S.A. and its wild frontier, we had stability in Canada.

What have we become after 10 years of the Liberal government? The motto should now be “crime, chaos and failing government”.

Why do I say that? In the past 10 years, violent crime has gone up 54% and sexual assaults are up 75%. The focus of my comments, referring to the question I had during question period, is on extortion, and it is up a lot.

What is extortion? It is the threat of violence to get cash; it is the classic shakedown of businesses and individuals to get them to pay up. It is not just threats; it is following up on the threats to business with violence, arson, shootings, beatings or killings. We see it in the gangster movies in New York City, in *The Godfather* or *Mafia!*, but I am not talking about New York City in the 1930s or 1940s; I am talking about Canada now.

Extortion is up 330% across Canada, and in B.C., where I am from, it is up nearly 500%. My community of Maple Ridge is a beautiful community and a beautiful part of the world, but we even have it right there. The paper reported just last week that a home that had already been targeted was shot at again in the middle of the night. The residence is associated with an individual connected with the Punjabi music industry. There had been extortion threats in the past, and the person had fled the country. In the neighbourhood, they are still wondering; there is still that disruption, insecurity and fear for the surrounding families.

In the same 24 hours, Surrey saw two separate incidents. A residence tied to a Punjabi music producer was once again targeted, and a Surrey industrial business was targeted twice in two days: The suspects poured gasoline on vehicles and, hours later, shot up the property while workers were present.

These types of events used to shock us and used to be rare. Now, they are becoming disturbingly familiar across B.C. This should not be normal; it must not be acceptable, and it is not the Canada that Canadians deserve. Police departments have raised the alarm. Community leaders have cried out for help, and victims have been asking for immediate help.

What have the Liberals been doing? They have tinkered around the edges, defended policies that are clearly not working and refused to confront the legislative choices that have helped to create this crisis.

Extortion is not just a crime; it is a cloud of tar over public safety. Victims live in constant fear unless their perpetrators, all of them, are behind bars, which is a process that can take years. The Liberals are more interested in bail, not jail, as opposed to Conservatives, who want to put them behind bars to keep our public safe, which is our first priority.

The Liberals continue to defend the very legislation that helped create this situation. Bill C-5 eliminated mandatory jail time for serious gun crimes, including extortion with a firearm. Bill C-75 imposed the principle of restraint in bail decisions, resulting in repeat violent offenders' returning to the streets far too easily. This is a pattern we cannot ignore.

Conservatives have brought forward clear, practical solutions that the Liberals have voted down repeatedly. We proposed restoring mandatory minimums of three years for extortion, four years when firearms are involved and five years when connected to organized crime. We proposed bail reform, stronger border protections and measures to support police and protect victims.

• (1850)

Conservatives will not stand by while Canadians lose the right to feel safe in their homes. We will fight to restore mandatory mini-

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mums for gun crimes and violent offenders. We will fight to pass our anti-extortion bill. We will demand a repeal of Trudeau's laws so that public safety is first. Canadians deserve better. Conservatives care, and Conservatives will deliver on public safety.

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

Madam Speaker, it was interesting hearing the member's comments when he talked about the issue of extortion. The first thing that comes to my mind is, really? The Conservatives have an opportunity to deal with the issue of extortion, and what is their response to it? In one word it is a filibuster. We have provinces, stakeholders and law enforcement officers all getting behind Bill C-14, and there are substantive actions in the legislation the Government of Canada has on the Order Paper today.

We have legislation before us today that deals with extortion, and the Conservative response to it is to not let it pass. We had to shame them into getting the bail reform legislation to the committee stage. The member does not have to tell me about extortion. I am very much aware of the issue. I know the impact it is having on our communities. Several areas of the country are special targets for extortion.

This is the reason we have been standing up on it. I have stood up on numerous occasions trying to convince the Conservatives to recognize the efforts of law enforcement officers, premiers and the Prime Minister, who made a commitment, an election platform commitment, to deal with bail reform legislation. Within that legislation, there is a direct reference to consequences with respect to extortion, repeat offenders and so forth.

We then hear members stand up and say they want this and they want that. I understand that the Conservative Party uses the whole crime file as a fundraiser. I have received many fundraising letters myself from the Conservative Party, and they are all asking for more money based on the issue of crime. I do not know how I got on that mailing list.

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The reality is that those in the Conservative Party look at the crime file and ask, “How do we generate money?” It is all self-serving, because when it comes time to do something, they are found wanting. I have likely even asked the member who posed the question today, a very good chance, what his personal opinion was on getting Bill C-14 passed before the end of the year. I have asked this of many Conservative MPs. I have encouraged the opposition to get behind substantive legislation that political parties of all stripes at different provincial levels are behind, and I have asked them to support it, but it is falling on deaf ears.

If they had not been shamed into allowing Bill C-14, the bail reform legislation, to go to committee, we would still be debating it. If the member wants to have peace, order and good government, he needs to look at supporting that.

Canada is not broken. The Conservatives will talk about crime—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge.

Marc Dalton: Madam Speaker, this would be a joke if it were not so sad. We would think the Conservatives have been the ones in power for the past 10 years, when this has been on the Liberals' shoulders. It is their laws that have brought this chaos we are in. Now the parliamentary secretary says to look at what they are saying and what they are doing. They talk and talk. That is what we are hearing, a bit of talk. I guess it is a step up from not talking about it. They are at least talking about it.

Every measure we have brought forward over the past 10 years has been shut down by the Liberals. They have not been concerned about this issue. Now, when they are concerned about a few seats, they are starting to get into the act by saying a few words.

As for where extortion is going to go, I do not see it going very far with the Liberal government, because it is not serious about public safety, as much as it might pretend to be. All the—

• (1855)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, let me remind the member that the Prime Minister and the government were elected back on April 28. We had extensive consultations working with the provinces, municipalities, law enforcement agencies and others. We have the legislation here today. All we need is the Conservative Party to recognize that and help us fight crime by passing these two pieces of legislation. That is all we have to do.

We have a new Prime Minister, who made a commitment in the last federal election, a platform commitment, on bail reform legislation. The only thing holding it up is the Conservative Party of Canada. Its members are more concerned about fundraising than they are about servicing the needs of Canadians. If they could only change the channel and start focusing on our communities, we would be able to deal with some of these repeat offenders. We would be able to deal with issues like extortion. They need to smarten up and allow the legislation to pass.

BORDER SECURITY

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader to imagine with me for a moment perhaps something unthinkable: that he or someone he knows is in a terrible car accident. We hope that would never happen to any member of the House or, in fact, any Canadian. Thankfully, in this unfortunate situation, the parliamentary secretary is extricated from his vehicle, loaded into an ambulance and taken to the nearest emergency room. Unfortunately, when he gets to the emergency room door, there is a sign saying that it is closed until further notice.

It is not hyperbole to say that this is what is happening at our border every week. Our border systems, which are critical for moving goods, food, medicine and essentials for Canadians every week, are now experiencing an unprecedented number of technical difficulties and outages. In fact, there was an outage on Monday, one on Tuesday, and if members can believe, there is an outage going on right now. It started at 2:56 p.m. this afternoon, and as of just a moment ago, before I got up to speak, it was still ongoing. The CBSA states that it is “actively working to resolve this issue, but we currently do not have an estimated time for its resolution.” We cannot make this up.

The Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association has been keeping track and says that the border is now experiencing one outage every week at least. These are not maintenance outages, but unplanned outages that are shutting the border down. What this means in practice is that goods cannot be cleared for import and goods cannot be cleared for export. There was a multi-day standstill at the border at the end of September, and the border came to a near complete standstill. Critical goods needed for just-in-time delivery were not delivered, and food and other perishables were not delivered, costing untold millions in lost time, productivity and delays.

The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada said, “the current situation is untenable and needs to be rectified in short order.” Likewise, the Canadian Trucking Alliance said, “We simply cannot have the movement of thousands of trucks come to a crawl at international border crossings, while giving another signal to the international business community that Canada is not open for business”.

My questions for the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader are these: What is causing the high frequency of these outages? Why are they continuing to happen? When will they end?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I acknowledge that there are times when it can be very difficult to provide the type of answers the member is looking for.

We have a very competent and able bureaucracy that has the technical expertise to get things running in a form that ultimately will serve all of us well.

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I do not know the details of what the member has just made reference to, but what I do know is that the federal government, not only over the years but in particular under the current Prime Minister, has made commitments to add further strength to our CBSA. We are doing that by saying that we are going to continue not only to provide financial support but also to add personnel. I believe the number is 1,000 CBSA personnel being added to our borders. That will go a long way in dealing with a number of the issues.

I would remind the member opposite, who is new to the House of Commons, that when I was in opposition, sitting not too far from where he is sitting, in a different building but with the same setup, it was Stephen Harper's government, and the current leader of the Conservative Party sat in cabinet when that government cut back border control services. There were significant cuts. I suspect that they had not only an immediate impact but also a long-term impact.

We should be concerned about our border, as the Prime Minister has stressed and as Liberal members have stressed the importance of trade. As the member pointed out, there is a great deal, hundreds of millions of dollars' worth, of trade going back and forth across the border. There are companies that rely on deliveries to arrive on time. I am very sensitive to this, and that is why I am pleased that we are continuing not only to invest but also to add where we can to ensure that we have better security at our border. Hopefully we can see more progress on the whole trade file.

In the long run, we will have more trade than we have even today and have had over the last number of years. Trade continues to grow between Canada and the United States, and we need a good, functional border on our side and also on the U.S. side, as I am sure the Americans also run into problems at times. The end goal is to make it efficient in order to make sure we are able to accommodate all the trade and commerce, as well as to hopefully at some point get tourism back up. I am hoping that will happen when we get the trade agreement finally signed off, as we continue to push for the best trade agreement and not just settle it for the sake of time.

● (1900)

Jacob Mantle: Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's attempt at an answer. However, I want him to focus on the future and not on ancient history. He might be trying to blame John A. Macdonald next for not building the railroad fast enough.

Let us talk about what the government is doing, and what it is failing to do, at the border. I am not talking about new border officers; I am talking about the electronic systems that make trade flow. One of the problems with CBSA, the Canada Border Services Agency, in this situation, is its utter lack of transparency on the issue. I have heard it again and again from the trade community in Canada. I asked the public safety minister in a written question to provide details of the border outages, and the response I got, signed by the government House leader, was that the government does not keep track; it does not know.

How can the government identify the problem and fix it if it does not even have the data to understand that problem?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, as technology continues to grow, things actually do change. Hopefully we are moving in a direction where we will see more tracking of information. Information is vital. At the end of the day, we have hard numbers in

terms of the amount of trade that takes place, though we might not necessarily know what is in everything that enters into Canada. We have a system in place to protect safety. We have excellent CBSA officers who are on the ground to ensure that the things that are coming into Canada are legal.

When it comes to overall trade, if there are enhancements that the member believes we can make, he should say so. He should be specific. Is he saying we should grow the bureaucracy more, or we should be spending more money in that area? He might be in a minority—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Calgary Crowfoot.

HOUSING

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, back in the spring, I asked the housing minister an important question. I pointed out to him that what has happened under the government over the last 10 years is that Canada has become a country where there are just two kinds of families: families that already own real estate and families that have given up hope of ever owning real estate. That is because for young people today, the only path to home ownership is their parents' ability to share their equity, to give them large amounts of money for down payments and/or to co-sign for loans. A generation of Canadians has given up on home ownership, and that is what the government has presided over.

The minister himself is, of course, a homeowner and a real estate investor. He was also the mayor of Vancouver when it was one of our most unaffordable cities and one of the most unaffordable places on this entire planet. The response we got was not very helpful.

The government has presided over real estate prices doubling and rents doubling, while productivity and per capita GDP have remained unchanged over a 10-year period. People's ability to cover the cost of living, including housing, is no better than it was 10 years ago, while rents and prices have doubled.

It was not the housing minister who responded; it was the House leader, and in his response, he made vague claims of building hundreds of thousands of homes. Since that response and since the commitments the Liberals made during the election about housing construction, pre-sales of the homes in Canada's two most expensive markets, Vancouver and Toronto, have utterly collapsed.

We heard about this at the finance committee. Pre-sales on condominium properties in Toronto are down 93% year over year. Think about that for a minute. When pre-sales collapse with a 93% drop, future housing starts are going to collapse. Without pre-sales today, there will be no financing and no construction in the years ahead.

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We are being set up right now in our most stressed housing markets for an utter collapse of housing construction at a time when Canadians cannot afford homes and need access to housing. We are in a market where sellers and builders cannot sell at the current cost of material and at current prices. They cannot build and make a profit. However, buyers cannot afford the prices in existing markets.

We certainly need far more homes for supply, but the only way we are going to get out of this jam is to unleash the Canadian economy and have productivity increase. When it comes to productivity, we are at the bottom of the G7 and the bottom of the OECD. Until we unleash the Canadian economy by getting rid of all the laws the Liberals have passed to prevent oil and gas development, for example, or by getting major projects built that can allow us to get our energy to market, we are not going to have the productivity to grow into the unaffordable housing market that has come in under the last 10 years of the government.

● (1905)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is important for us to recognize that when we think of housing as a policy issue, it is only in the last number of years that we have actually had a government that has recognized that there is a federal role to play on the housing file. Prior to Justin Trudeau becoming the Prime Minister, during the previous 10 to 15 years, there was very little footprint on the housing file. The member talks about a housing shortage or the cost of housing, but he has been around for a while. He knows that even 10 years ago or 15 years ago, people were saying that there were children living in homes and that they were having a difficult time being able to purchase a home in certain areas of the country.

In other areas of the country, I can tell us that, right now, one can buy a beautiful condo in Winnipeg for under \$150,000. We need to look at what we can actually get out there and get the support from the different levels of government.

The Conservative Party's approach to housing seems to be to just stand back, do nothing, maybe do some talking and be very critical, whereas the government has continued to work with the different stakeholders, the provinces, municipalities, private industry and non-profit groups. We are looking at how we can enhance programs for Habitat for Humanity. We are looking at ways in which we can support the growth of housing co-ops, other forms of non-profits, with provinces, and shelter relief programs, as well as supporting the private sector.

A good example of that would be the GST exemption for first-time homebuyers, which is actually incorporated in legislation that we have brought forward. We have a government that has actually taken an approach, particularly the Prime Minister's approach, to have Build Canada Homes.

It is like what happened after the war, when the Government of Canada got engaged, in a very real and tangible way, and saw exceptional growth in the housing industry, in the building of homes. That is what we are seeing from the current Prime Minister, who recognizes the problem. We have to realize that he has been Prime Minister for only about eight months. It takes time. We have a pro-

gram in place, and all the Conservatives do is say that it is bad. They say to just open the market, to get out of the way.

We are committed. We have both feet in to try to build more homes, and we are looking at doubling the numbers, for hundreds of thousands of new homes.

Contrast that to the leader of the Conservative Party. The member knows that the leader of the Conservative Party was actually the minister of housing at one time. Canadians would be shocked to find out how many homes he built when he was the minister of housing. I barely need two hands: It was six. I still do not know where those homes are, but I am told he built six homes, not by himself physically, but as a minister, he supported six homes being built. Does that not knock our socks off?

At the end of the day, again, it is a contrast. The Conservatives stand back and say they do not have to participate. They have demonstrated that. Their leader says that. Many of the Conservative MPs believe that. We believe that we need to work with people, work with governments and make things happen. The Prime Minister is going to do just that.

● (1910)

Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, the member, in his speech, suggested that perhaps I have been around long enough to know a bit about the history of housing affordability in Canada. He is right. I spent 22 years in the mortgage business before I became a member of Parliament. I am quite aware of affordability and how it impacts families.

What I know is that before the government took office, wages and per capita GDP were rising. This is during the years of the Harper government, which included the current Leader of the Opposition. Wages were rising. The affordability of housing and the ability of Canadians to service debt and to buy homes and to afford rent were keeping pace. We had the construction of housing in those years. Everything has changed over the past 10 years, in which the government has allowed our productivity to fall into the—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, if the member wants to compare credentials, I have been a parliamentarian, much like the leader of the official opposition, for many years. In fact, in 1988, I was the housing critic in the province of Manitoba. I talked a lot about infill houses. I talked, back then, about co-ops. In fact, I used to be on a housing co-op myself. I understood the important role of non-profits, but I also understood the importance of private development and promotions.

I understand the housing industry, maybe from a different perspective than the member opposite, but I do know that, if we want an explosion of housing construction going forward, we need to see the federal government get, at least in part, behind it. We have a leadership role to play. The Prime Minister knows that. He has recognized that, and we are stepping up as a government because we want to make it happen for Canadians.

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• (1915)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Ac-

cordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:15 p.m.)

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