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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem, led by the hon. member for Richmond Hill South.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION

Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, at Maisonnette des parents, we celebrated the newly acquired citizenship of nearly 200 people in Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie. It was a time for sharing and discussion. It was an opportunity to learn more about each person's background, their reasons for coming to Quebec, their language learning, their family situation, their job, their education and the administrative nonsense that they had to deal with. It is touching to see the tremendous efforts that these people are making to learn French, integrate and participate in their new community.

We have been holding these get-togethers for years, but, lately, these people have been bringing up new questions. They want to know why political parties and commentators are badmouthing them, why some people are pointing the finger at immigrants and blaming them for the housing, school and health care crises. They are wondering why some people are being discriminated against because of their clothing and they are wondering whether they are truly welcome here.

As parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to recognize the contributions that immigrants make to our society, to defend their rights and to build an inclusive society where everyone has their place.

BÉATRICE PICARD

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard (Hochelaga—Rosemont-Est, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we were stunned and saddened to hear the news of the passing of a grande dame of the theatre, television and cinema. A truly unique woman, Béatrice Picard had us all fooled. Indeed, over the past few years and until very recently, although we knew she was 96 years old, she managed to convince us that she was immortal. That is how we can appreciate the extent of her talent as an actress. Throughout her career, Ms. Picard touched us with the faithfulness of her acting and surprised us with her passion and the ease with which she was able to make all of the roles she played her own. Of course, she also had an enchanting way about her. She could make us laugh ourselves hoarse—yes, I went there—with her unforgettable portrayal of Marge Simpson, which, unsurprisingly, touched so many generations.

We loved Béatrice, we admired her and we will never forget her.

* * *

• (1405)

[*English*]

ESSEX

Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the holiday season quickly approaches, I reflect on so many amazing people and organizations in Essex that make Christmas a little easier, special, brighter and joyous for so many people in need. Essex is compassionate. Essex is generous. Essex truly cares. I am extremely thankful to represent a community committed to leaving the world a better place than we found it.

Finally, I want to wish a happy anniversary to my amazing wife, Allison. It has been 27 years of laughs and friendship, tears and stories, and children and grandchildren. It is unique, to say the least. I thank Allison, and I love her.

Jesus is the reason for the season. Merry Christmas, Essex.

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HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Chi Nguyen (Spadina—Harbourfront, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week I joined hundreds of residents from across my riding to celebrate the magic of the holiday season with the lighting of our 33-foot tree in the community square at Harbourfront Centre.

Statements by Members

Harbourfront Centre and the public spaces around it are vital gathering places. They bring people together and create a sense of belonging in vertical neighbourhoods like mine. Even in a fast-paced city, these traditions remind us that community is still at the heart of who we are in Spadina—Harbourfront. The holiday season offers a moment to pause and reflect, and to recognize the diversity and resilience of our communities, especially after a year marked by global economic shocks and challenges felt by many.

As we look to the new year, let us carry forward a spirit of hope, generosity and determination. From my family to theirs, I wish all Canadians peace, joy and good health this holiday season. Happy holidays.

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HOUSING

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, week after week, parents in Vaughan—Woodbridge tell me they fear their children will never be able to afford a home. Home ownership is a key milestone in adulthood. It is a rite of passage for Canadian families, yet under Liberals, that dream is slipping away.

After promising half a million new homes, the Liberals now admit their new housing bureaucracy will deliver only a fraction of that. Build Canada Homes will cost \$13 billion yet will add only 5,200 homes per year. This failure is pushing families out of the communities they love. Last year alone more than 35,000 families left the GTA because they could not find affordable housing, and it is no wonder. Government-imposed costs and delays now make up between 30% and 50% of the price of a new home.

Conservatives have a real plan: cut the GST on new homes, help reduce development charges, tie federal infrastructure dollars to building more homes, and get government out of the way so builders can build. We will restore the promise and hope of home ownership for young Canadians.

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[*Translation*]**RIDING OF BOURASSA**

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of Bourassa for the trust they placed in me during the last federal election. Serving the people of my riding is an honour, a responsibility and a privilege that I take very seriously.

Since becoming a member of the House of Commons, I have been fully involved in issues such as public safety, standard of living and community development. I have also worked with local organizations, businesses and municipal partners. I am very proud to have helped secure additional funding for the Montréal-Nord sports centre, a very important facility for our young people and families.

This first parliamentary session is just the beginning. I love this experience and I am committed to continuing my work with determination, transparency and a focus on community. I will always be at the service of my constituents.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year, and once again, thank you, *grazie mille, mèsi anpil*—

The Speaker: The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

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[*English*]**FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what constitutes a free society? What are the identifying characteristics that separate nations whose people live in freedom from those whose subjects live under tyranny and fear?

I can think of no guiding principle more fundamental to this question than the existence, or lack thereof, of free speech and free expression: the legal ability to express oneself without fear of government coercion, oppression or use of force. This is why I am so concerned by the Liberal government's Bill C-9, which would open the floodgates and abandon the guardrails on prosecuting and criminalizing speech in Canada, including the reading of sacred and ancient religious texts such as the Bible, the Torah and the Koran.

Make no mistake; once we cross this Rubicon, once we accept the premise that governments and politicians in the House have the subjective right to determine what we may or may not say, or what religious texts we may or may not read, we have lost the plot. Free speech is a western value, a Canadian principle and a human right, and we must always defend it.

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● (1410)

UN INCENDIE À PIERREFONDS

Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): On November 18 a fire destroyed an apartment building in Pierrefonds on the corner of Gouin and des Sources boulevards, injuring one person and displacing 92 of our neighbours.

[*Translation*]

My thoughts go out to all of the residents and families affected.

[*English*]

I want to recognize the courageous response of our firefighters.

[*Translation*]

A number of local restaurants offered free meals.

[English]

My team and I have been conducting a food and clothing drive with local groups. Sun Youth has contacted the people impacted and put them in touch with On Rock Community Services.

[Translation]

Thanks to our residents' generosity, donations have already started coming in. More than 50 large bags of essential goods have already been collected.

[English]

I give a big thanks to everyone who stepped up and donated. It is beautiful how our community has come together in this moment of crisis.

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ALANO CLUB OF CHILLIWACK

Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 40 years Chilliwack's Alano Club has provided a safe, clean and sober place to meet seven days a week for people in recovery from addiction. This consistent availability ensures that help and support are always accessible for vulnerable people in need. It has become a vital resource for groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Al-Anon.

Chilliwack's Alano Club is more than just a building; it is a place for community and fellowship where members and visitors can enjoy a reduced-price breakfast or lunch. Friends and families can gather for coffee or to play board games. Christmas parties, holiday dinners and weddings are held there too, all in an environment free from drugs and alcohol. Alano is a hub dedicated to healing and recovery, recognizing the importance of social activities for people on their journey to live a clean and sober lifestyle.

On behalf of all the people who have been helped by Chilliwack's Alano Club, I thank it for the difference it is making in people's lives. I congratulate Chilliwack's Alano Club on 40 years of serving our community.

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[Translation]

BÉATRICE PICARD

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a grande dame has left our midst. One of our most distinguished actors, Béatrice Picard, passed away yesterday at the venerable age of 96, yet we all feel that she has left us too soon.

Béatrice Picard was a fixture of Quebec's theatre scene for over 60 years. She played iconic roles in over 40 plays at the Duceppe theatre, which will forever be linked to her name. Examples include French versions of *The Death of a Salesman* and *Harold and Maude*, a role she only recently performed. She brought our big and small screens to life, and brought down the house with her acclaimed roles in *Survenant*, *Un gars, une fille*, *Symphorien* and *The Simpsons*.

Perhaps more than anything, Béatrice Picard was also the epitome of graceful aging. As a spokesperson for Les Petits Frères and the Salon des aînés de Saint-Jérôme, Béatrice Picard was engaged.

Statements by Members

She generously donated her time and energy in the service of others. Yes, a grande dame has left our midst.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, Quebeckers and more personally, the Duceppe family, I offer her loved ones and her family our sincerest condolences. To Béatrice, I say thank you for everything.

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[English]

HANTS COUNTY CHRISTMAS ANGELS

Hon. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Hants County Christmas Angels is a long-standing tradition in Kings—Hants, dating back to 1977, that is truly the definition of community and Christmas spirit. Every year, this volunteer organization seeks to raise funds to support local families in need. This year was exceptional. Over the course of a day filled with local musicians and local performances, \$93,108 was raised for families in need right in Hants County.

I would like to congratulate hon. chair Lisa Bland, 2025 coordinator Lianne Perry and the entire volunteer board of directors for their contribution to this significant effort.

To everyone who contributed and supported this wonderful holiday tradition, my thanks for making Hants County and our communities across Kings—Hants an even greater place to call home, especially at this time around the Christmas season.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish a merry Christmas and happy holidays to everyone back home in Kings—Hants.

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ALBERTA

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after a decade of Liberal obfuscation and obstruction, Albertans have had enough. We need a pipeline to the Pacific, but yesterday, the Liberal member for Calgary Confederation voted against a motion that would have reassured his constituents that hope was possible—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Mr. Speaker, they are applauding him for doing that.

It reminded me of the time a few years ago when another Liberal MP for Calgary told Albertans that he would bang on the table for pipelines. He then betrayed his constituents by supporting the Liberal tanker ban and the Liberal “no more pipelines” bill. It seems like history is repeating itself. However, that Liberal member went on to lose his seat in the next election, while Albertans went through unnecessary hardships and lost jobs because of Liberal anti-energy ideology.

Statements by Members

Alberta has the right to develop its natural resources, and voting in favour of yesterday's motion would have been a step in the right direction. It would have reassured the province that the government could do something better, but the member did something opposite. He should do better. What a shame.

* * *

● (1415)

DEER LODGE CENTRE

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the vital role that Deer Lodge Centre plays in our community and to recognize the ongoing support of the Deer Lodge Centre Foundation.

As the third-largest health care facility in Manitoba, Deer Lodge has long been a trusted place of care for families, offering rehabilitation, chronic care, dementia care, mental health and bariatric services. Its roots stretch back to 1916, when it first opened to support returning World War I soldiers. That deep commitment to serving veterans continues to guide its mission today. Deer Lodge remains a place where both aging veterans and younger service members receive specialized, compassionate care. The foundation strengthens this connection by raising funds that enhance comfort, expand programs and foster innovative care.

I am grateful to the staff, volunteers, families and donors whose dedication ensures Deer Lodge remains a compassionate, community-centred place of healing and dignity.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac, CPC): Mr. Speaker,

In this week before Christmas, one might wonder why
Write a poem at all, and not just use AI.

AI knows meter and rhyme and all their uses
Can make Clement Moore's verse sound like Dr. Seuss's.

AI seems to do everything better than you can,
Flies drones and drives safer than a real human.

Its advantage in word search is very well sealed.
It found me 29 words that rhyme with "Brookfield".

But there are things too bizarre for AI to know,
Like what draws Katy Perry to Justin Trudeau.

You can ask, but AI can't give you directions
Why Jagmeet Singh lasted through three elections.

And AI can't explain to me or to you
Why the Grits won't vote to support their own MOU.

Some places there are, where AI just can't fudge it.
It's going to take humans to balance the budget.

Which is why this poem was still written by me
(But the partisan bits are from ChatGPT).

JIM CARR

Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Friday will mark three years since the passing of my father, the Hon. Jim Carr. My dad loved Canada, its people, its culture, its kindness and tenacity, and all that it gave him. He taught me from a young age that those with whom we disagree are merely our opposition, not our enemies. He conducted himself with integrity, honesty and compassion. Seldom a week goes by without someone coming up to me to share a fond memory of him, and each encounter ends with some variation of the same: "He was a good man," they say.

Whenever the time may come that I look back at my own parliamentary career, I hope I will be able to genuinely say that I have lived up to the standard that he has set for us all. In the Jewish faith, upon one's passing, we have an expression of condolence that we offer: May their memory be a blessing. On that account, I can say with all my heart that, with him in my mind, I stand eternally blessed.

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NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on what should have been the proudest moment of her life, Maria Corina Machado was not even there. Unable to attend the ceremony after months of hiding and fighting the regime in Venezuela, her daughter accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on her behalf. Quoting her mother, she said, "our journey towards freedom has always lived inside us. We are returning to ourselves. We are returning home."

For years, Venezuela's iron lady has boldly opposed the socialist Maduro dictatorship and the economic collapse it has engendered and inflicted on the once proud and free nation. At great personal cost to herself, Machado has inspired millions both in her country and around the world. The Nobel Prize awarded for her tireless work promoting democratic rights for the Venezuelan people is, therefore, a victory not only for herself but for all of those who have suffered under decades of socialism.

May we all be inspired by her courage and determination to stand up for freedom over socialism and for the people all around the world.

* * *

● (1420)

CHRISTMAS POEM

Hon. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker,

'Twas two weeks before Christmas,
I still can't hold back the smile.
Even we didn't believe we'd be back on this side of the aisle.

Canada needed someone smart, a proven young steed.
That ruled out a guy who blew a 22-point lead.

The Conservatives were lost with the carbon tax dead,
While visions of Trudeau on a yacht danced in their leader's head.

The Bloc dreamed of kingmaking, of holding great sway,
But His Majesty's loyal opposition? Oh, *mon Dieu*, not even for a day!

The NDP, well, they were reduced to seven.
My gosh, even Nova Scotia now has 11.

Now, for a “new” government, we sure have a lot of grey hairs,
But we won four in a row, so... “Who cares?”

A trade war with friends, what's ahead is a fight.
Christmas came early. Canadians chose right.

There'll be no Christmas election, of that I'm now certain,
Thanks to two Conservatives hiding behind that curtain.

Now, I've thrown a lot of jabs, but I promise they're in jest.
To each and every one of you, I truly wish you all the best.

I hope you all could hear me, with my voice raised up.
All we hear in this place these days are heckles—
I hope the Speaker doesn't wake up!

Merry Christmas, everyone.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, who suggested that the Liberals open our borders to massive, uncontrolled immigration that has inflated housing prices, taken jobs away from Canadians and put pressure on the health care system while causing a decline in the French language? It was Mark Wiseman, the ultra-Liberal corporatist at the head of the Century Initiative, who suggested tripling Canada's population.

Why is it that every time someone introduces policies that hurt Canadians, the Prime Minister gives that person a promotion?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, since we are on the subject, we want to send our best wishes to our ambassador to the United States, Kirsten Hillman, who has done a tremendous service for our country and continues to guide and advise us well.

The policy the Leader of the Opposition is referring to has never been and will never be the policy of the Government of Canada.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the person who suggested this radical, Liberal policy is Mark Wiseman. He advocates for tripling Canada's population to 100 million “even if it makes Quebec howl”. This is someone who has shown contempt for Quebec and who cannot negotiate on behalf of Quebec. This is someone who proposed a policy that inflates the cost of living, takes away jobs and puts pressure on our health care system.

Why does the Prime Minister want to appoint him as ambassador to Washington?

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, allow me to echo my colleague in thanking Ms. Hillman for her service to Canada. I had the privilege of working very closely with Kristen over the past few months. I

Oral Questions

am very grateful for her friendship and for what she has done for Canada. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to extrapolate a series of things that are not true. He knows full well that the policies he is referring to have never been and will never be the federal government's policies. I understand that he is trying to get a sound bite broadcast on *Le Téléjournal* tonight. Unfortunately, it will not be the right one.

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have wanted to know who came up with the idea of radical open doors, liberal immigration that overwhelmed our health care, housing and job market. It turns out it was Mark Wiseman, the Prime Minister's corporate crony, long-time Liberal elite and head of the Century Initiative, whose stated mission is to triple the population of Canada to 100 million people, a policy that is designed to profit multinational corporations by driving wages down and housing costs up.

Why is it that every time somebody comes along with an idea that harms Canadians and drives up their cost of living, the Prime Minister gives them a promotion?

• (1425)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to reiterate my thanks to our outgoing ambassador to the United States of America, Kirsten Hillman, who has furnished incredible, loyal and very insightful services to the people and to the Government of Canada. I think our country owes her a debt of gratitude.

Once again, the policy that the member opposite refers to has never been and will never be the policy of the Government of Canada.

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GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every time a Liberal insider does damage to Canadians, drives up their cost of living, they get a reward. It is not just with Mr. Wiseman; it is the Prime Minister himself. His policies are driving up grocery prices for the year to come, and what did he do as punishment for himself? He gave himself an \$800,000 privately chartered flight to Egypt, where there were meetings happening in which he had absolutely no role other than a photo op.

Why is it that Canadians need to line up at food banks so he can go jetting around the world for photo ops?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that in the spirit of the holiday season, the Leader of the Opposition is surely not suggesting that the Prime Minister not attend as auspicious an event as the ceremony with respect to peace in the Middle East and Gaza, and join multitudes of other world leaders at that occasion, representing and making Canadians proud for his attendance at that event.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was conspicuously irrelevant at that meeting, where he played no role whatsoever in the agreement, yet he charged Canadians \$800,000 for a privately chartered jet. Apparently, his own prime ministerial jet was not good enough for him. He does this while he imposes an industrial carbon tax on farm equipment, on fertilizer and on food processors that has driven 2.2 million Canadians to a food bank.

Why is the Prime Minister being the Grinch of the grocery store, charging taxpayers for flights when Canadians cannot eat?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's work on the world—

The Speaker: I cannot hear. Also, I would like to mention to the hon. member for Oakville West that I could hear her all the way from here.

If we could keep it a little lower, we will now go to the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Hon. Anita Anand: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's work on the world stage with his counterparts to bring an end to the conflict in the Middle East is extremely important. He is continuing to be engaged on the peace plan in the Middle East. The plan, in fact, reflects Canada's long-standing position that Hamas should have no role in the governance of Palestine, and the ceasefire provides an opportunity for the Prime Minister and other world leaders to continue to work on humanitarian aid for the benefit of all.

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THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's refusal, even though he is in Ottawa, to answer my questions directly is not in keeping with the Christmas spirit.

This is at a time when he has driven up the cost of living so much that 2.2 million Canadians are lined up at food banks and food prices are going to drive an extra \$1,000 onto the grocery bills of Canadians next year, after he imposed higher taxes on farm equipment, fertilizer, food packaging and more.

Will the Prime Minister, instead of being the Grinch of the grocery store, reverse these taxes so that Canadians can have an affordable, delicious Christmas?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the member opposite talks about imaginary taxes, Canadians know exactly what is going on, and it is related to climate change.

Our thoughts are with the cattle farmers in the western provinces this year, who have faced unimaginable loss of crop and loss of cattle as a result of drought. That is driving up the price of beef, something that we cannot actually control right now.

What can we control? We can make sure that Canadians have extra money in their pockets. That is what Canadians are counting on, that we will be here for them in these tough times.

• (1430)

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is considering appointing Mark Wiseman as ambassador to Washington.

Mark Wiseman is one of the co-founders of the Century Initiative, a policy that aims to increase Canada's population to 100 million people and is at the root of Quebec exceeding its intake capacity. He said that 100 million Canadians by 2100 should become federal policy "even if it makes Quebec howl". He used the term "howl", which is something dogs do.

Does the Prime Minister really think that Mark Wiseman can represent Quebecers in Washington?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we just mentioned many times in the House, the policy to which my colleague refers has never been and never will be the policy of the Government of Canada.

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that still speaks to his policy.

Wise men say only fools rush in. The Prime Minister already made an appointment last week that turned all of Quebec against him. We are just trying to give him a chance not to make the same mistake twice. When Mark Wiseman talks about imposing immigration policies on Quebec, even if it makes them howl, he is showing his contempt not only for Quebec, but also for democracy.

There are 44 Liberal members from Quebec. Will one of them stand up and tell the Prime Minister to appoint someone else?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the House, for the sixth time today, that the policy the member is referring to is not a Government of Canada policy, and it never will be.

If she wants to talk about culture, I can tell her that I am very proud of our Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and this government, which has invested \$4.1 billion in official languages, among other things, and \$770 million in culture. The only thing we asked of the Bloc Québécois was to make requests in anticipation of the budget. However, it did not make a single suggestion regarding the cultural industry.

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JUSTICE

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal abuse of power continues.

After Bill C-5, which gives the federal government the power to circumvent all laws for its major projects like pipelines, now we have Bill C-15. The Liberals are enshrining the right for all their ministers to break any law under the guise of innovation. That is not all. Liberal senators' Bill S-4 also allows them to circumvent the law.

If the Liberals can decide everything without obeying the law and without consulting anyone, can we still call this a democracy?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course we can call this a democracy. We are here to debate it publicly. That is the very definition of democratic debate.

As for Bill C-15, it contains very important tools for advancing our economy, advancing Canadian innovation and ensuring that we can achieve great things together, so that Quebec can reach its goals and Canada can reach its economic and other goals.

We look forward to debating it further with the member and with the entire House of Commons.

* * *

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has a problem. A pipeline to the Pacific is very popular with Canadians. Canadians want to stop the practice of selling Canadian oil at a massive discount to the United States when billions of customers lie just on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, but the Prime Minister has never believed in selling more Canadian energy. He wrote an entire book about leaving Canada's natural resources in the ground. He cheered on the decision to cancel the northern gateway pipeline, and his caucus does not support one either.

Is the real reason he voted against his own MOU yesterday that he has no intention of actually getting a pipeline built? He just needs to pretend long enough, until the next election.

Corey Hogan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we support a pipeline. We support the whole MOU, which is a careful balancing of the economy and the environment and gets us away from the United States as a primary trading partner. This is great news. It is also an MOU that balances the interests of indigenous peoples and other jurisdictions.

We do not support, and we are happy to vote against, games played by the opposition that make a pipeline less likely. That the Leader of the Opposition would do this is ridiculous. It lets Alberta down, but I should not be surprised. Being elected in Battle River does not an Albertan make.

● (1435)

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, voting against the Prime Minister's own MOU does not a pipeline build. Getting that MOU through his own caucus should have been the easy part of the process. This self-declared master negotiator could not even do that. Instead, his MOU piles on new conditions and red tape, ties approvals to other projects, hikes the

Oral Questions

industrial carbon tax and hands unconstitutional vetoes to other levels of government. It is clear he could not even get it through his own caucus.

If the Prime Minister could not do that, why should Canadians believe he can get a pipeline through all his new hoops and hurdles?

Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was in Rachel Notley's New Democrat government when, in partnership with the federal Liberals, we got the first pipeline to tidewater built in generations. This is a pipeline that helps pay for schools, hospitals and environmental investments and supports good union jobs. Now, as a Vancouver Island MP, I support our Prime Minister's vision to build Canada strong with indigenous peoples, the provinces and the environment. The Conservatives want to ram things through, never mind indigenous people and never mind the environment. Our thoughtful approach ensures that no Canadian is left behind.

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GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we found out the Prime Minister spent almost \$800,000 on a one-day taxpayer escape to Egypt to take a photo and not sign an agreement. Struggling Canadians are lining up at food banks and skipping meals, while the Prime Minister takes their money and skips town.

We know it is second nature for the Prime Minister to live large on other people's dime, but can he at least stand up today and explain to hungry Canadians why he treats their tax dollars like his personal travel fund?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I know the hon. deputy leader of the Conservative Party is not suggesting that the Prime Minister of Canada should not have joined with dozens of his international counterparts for as auspicious an event as the commemoration of a ceasefire in the Middle East, an issue upon which, I might add, she has had a lot to say over the last little while.

The Prime Minister of Canada represents Canadians proudly, and Canadians are proud when our Prime Minister attends these events and does incredible business with his counterparts from all around the world.

*Oral Questions***TAXATION**

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the member that the agreement was signed despite the Prime Minister, not because of him.

I would also like to remind the Prime Minister that Toronto food banks got over four million visits last year. They are going to get even more when the price of groceries rises \$1,000 per family next year.

Will the government kill the industrial carbon tax, the packaging tax and the new fuel tax so that Canadians can afford food, or will he hop on another plane and avoid answering questions in this place altogether?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opposition wants to talk about nonsense taxes that do not exist on food instead of supporting the very things that Canadians have told us, time and again, that they want.

They want a Canada child benefit that is indexed to inflation. They want seniors' benefits that are indexed to inflation. They want to make sure, as do all mothers, that children get healthy food in schools. However, the Conservatives do not. They want to stand in the way of the very things that Canadians know will help them at this time.

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to bring down the price of groceries. In Haldimand—Norfolk, where I live, a family reached out to me in desperation. Despite a decent income, they said that they could barely afford groceries for their family and their household.

When the Liberals took office in 2015, the average weekly grocery bill was \$159. A decade later, it has more than doubled, to over \$338.

When will the Prime Minister cut the hidden food taxes so that Canadians can afford to feed their families?

• (1440)

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the members opposite are focused on imaginary taxes. On this side of the House, we are continuing to invest in Canadians and the supports that they need, including the Canada child benefit, which is pegged to inflation and worth up to \$8,000 per child under six years old in this country.

On this side of the House, we will continue to invest in Canadians and the supports that they need. We would encourage the members opposite to show a little more support for those programs as well.

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing imaginary about the hunger pangs that many Canadians are feeling. Many families are also financially squeezed with mortgage payments and utility bills that are rising faster than they can keep up with. These pressures have worsened under the Liberals with the rise in the industrial carbon tax, the packaging tax and the new fuel tax. All of these hidden taxes are driving up the cost of food.

When will the Liberals stop their inflationary spending and cut these hidden food taxes so that Canadians can afford to eat?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that we do not want families to struggle to feed their children. We are investing in programs and supports for families so they can put food on the table and have food at school through, for example, the national school food program.

At the same time, we are creating jobs. That is what Canadians really need. We can see it in the numbers. The number of jobs has been increasing every month for the past three months.

[*English*]

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, food bank usage is at an all-time high this holiday season in Manitoba and across the country. Harvest Manitoba's latest report shows that 60,000 Manitobans are relying on food banks every month, and almost 50% of them are families with young children. This is what a decade of food packaging taxes, fuel standards and a rising industrial carbon tax has done to Canadians. My question for the Prime Minister is simple.

When will the Liberals finally stop their inflationary spending and cut hidden food taxes so that Canadians can afford to eat this Christmas?

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is from Manitoba. If he were listening to Manitobans, he would hear that Manitobans are happy with what our government is doing.

We are seeing \$10-a-day child care for northern Arctic communities. We are also seeing the national school food program. We are seeing investments in housing and infrastructure like never before. We are seeing the child tax benefits supported with increases, GST housing credits and enhanced benefits for families so that they can heat their homes. The member opposite needs to get on board.

[Translation]

TRANSPORTATION

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when Quebecers and truckers from Quebec asked the Liberals to put an end to the Driver Inc. model, the Liberals ignored them. As a result, the Americans are now the ones asking the federal government to take action. The embassy said that simply targeting companies allows individuals who commit violations to create a new company under a new name. There are 10 measures to be taken. The most obvious is preventing temporary immigrants from incorporating in trucking industry. That is the bare minimum.

When will the Liberals take action?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague should speak to Quebec's trucking association, which has commended the work of the government, my colleague the Minister of Jobs and Families, the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and myself. We have implemented a series of measures to put an end to this relic from the Harper era, which allowed the use of Driver Inc. truckers.

Now, we have put in place a series of measures to get them off the roads, and we are working with the provinces. The member should also welcome our—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Association du camionnage du Québec supports our 10 measures. How many measures have the Liberals implemented? They have only implemented one. The Liberals are doing nothing because they have been being infiltrated on all sides by Driver Inc. truckers. The Prime Minister's campaign organizer and donor was the spokesperson for a new Driver Inc. advocacy association. Not one, not two, but 10 Liberal MPs showed up at the organization's founding convention in 2023. They received \$85,000 in donations from Driver Inc. promoters.

The Liberals have to choose. Are they going to protect road users, or are they going to side with their cronies and Driver Inc. truckers yet again?

• (1445)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government has implemented far more than just one measure. We lifted the T4A moratorium. We instituted information sharing between the CRA and the Department of Employment and Social Development. We made sure that the Department of Employment and Social Development conducted inspection blitzes.

Now, we expect the provinces to perform roadside checks, take charge of certification and, of course, issue driver's licences. That is the provinces' job. Does the Bloc Québécois member want us to encroach on Quebec's jurisdictions? I should think not.

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in Canadian diplomacy, there is no position more important or prestigious than that of Canadian ambassador to the United States. The person who holds this position must be in perfect political harmony with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is set to appoint Mark Wiseman as Canada's ambassador to the United States. Mr. Wiseman is the architect of the infamous Century Initiative, which aims to increase Canada's population to 100 million by 2100. Worse yet, he insulted Quebec when he said that it is the right policy, “even if it makes Quebec howl”.

Why is the government appointing someone who insults Quebec and Quebecers?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as fond as I am of my colleague from Quebec, I see that he is asking the same question his leader asked a few moments ago with a view to getting a sound bite played on *Le Téléjournal* this evening at 6 p.m. or later with Ms. Galipeau. He knows full well that the public policies he is referring to have never been public policies of the Liberal government and will never be public policies of the government. I understand that the member is trying to make hay out of the situation, but, unfortunately, it is not going to work.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is not working is that the architect of the Century Initiative is going to be appointed as the Canadian ambassador to the United States. Worse still, the minister knows full well that Mr. Wiseman is also strongly opposed to supply management. I am not making this up. That is the truth. Imagine the conversation he will have with President Trump, when President Trump says to him:

[English]

“Ambassador, you're against supply management, just like me.”

[Translation]

How can the minister possibly explain the appointment of a man who insults Quebecers and who is opposed to supply management?

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, once again, our colleague from Quebec is giving me an opportunity to brief him. Just yesterday evening, I participated in an activity put on by the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec. I had the opportunity to speak with the vice-president of the Producteurs de lait du Québec, and we obviously talked about supply management. Yesterday evening, in Montreal, I was able to reassure our friend that the government will always defend supply management. We will not negotiate with the Americans on supply management. The Prime Minister has been very clear on that, and I am pleased to repeat it today in the House before all members.

*Oral Questions**[English]***JUSTICE**

Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night at the justice committee, Conservatives moved to immediately prioritize Bill C-14 and scrap dangerous Liberal bail laws. What did the Liberals do? Shamefully, they blocked us, not once, not twice, but three times. Now we just learned that they cancelled today's eight-hour meeting.

Instead of stopping criminals, the Liberals are more concerned with prosecuting religious expression. Why do the Liberals not just get out of the way and let Conservatives finally fix the broken bail system?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, me thinks the member doth protest too much. We have watched him and his colleagues filibuster the work of the justice committee for many weeks on end. He says that he is not responsible for it, but it is actually all on video. For hours they go on discussing their preference for puppies or kittens when they in fact could be debating laws that are designed to keep Canadians safe.

It is essential that we move forward with the aggressive campaign to improve public safety, which we campaigned on to fight hate in this country, to improve bail systems in this country and to ensure every community is safe.

• (1450)

Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals had multiple opportunities to crack down on violent repeat offenders. Instead, they chose religious censorship over public safety. The Liberal members for Burnaby Central, Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Mount Royal and even the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice must answer to Canadians as to why they keep obstructing the study of Bill C-14. They were given the chance to protect Canadians. They chose not to.

How many more murders, sex assaults and violent extortions are enough for the tired Liberal government to finally protect Canadians?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the speed with which the member will cite these kinds of tragic crimes as a political prop is simply beneath this—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I do not know what to say to that. Obviously, it is quite clear that I will allow the minister to start from the top.

Hon. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are now even finding a way to filibuster question period.

In all honesty, this is the readiness with which the Conservatives come to this conversation. They will cite heinous crimes to make a political point, but then stall the proceedings to actually advance the laws that police chiefs are asking for, that victims are asking for and that law enforcement from their own communities is deliberately asking us to get on with. What is getting in the way—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: There is a problem when yours truly cannot hear because there is too much noise, and I have to stop it because I need to hear what people are saying.

Would the hon. minister like to conclude his comments?

Hon. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, the excuse the Conservatives are using now to prevent us from addressing bail and sentencing is that they will not support measures that are designed to combat hate crimes in this country.

We can fight hate. We can keep communities safe. The Conservatives should get out of the way.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Conservatives on the justice committee tried three times to let the committee prioritize the study of the much-needed bail reforms on which it would be possible for us to have a consensus. What was so pressing that the Liberals did not want to study their own bail bill? They launched a full-scale assault on religious freedom in this country that risks the prosecution of those who express religious beliefs.

Now the minister says that after passing the amendment he will start his consultations. This is the minister who said he would rather spend time with his family. Could he do that instead of censoring Canadians?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, because the member wrote the biography of the member for Battle River—Crowfoot, he knows very well the tricks of the trade when it comes to obstructing legislation.

Here is the problem the Conservatives have. We have systematically tabled legislation in the House to battle child pornography, extortion and intimate partner violence and to do bail reform. We have put border measures and we have put immigration crack-downs all in front of the House. What do the Conservatives do? They filibuster and jam, just like the book says.

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect jail time for the most serious crimes, especially those involving children.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. member for Pickering—Brooklin.

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect jail time for the most serious crimes, especially those involving children.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1455)

The Speaker: Order. We do not want strike three here. I could always upset the order of questioning.

The hon. member for Pickering—Brooklin.

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, Canadians also expect laws that will withstand court scrutiny and respect the charter.

Can the Minister of Justice please inform the House about what the government is doing to preserve strong mandatory minimum penalties for imprisonment while ensuring laws remain constitutional and enforceable?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague her support in advancing the protecting victims act, which would treat more seriously femicide in this country, which would criminalize coercive control and which would include new higher maximum penalties for a range of sexual offences. In addition, this bill would restore mandatory minimum penalties for a range of sexual crimes and trafficking-related crimes that were struck down because they were not constitutionally compliant.

We are moving forward with a path that will ensure that people who commit heinous sexual crimes, including against our kids, spend time behind bars, if only the Conservatives would get out of the way and let the House adopt the law.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nearly one in four British Columbians is food insecure and food bank usage is soaring. The Prime Minister told Canadians to judge him by grocery prices. Well, the verdict is in. Under the current Liberal government, food banks are not just for emergencies anymore. They are now an entrenched lifeline of support.

When will these Liberals stop their inflationary spending and cut the hidden taxes on food so Canadians can afford to eat?

Hon. Jill McKnight (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, opposition MPs are too comfortable with fiction and fantasies. British Columbians demand facts, and the respect that they can tell the difference.

Here are the facts: We are delivering a middle-class tax cut to put savings in the pockets of 22 million Canadians. We have made the national school food program permanent to save families up to \$800 a year, and we are investing in 175,000 youth and student employment opportunities. British Columbians deserve the facts, and the fact is that we are delivering for Canadians.

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that member should be ashamed of outlining fiction and fantasy in respect to the challenges of British Columbians in feeding their families.

Oral Questions

The 2026 food price report says grocery prices will keep climbing to \$1,000 more next year, forcing families to compromise on healthy food and to rely more on food banks. Farmers in my riding, the breadbasket of British Columbia, tell me they are drowning in costs. Fertilizer, fuel and transportation costs have all skyrocketed nationally. Producers are taking on more debt than at any time since 1981.

Instead of raising taxes to grow, ship and sell our food, when will the government face reality and lower food prices?

Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Christmas approaches, I am reminded that there are 143 Conservatives over there who might as well be named “Scrooge”. British Columbians in my riding of Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke know that Scrooge from Battle River—Crowfoot does not want to feed hungry children in schools, that Scrooge from Thornhill does not want money going to seniors through old age security and that Scrooge from Haldimand—Norfolk does not want parents to get a cheque for child care benefits.

I sure hope that the Conservatives get a visit from the ghosts of Christmas present, past and future, so that they embrace the Canadian spirit of compassion.

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while Canadians cannot afford to put food on the table, the Liberal Prime Minister spent nearly 800,000 taxpayer dollars to charter a flight to Egypt. While he was jet-setting, the reality here at home is that grocery prices have skyrocketed, and “Canada’s Food Price Report 2020” shows that it is expected to get even worse. The report confirms that, in 2026, Canadians will pay an extra \$1,000 per year on groceries. When will the Liberals stop their reckless spending so that Canadians can afford to feed themselves?

• (1500)

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on creating opportunities. Let me tell that member that jobs are up in this country, wages are up and growth is up, but we are not stopping there. We are creating opportunities for Hamilton. We are building big, with the largest infrastructure investment in Canadian history, which that member voted against. We are going to be building major projects in the national interest, such as community centres, hospitals and health care.

When are the Conservatives going to get on board? We are doing the hard work on this side; they are not.

Oral Questions

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member from Hamilton over there that, instead of chirping us and heckling us, he should visit a food bank in Hamilton. The Stoney Creek Community Food Bank is serving 60 people per day. That is up 400% in the last two years. Last week, youth visits were up double compared to this time last year. It is no wonder food is so expensive. The industrial carbon tax, the packaging tax and the new fuel tax all raise food prices.

Will the Liberals cut their hidden taxes on food so that—

The Speaker: The Secretary of State for Labour.

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative record in the House speaks volumes. That party has voted against every affordability measure that this side of the House has brought forward. They voted against dental care, which is helping Canadians get to a dentist; the Canada child benefit, which gives cheques to parents to help their kids with food and clothing; Build Canada Homes, which will reduce the price of housing in this country; and automatic tax filing.

That party has voted against every measure to help Canadians. They come in here to say that they support affordability, but they do not.

Blake Richards (Airdrie—Cochrane, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Heather from Airdrie is a senior who has worked in Canada since she was 13 years old. She and her husband paid their dues, but now, after a lifetime of contributing, they are, in their words, next to having to use the food bank just to get by. It is unacceptable that, after 10 long years of the Liberal government, the seniors who built this country cannot even afford groceries.

When will the Prime Minister axe his inflationary spending, his industrial carbon tax, his fuel tax and his food packaging tax, so Canadians can afford to eat?

Hon. Eleanor Olszewski (Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience and Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the industrial carbon tax has next to zero impact on the cost of food. School food programs, on the other hand, lower food costs for many families, but the Conservatives voted against them, just like they voted against child care, dental care and affordable housing. Day after day, we hear the Conservatives talk about making life more affordable for Canadians. Why do they keep voting against the things that would do exactly that?

Blake Richards (Airdrie—Cochrane, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people struggling in this country who would beg to differ. I will talk about Justin, a middle-class dad from Airdrie, who says that the cost of living crisis is eroding middle-class stability, with families being squeezed by soaring housing, grocery, utility and fuel prices. That is all because the Liberal industrial carbon tax, the fuel tax and the food packaging tax have increased the cost to grow, ship and sell everything that Canadians need.

Why will the Prime Minister not finally axe his inflationary spending and end his punishing taxes so that Canadians can afford a decent life once again?

Corey Hogan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Albertans are

steady people and sensible people, and they know imaginary taxes are imaginary. They know there is no packaging tax, and they know that wages are growing in this country. While there is much work to do, we are managing a very difficult storm very well. We welcome the members opposite to help us with that storm, instead of whatever this has been today, because this has been wild.

There is much work to do in this country, and we want the Conservatives to help.

[*Translation*]

Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while Canadians are struggling to put food on the table, this Liberal Prime Minister spent \$736,000 of taxpayer money to travel to Egypt, a last-minute trip, which tripled the cost. The Prime Minister's responsibilities come at the expense of taxpayers, while next year Canadians will pay \$1,000 more for food.

Can the Liberals stop their inflationary spending and get rid of hidden taxes on food so that Canadians can finally eat their fill?

• (1505)

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think what we are doing right now, as Christmas approaches, is giving Canadians back some of their purchasing power.

On the one hand, we have a series of programs that will bring them relief on a daily basis, with \$10 child care, the Canada child benefit, and a host of other measures. On the other hand, we are working hard on the economic front to ensure that Canadians can have good jobs, particularly in the member's riding. We will get there.

I wish everyone a merry Christmas.

Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reality on the ground is that food prices have skyrocketed.

This week, Ms. Ouellet wrote to me that her grocery bill is higher than her mortgage payment. Ms. Vallée told me that she no longer eats meat so that she can stay within her budget. Mr. Hardy has noticed that people are regularly choosing pop and chips as a meal so they can pay their rent at the end of the month.

Can the Prime Minister come down from his ivory tower and finally acknowledge the reality that Canadian families are facing?

Oral Questions

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I notice that the Conservatives make up imaginary taxes faster than they come up with questions for question period, because they always ask the same questions.

However, if the member wants to talk about the reality on the ground, there is nothing imaginary about it. The Canada child benefit has reduced child poverty by 40% in our country. The Canadian dental care plan provides access to dental care for 1.5 million Quebecers. The national school food program provides 100,000 of Quebec's most vulnerable young people with access to meals. Allow me to share one more statistic: 180,000 jobs have been created in the last three months. These are opportunities for Quebecers and Canadians across the country.

Bernard Généreux (Côte-du-Sud—Rivière-du-Loup—Kataskomiq—Témiscouata, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that we should judge him by the prices at the grocery store. Well, Canadians have judged him. Groceries now cost twice as much as they did 10 years ago, and the latest food price report says that the cost will go up another \$1,000 next year for a family of four.

Today, families are telling us that they have to choose between milk and fruit or even skip the occasional meal to make it to the next paycheque. It is appalling that such a thing is happening in a country like Canada.

Will the Liberals finally stop the inflationary spending, which is driving up prices, and axe the hidden taxes on food so that Canadians can get enough to eat?

Hon. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The Conservatives are crying crocodile tears. They complain that Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. However, they vote against Canadians' interests.

We have the Canada child benefit, which is indexed to inflation, but the Conservatives do not like this program. They voted against it. We have the dental care program for children and for seniors who are struggling, but the Conservatives voted against that too. They want nothing to do with that program because it helps Canadians. Let us be frank. The Conservatives do not have Canadians' best interests at heart.

* * *

HEALTH

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign, I knocked on thousands of doors throughout Halifax. I kept hearing the same concerns about access to health care. My voters know that the federal government can and must be at the table with solutions to improve our health care system.

Can the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship tell the House how our government will contribute to this essential work?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. On Monday, as part of our international talent attraction

strategy, I announced new express entry measures to attract doctors, specialists and surgeons who are ready to practice in Canada and to retain foreign doctors who are already here caring for patients in our communities. Thanks to our plan, our government is going to build a more stable health care system for all Canadians.

* * *

• (1510)

[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for months, Conservatives fought to get the Stellantis contracts released despite the gag order from the Liberals, and now we know why they wanted to hide it. The so-called jobs guarantee that the minister was bragging about in question period only a few weeks ago was for 4,400 full-time employees at Stellantis. That sounds okay, except Stellantis had 8,000 employees at the time the contract was signed. That allowed the company to lay off 3,500 workers and still get the money.

Is that why it fired 3,000 auto workers in Brampton, took the cash and sent the jobs to Donald Trump?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we stand with our workers in the auto sector who are victims of the unjustified and unjustifiable American tariffs, and we will continue to fight for their jobs. When it comes to Stellantis, we had a deal, and Stellantis broke it. We will go after the money.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do members want to know what is unjustifiable? What is unjustifiable is giving a multinational company \$15 billion and having a jobs guarantee in the contract that allows the company to fire almost 50% of its workers. Let that sink in. The Liberals gave Stellantis \$15 billion. It was allowed to fire 3,500 workers in Canada and still be in compliance with the contract. That is gross negligence. It is incompetence beyond incompetence.

How the hell has someone not been fired?

The Speaker: We have pretty much unlimited freedom of expression in the House, but there are some words that provoke a reaction, even if they are not technically unparliamentary.

[Translation]

The hon. Minister of Industry.

[English]

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, do members know what gross negligence is? It is when the Conservatives, under Harper, decided to do a deal to bail out GM and Chrysler, and shook hands with these two giants. Two Ford plants closed, a GM plant closed, and Orion Bus closed.

Oral Questions

We have no lessons to take from the Conservatives. We were the first government to bring jobs back to the auto sector, and there are 3,000 right now in Windsor at the NextStar facility. We will make sure that we get our money back from Stellantis.

Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal government was asked about its billion-dollar subsidy deal with Stellantis, the minister said to read the contracts and we would see job guarantees. After her officials lied and were forced to release the documents, we see exactly what the Liberals got in return for Canadians' money. The contract stated that there would be no penalties against the recipient should their aspirational target not be met.

Why did the minister hand out hundreds of millions of dollars without any guarantee from Stellantis that jobs would be created?

Hon. Buckley Belanger (Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister answered that question twice already. I am not a mathematician, nor am I an economist, but when we talk about investments, I calculate that the 14 Saskatchewan Conservative MPs who have been sent to Ottawa over the last 10 years cost us \$30,800,000. There is no return on investment. The people of Saskatchewan deserve better.

Merry Christmas and happy new year.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister announced earlier this week that Canada is going to present a bid to host the Sommet de la Francophonie in 2028. That is great news. This major event, which brings together the world's francophone countries, will have significant cultural and economic benefits.

I wonder if the Minister of Foreign Affairs could tell us what this bid might mean for Canada if we are selected, and how hosting this summit could strengthen our ties with other francophone countries while also strengthening the Canadian francophonie.

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the French language and French culture are very important. They are at the heart of our Canadian identity.

That is why, this week, we announced Canada's bid to host the 2028 Sommet de la Francophonie right here in the national capital region.

Hosting this summit will launch new economic partnerships for Canadians. This is good news for the economy and for francophones.

* * *

• (1515)

[English]

FIREARMS

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from Prince Edward Island, where all 10 Charlottetown city councillors were present and voted unanimously to

reject the Liberal government's gun grab. The 10 city councillors in Charlottetown clearly know better than the four Liberal MPs from that island. They know that lawful gun owners are not the problem. They know that their police resources are already stretched thin. They know that the real problem is with violent crime and with illegal guns from the United States.

Charlottetown does not want anything to do with the Liberal government's policy. Even the minister himself has admitted it is a failure.

When will the Liberals abandon this ineffective, useless \$750-million boondoggle?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear: We will be moving forward with the national program to ensure that the gun owners who are lawful gun owners are able to get compensation for prohibited weapons, the 2,500 types of weapons we prohibited under the Firearms Act. We will be compensating them.

My question to the opposition members is this: Why do they continuously go against law enforcement? For example, on lawful access, why do they continuously vote against and stall legislation that would help the people of Canada?

* * *

[Translation]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, many families will soon be gathering together for Christmas dinner. What kind of conversations will there be around the dinner table? People will be talking about how they are disappointed in this Liberal government. Not only have the Liberals done nothing to bring down the cost of groceries or housing, but it is plain to see that they have given up the fight against climate change. Even the former environment minister is now saying that Canada's climate goals are unachievable.

This government is headed straight for disaster and it is abandoning future generations. It is going to leave them a broken climate and a planet on fire.

I have one simple question: Will the Liberals apologize to our children?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have said it before and I will say it again: Our government is committed to continuing the fight against climate change. From what we are hearing from the other side of the House, the Conservative Party does not have the required expertise and does not believe in the fight against climate change.

Routine Proceedings

We are getting the job done and we will continue to do so. I hope that my colleague will support us as we take on this work. [English]

[English]

Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties, and I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent—

Some hon. members: No.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As members of the House are aware, we open with prayer each day, and I am hoping you can rule on whether members will be protected from prosecution by parliamentary privilege should Bill C-9 pass.

The Speaker: I did not hear what the member said. I would ask the member to repeat it. To avoid having the member repeat it a third time, maybe we could have a little more silence in the room.

The hon. member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, as members are aware, we open our days in prayer each day, which is a testament to the spiritual roots of this country. I am wondering if you can rule on whether our parliamentary privilege will protect us from prosecution if Bill C-9 becomes law.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. It is absolutely absurd and outrageous to suggest that Parliament would act to constrain the rights and privileges of Canadians to prayer, to choose their faith and to practise their religion in any way possible.

● (1520)

The Speaker: I do not see it being a problem.

The hon. government House leader is rising on another point of order.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, late in question period the member from Saskatchewan suggested that public servants had misled or lied to committee. I think that is something you should review.

The Speaker: I do not see that as a point of order.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 38(3.3) of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, a case report of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner.

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) and consistent with the policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaty entitled “Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines Concerning the Status of Visiting Forces of Each State in the Territory of the Other State”, done at Manila on November 2, 2025.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the “2024-2025 Reports by Federal Authorities with Obligations under Section 71 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012”.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hope you will allow me a bit of latitude to wish my constituents very happy holidays and a very merry Christmas in St. Catharines.

I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, entitled “Question of Privilege Related to the Member for Wellington—Halton Hills and Other Members”.

* * *

● (1525)

INDIAN ACT

Hon. Mandy Gull-Masty (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.) moved that Bill S-2, An Act to amend the Indian Act (new registration entitlements), be read the first time.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

*Routine Proceedings***PETITIONS**

PAYMENT PLATFORMS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Carmen Tam, a constituent of the riding of Waterloo, created Petition e-6695. Today I rise to present it on behalf of 14,921 petitioners.

Petitioners need the House and all Canadians to know that in 2025, online video game storefronts like Steam and Itch.io removed numerous games featuring adult sexual content because Mastercard, Visa and other payment platforms changed their policies to regulate adult entertainment. Petitioners share with the House that this sets an unsettling precedent of financial censorship. Petitioners are saying to let creators create and to let consumers choose. Payment processors should not be cultural gatekeepers.

The petition demands the protection of consumer choice and creative expression against financial censorship. Petitioners agree that laws and regulations, all rules, including our Standing Orders, should be followed, but payment platforms should not determine what a creator can create or a consumer can purchase.

TAXATION

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise on behalf of petitioners from Oxford County who are calling for the exemption from taxes for registered massage therapies, removing GST and HST from these services and putting them in line with physiotherapy and chiropractic care. Massage therapy is prescribed by medical professionals to help with chronic illnesses, occupational injuries and physical injuries, and to deal with stress.

Petitioners are calling for this to happen as soon as possible so any barriers could be removed for people who might need help. It would promote early intervention, reduce long-term care health care costs and would align with federal policy on modern clinical regulatory realities.

Petitioners ask this to be petitioned and passed as soon as possible.

[*Translation*]

STRIPED BASS

Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise at the end of this session to table a petition.

The numerous signatories are calling on the Minister of Fisheries to take action on striped bass. I think it is important to note that striped bass used to be a protected species, but now they are plentiful, and that is creating problems for the ecosystem.

We are asking the minister to take swift action so as not to cause further problems for other species and to make this opportunity available to fishermen.

[*English*]

GAELIC LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Hon. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to present Petition e-6931, spearheaded by my constituent Emily McEwan-Fujita, regarding the Gaelic language and culture.

The petition recognizes that Nova Scotia is the only region outside Scotland where the Gaelic language and culture remain everyday aspects of community life, and that Gaelic is a heritage language for 6 million Scottish Canadians.

The petitioners also point out that Gaelic publishing has taken place in Canada for nearly 200 years and that Gaelic publishers are struggling to access the federal supports they need. They call on the government to ensure that Gaelic publishers have proper access to federal funding.

BRAIN INJURY

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table two petitions.

The first is a petition from Canadians who are calling for urgent federal investment on brain injury awareness, prevention and treatment.

Petitioners note that brain injuries can occur in many ways, from accidents to illness and strokes, and often result in serious physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioural effects. They further point out that brain injuries are frequently linked with other challenges, including substance use and homelessness, creating additional barriers for people affected.

It is estimated that 1.6 million Canadians are living with a brain injury today, yet there is no coordinated national response. The petitioners therefore call upon the Government of Canada to support Bill C-206, the development of a national strategy on brain injuries, in order to improve awareness and prevention and to ensure better access to treatment, rehabilitation and recovery supports for Canadians living with the impacts of brain injury.

GAZA

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from Canadians deeply concerned about the delivery of humanitarian aid in Gaza.

Petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to restore aid for UN agencies and NGOs such as UNRWA and the World Food Programme, to permit safe entry for Canadian health care and humanitarian workers, and to ensure that all Canadian aid is delivered through internationally recognized, neutral and independent channels.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BANGLADESH

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of petitioners who want this place to know that Hindus in Bangladesh have faced escalating violence, including arson, mob attacks, sexual assault, temple demolitions and forced displacement. There have been over 2,000 incidents in 2024 alone.

I want the petitioners to know their voices have certainly been heard here, that the voices of the oppressed are amplified, and that we are going to intervene before it is too late.

● (1530)

SPORT FISHING

Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand and present e-petition 6908, which was created by a constituent of mine, Aidan Gunter, a local angler. The petitioners are deeply concerned about a growing problem on the Chilliwack-Vedder River, including foul hooking. They call on the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to implement a maximum leader of approximately one metre for sport fishing on the Chilliwack-Vedder River, to increase enforcement monitoring, to ensure compliance and to protect wild salmon.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Canadians with respect to the Liberal-Bloc amendments to Bill C-9. I was in my riding on the weekend and was absolutely overwhelmed with the number of constituents who brought this concern forward to me with hundreds of signatures.

In a country that is hungry and hurting, the government has prioritized attacking freedom of religion and freedom of expression over dealing with the broken Liberal bail system at justice committee. Freedom of expression and freedom of religion are fundamental rights that must be preserved.

The petitioners are calling on the government to protect religious freedom and stop the government overreach.

The Speaker: I do not know if the member was reading verbatim from the petition. Some of it sounded like we were entering debate.

The hon. member for Riding Mountain.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions today.

I rise on behalf of the people of Dauphin, Manitoba to present a petition on the rising rate of crime. Residents of Dauphin and the Parkland region are demanding that the Liberal government repeal its soft-on-crime policies, which have fuelled a surge in crime throughout their communities. Petitioners are deeply concerned by what they read in the local papers, including a November report that Dauphin RCMP are searching for a wanted man with three separate arrest warrants. Our once-safe communities have now turned into places where people fear for their lives because the government's catch-and-release policies have allowed violent repeat offenders to be out on bail instead of in jail.

Routine Proceedings

The people of Dauphin and the Parkland region demand that the Liberal government repeal its soft-on-crime policies, which directly threaten their livelihoods and their community. I fully support the people of Dauphin.

SYNTHETIC FOOD DYES

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for my second petition, I rise to present a petition on synthetic food dyes. Petitioners are concerned that synthetic food dyes are negatively impacting consumers' behaviour, memory and learning, especially among young children. That is why the petitioners are calling on the government to reform regulations that are permitting synthetic food dyes like red number 40, yellow number five, yellow number six, and red number three. Petitioners are calling for a reassessment of synthetic dyes under the Food and Drugs Act. They want to see regulations that respect experts and science-based approaches that prioritize protecting the health of Canadians.

FALUN GONG

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of Canadians concerned about the ongoing persecution of Falun Gong practitioners by the Chinese Communist Party. The petitioners note documented human rights abuses, including arbitrary detention, torture and forced organ harvesting, as well as incidents of transnational repression here in Canada, such as harassment, intimidation and recent threats against Shen Yun performances.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to publicly urge an end to the persecution, to impose sanctions on and pursue accountability for those responsible, and to take stronger measures to protect the Falun Gong community from foreign interference.

FIREARMS

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise for the third time to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Skeena—Bulkley Valley, specifically law-abiding citizens who do not agree with the Liberals' confiscation plan. Provinces, police associations and now the Charlottetown council do not agree with the confiscation plan. In fact, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has estimated that this program will cost over \$750 million.

The petitioners want the government to stop this confiscation plan in Skeena—Bulkley Valley and go after criminals.

● (1535)

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, this year, the 80th anniversary of the falling of the nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, petitioners wish to draw to the attention of the House of Commons the fact that work towards nuclear disarmament has slowed and is sputtering to a halt.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners note that the arms control architecture has all but disintegrated with the termination of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that was in place with Iran, with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty between the U.S. and Russia, and with grim prospects for the renewal of the New START Treaty in 2026.

I will abbreviate the petitioners' concerns, but they are deep and command our attention: that we should follow the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence recommendations from 2018; that we should, as the Parliament of Canada, urge the Government of Canada to make nuclear disarmament a foreign policy and national defence priority for the security of the globe; that Canada should assume a leadership position within NATO to work for nuclear disarmament; and that Canada should, with haste, join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, TPNW, to negotiate, on an urgent basis, new legally binding treaties to achieve the ultimate goal, which is the complete elimination of the ultimate weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons.

BRAIN CANCER TREATMENT

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition with respect to the approval and accessibility of brain cancer treatment and therapies.

The petitioners observe that an estimated 27 Canadians are diagnosed with a brain tumour each day. Canada is years behind the United States in approving new drugs and treatments, and even when new brain cancer therapies are approved, they are not always made equally accessible to patients across the country.

Accordingly, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to work with the provinces and territories to ensure that drugs, medical devices and new therapies are accessible to brain cancer patients nationwide, and to remove unnecessary red tape so that brain cancer drugs can be approved more quickly.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition on behalf of residents of Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford who are frightened by the ever-increasing levels of organized violence, extortion, shootings and intimidation across the Lower Mainland. Daylight shootings, murders and violence underscore a broader public safety crisis.

These residents call upon the Government of Canada to reinforce the process of public reporting so Canadians can clearly see how federal, provincial and local governments are working together to prevent further increases in violent and organized crime.

The petitioners note that this petition is in honour of Darshan Sahsi, who was tragically murdered outside his home in my riding.

OPIOIDS

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I present today is on behalf of angered parents who are concerned about the actions of BC Housing and its attempt to install a safe consumption site, or drug den, across the street from the school track at Abbotsford Traditional School.

Angered parents are calling upon the Government of Canada to cease all federal funding to BC Housing until it comes to its senses

and finds a more suitable location to provide such services, and to protect the innocence of children, first and foremost, as a key policy priority.

GAZA

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table e-petition e-6581, which has 7,531 signatures.

The petitioners note that the Israeli government's blockade of food and medicines to Gaza has continued for more than 90 days since its commencement on March 2, 2025. According to the food security analysis released on May 12, 2025, by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification partnership, three-quarters of Gaza's population is currently experiencing "emergency" or "catastrophic" food deprivation.

Canada has ratified the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, giving these the force of law through the Geneva Conventions Act of 1964, which prohibits the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. The starvation of civilians and other forms of collective punishment are also criminalized by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which Canada ratified on July 7, 2000.

The Government of Canada is the custodian of Canada's reputation as a country that upholds international human rights laws, and it has a duty towards Canadians to ensure that this reputation is not diminished by Canada's inaction in the face of grave breaches of the Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute by other states. Therefore, the petitioners call on the government to suspend the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement until the Government of Canada has certitude that the Israeli government is no longer acting in violation of international laws with its deliberate blockade, and to impose sanctions on all members of the present Israeli government who have publicly expressed their support for the continued blockade.

* * *

● (1540)

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534 and 535 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled in electronic format immediately.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

* * *

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 remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

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 also be allowed to stand at this time.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUDGET 2025 IMPLEMENTATION ACT, NO. 1

The House resumed from December 8 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.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried on division or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, we will carry on division.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried on division. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

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

* * *

STRENGTHENING CANADA'S IMMIGRATION SYSTEM AND BORDERS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-12, An Act respecting certain measures relating to the security of Canada's borders and the integrity of the Canadian immigration system and respecting other related security measures, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

Government Orders

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: There are 51 motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-12.

Motions Nos. 1 to 51 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

[*Translation*]

I will now put Motions Nos. 1 to 51 to the House.

[*English*]

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC) moved:

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting the short title.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Vancouver East, moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 28.

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 29.

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 30.

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 31.

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 32.

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 33.

Motion No. 8

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 34.

Motion No. 9

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 35.

Motion No. 10

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 36.

Motion No. 11

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 37.

Motion No. 12

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 38.

Motion No. 13

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 39.

Motion No. 14

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 40.

Motion No. 15

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 41.

Motion No. 16

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 42.

Motion No. 17

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 43.

Motion No. 18

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 44.

Motion No. 19

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 45.

Motion No. 20

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 46.

Motion No. 21

Government Orders

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 47.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.) moved:

That Bill C-12, in Clause 47, be amended by

(a) replacing lines 4 to 8 on page 23 with the following:

(a) in the case where the person has voluntarily returned to the country in respect of which they claimed refugee protection and the Refugee Protection Division has not yet made a decision in respect of the claim, must determine that the claim has been abandoned; and

(b) in any other case, must not commence, or must suspend, consideration of the claim.

(b) replacing lines 12 to 17 on page 23 with the following:

(a) in the case where the person has made the appeal and has voluntarily returned to the country in respect of which they claimed refugee protection and the Refugee Appeal Division has not yet made a decision in respect of the appeal, must determine that the appeal has been abandoned; and

(b) in any other case, must not commence, or must suspend, consideration of the appeal, other than an appeal by the Minister.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Vancouver East, moved:

Motion No. 23

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 48.

Motion No. 24

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 49.

Motion No. 25

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 50.

Motion No. 26

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 51.

Motion No. 27

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 52.

Motion No. 28

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 53.

Motion No. 29

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 54.

Motion No. 30

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 55.

Motion No. 31

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 56.

Motion No. 32

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 57.

Motion No. 33

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 58.

Motion No. 34

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 59.

Motion No. 35

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 60.

Motion No. 36

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 61.

Motion No. 37

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 62.

Motion No. 38

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 63.

Motion No. 39

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 64.

Motion No. 40

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 65.

Motion No. 41

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 66.

Motion No. 42

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 67.

Motion No. 43

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 68.

Motion No. 44

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 69.

Motion No. 45

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 70.

Motion No. 46

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 71.

Motion No. 47

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 72.

● (1550)

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC) moved:

That Bill C-12, in Clause 72, be amended by replacing line 3 on page 32 with the following:

“permanent resident status or to grant or extend study permits or work permits.”

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Vancouver East, moved:

Motion No. 49

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 73.

Motion No. 50

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 74.

Motion No. 51

That Bill C-12 be amended by deleting Clause 75.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people from Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, and this is certainly no exception.

Bill C-12, which was originally conceived of as Bill C-2, has really had a very long journey. Let us be real. The election was in April. We came here in May, and Bill C-2 was the first substantial bill. I had not really dealt with a lot of omnibus bills, and I still remember when the Liberals came to power and talked about the effect of omnibus bills on democracy. They talked about the use of parliamentary tricks, omnibus bills, time allocation and things like that and how they would never, ever do that. We now see the Liberals, to be very candid, have put way too much in one bill. They may have, so to speak, bit off more than they could chew.

When lawful access, for instance, is put into parts 14 and 15 of a bill that touches on the sex offence registry, puts the Coast Guard under the authority of the Minister of National Defence, talks about cash transactions over \$10,000, requires mandatory reporting from all sorts of financial agencies and has dramatic immigration reforms, we are going to end up with a bill that is a hodgepodge of policies.

Government Orders

Lo and behold, we dealt with a bill that was largely unworkable at the end of the day. We know it was unworkable because the bill was originally tabled in the form of Bill C-2. It is now Bill C-12. The Liberals can claim that this was a good thing, but the reality is that they had to, word for word, take various parts of Bill C-2 and hive them off into another bill.

In fact, I was at the public safety committee not long ago. We had a legal expert appear, somebody who was an expert in, I believe, constitutional law, and she was asked about lawful access. Lawful access is something lawyers debate. It is not an easy topic to comprehend. I would not disregard anybody in the House if they said they were having trouble wrapping their head around lawful access. What the expert said is that lawful access requires its own bill, yet we had a bill that essentially was forced on us.

The Liberals, to this day, are attempting to shame us into passing a bill on lawful access that throws everything and the kitchen sink into a bill. They expect us to produce a shining, gleaming bill when the privacy commissioner, I believe, was not even asked for input.

For those at home who are watching and do not know, lawful access is about what the government can do without a warrant. It sounds good. Warrants or judicial authorizations can come in many forms; a warrant is one of them. When a person has an expectation of privacy and a search is not prescribed by law, as in there is no law saying someone may search something, then a warrant is needed. Search warrants are the most common ones, but other authorizations might include a production order or things like that.

The Liberals roundly mocked the Harper government when the Harper government introduced lawful access. They said to the Harper government that it was going too far, yet what do they do? They bury lawful access, a critical legal element in this bill, Bill C-2, and then expect everybody will turn a blind eye to what may at least be, and are potentially likely, breaches of section 8 of the charter, which says that Canadians have a right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure.

The Liberals love to wield the charter when it suits their purposes. However, when it does not suit their purposes, they say that it is okay because it is charter-compliant, as though we are supposed to take their word for it. We have seen where it goes when we are supposed to take the Liberals' word for it.

• (1555)

In fact, we just had the justice minister table Bill C-16 yesterday. I cannot say how many times in committee I brought up the issue of mandatory minimum jail sentences and was laughed at. I was mocked by people like Minister Lametti and Minister Virani. Minister Virani and I had a good relationship, but he would literally defend the lack of mandatory minimums. They would say, "No, we do not want to tie the hands of judges."

In fact, just the other day, my colleague from Lethbridge was giving an impassioned speech, and I could not believe what I heard from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice. This was about making sex offence sentencing consecutive. I mean, who is against that? Apparently, the Liberals are against that. She talked about the unconstitutionality. We cannot make this up. She said that it would not be constitutional. What? There is an analogous provi-

sion for sex offences against kids, but they do not want to talk about that.

This is the cherry-picking of the charter that we often see. They say they do not want to do that. The cherry on top of that was that they said they do not want to tie the hands of judges. We do that all the time. In fact, we do it in bills that say they must get a warrant or the parameters of what a warrant can be. In one case, we are tying the hands of peace officers. In the other case, we are telling judges what they can and cannot do.

A murder conviction, for instance, has a mandatory life sentence. We are okay with tying judges' hands there. What about house arrest? What about house arrest for sex offences? For years, they told us that was not the case and that it was okay. I brought this up to many ministers at committee, and we were told, nope, they would not tie the hands of judges. However, just yesterday Bill C-16 came out and, look, the Liberals say we should be giving them high-fives. We should be patting them on the backs because they finally listened to the Conservatives.

On one hand, they do not want to tie the hands of judges. On the other hand, they are expecting people to praise them for doing that very thing. This is just unbelievable. We have the colossal failure that was Bill C-2, which has gone so far in the form of Bill C-12. I will be candid. When Bill C-12 came to the SECU, colloquially known as the public safety committee, there were not a lot of amendments because the controversial stuff had been taken out, such as the stuff like Canada Post being able to open our mail.

I will note the member for Winnipeg North still cannot wrap his head around this even though it is plain as day, and his own official said, yes, they can open mail without a warrant. I guess the fact that justice officials said they can open mail without a warrant according to Bill C-2 was not good enough for the member for Winnipeg North. He just wanted to repeatedly say that they needed a warrant, even though they did not, not that I am counting or anything.

Be that as it may, there are a lot of amendments, and there has been a lot of hard work that has gone into this. I recognize the member for Calgary Nose Hill for her exceptional work when it comes to immigration. I was at the table when I believe something like 48 amendments were moved. It was a number along those lines. I was actually quite surprised because, in some cases, the Bloc voted with the Conservatives on these things. It was common sense, like when someone lies about their application, when they commit fraud to get into Canada, they should not then be able to resile from that fraud and still expect the same treatment as somebody who did not commit fraud.

Government Orders

I am saying this as a child of immigrants. I owe everything in my life to immigration. The night of my first election, my mom asked me if I could imagine what my *nonno* Pasquale, my grandfather, would say if he were observing this. He had to borrow money to buy a chicken on Christmas Day when he first got to Canada.

• (1600)

When we think about these things, nobody on this side of the House is opposed to immigration. Nobody is. The member for Winnipeg seems to disagree. He says that it is true, but it is audacity to say that, when we have members on this bench who immigrated to Canada. That member can be quiet. I am making a point.

That member can be quiet. We can joke around about different things, but that member says that we are “meh” on immigration, when our front bench has people who came to Canada for a better life. Our front bench has people who I would get behind and who would get behind me, and who would fight for families like Bailey McCourt's.

They say that we are “meh” on immigration. My family did not have two pennies to rub together, and I am darned proud of my immigration legacy. I am proud of the legacy of every member in the House, whether they were born here or they came here for a better life.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it would be for another day how I do not believe that 100% of the Conservative caucus, and the stuff they put on social media, is what I would classify as immigrant friendly. Let us just leave it at that.

The issue that we have before us today is a substantive piece of legislation that is going to make our communities and our country safer. We have had, through this government, a number of pieces of legislation, some of which the member has actually brought forward. Part of the frustration that the government has experienced is with the way in which the Conservative Party, as an opposition party, is preventing, and in many ways filibustering, legislation from ultimately passing so that we can provide things such as bail reform.

The question I would ask the member is this: Would he feel any sort of obligation to see some of the legislation passed, which likely will not because of filibustering?

Frank Caputo: Madam Speaker, can someone tell me if the filibuster that the Liberals were doing at transport committee is still going on? When the Liberals filibuster, it is A-okay, but it is not when the Liberals cannot get their house in order or figure out how to pass their own legislation. They sat on bail legislation for 10 years. They told us that there was no problem, and then they have the audacity, after mocking our party on immigration, to waltz in here to say that they will not pass bail legislation. This is after they told us, for 10 years, that there was no problem. Now they are saying we should turn on a dime and do it, when they cannot figure it out for themselves.

That is their fault and their problem. They sat on their hands. Now they have to navigate it through. I really wish we could have heard from the member from Vancouver, but hopefully we will

have more time for that, because I do not think he would be mocking us on our immigration policies.

• (1605)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, as my colleague pointed out, there was excellent collaboration at committee on Bill C-12. It is unfortunate that the government has decided to set aside certain amendments.

What is interesting about this bill is that the government now explicitly recognizes that there was a problem with asylum seekers. For a long time, harm was being done to the reputation of the Bloc Québécois and that of all Quebecers who were concerned about immigration. Quebecers want a stronger immigration system that allows for integration, of course, but that also plugs the gaps. It seems like the Liberal government is finally acknowledging how cavalier it has been about asylum seekers.

I would like my colleague to comment on that.

Frank Caputo: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

[*English*]

When it comes to refugees and asylum seekers, I do not think anybody in the House says that there is a problem with people coming from another country who are fleeing persecution. Some of the greatest Canadians I know fled persecution. There is somebody who, with redistribution, is no longer in my riding, but he fled Afghanistan with a backpack. I believe he actually watched a family member be killed. I do not take issue with that person. He has come here for a better life, fleeing persecution.

I want to be very clear when I talk about the Conservative standpoint. When we refer to refugees, under international law, and asylum seekers, under international law, we must be welcoming to these people. I could talk about this for hours. I could probably have a long conversation about the immigration portion, and I am sure my colleague from Calgary Nose Hill is going to talk about the issues that we sometimes have there. However, for people arriving as legitimate asylum seekers and people who are legitimately seeking to arrive as refugees, in my view, and on behalf of the Conservative Party, there is absolutely no issue with legitimacy in immigration in those regards.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Peace River—Westlock, Natural Resources; the hon. member for Calgary Crowfoot, Finance.

Government Orders

[English]

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I wish I could say I was pleased to rise today. December 10 is coincidentally Human Rights Day, and I stand here at the point of report stage on Bill C-12, which threatens to actually violate international human rights law. I will go into why I believe that to be the case and why I am offering amendments at this late stage.

I want to extend my deep appreciation to the hon. member for Vancouver East for seconding my amendments. She also worked hard to put amendments forward during clause by clause at the national security committee, where we met. A number of other members of this place continued to try to make amendments, some of which I agreed with, others of which I did not, until midnight, when we were cut off from trying to make amendments, but we tried.

I want to give the people who are watching these speeches right now some more context.

I want to thank my hon. colleague from Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. We may disagree on some of the points, particularly those on refugee protections, but I agree and want to associate myself with his very elegant preamble on what is wrong with omnibus bills, how many things are stuffed into the bill we have before us and whether it is appropriate to do that. I agree with him that it is not.

It is true that the Liberals used to make comments about the horrible Conservative omnibus budget bills. We have an omnibus budget bill before us today that passed on division, which, by the way, coincidentally means that members of Parliament were not able to register personal votes. I was not able to vote against it, as I would have wished to have done, but it was agreed that it would be passed on division by the recognized parties, which means that the Greens and the NDP MPs in this place could not register opposition to Bill C-15, the mother of all budgetary omnibus bills, at over 600 pages long.

Never mind that. Right now we are talking about my amendments, and those of others, to Bill C-12.

Let me start briefly by sharing the path this bill took, as the hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola has done in brief.

Back in June of 2025, as the numbers indicate, Bill C-2 was one of the very first bills put forward by the new administration under the Liberal Party in a minority Parliament. It did not take long for Bill C-2 to attract attention. I have never seen such quick work by as broad a range of civil society organizations, and I have seen lots of opposition.

- (1610)

[Translation]

There is a huge coalition of more than 300 NGOs that are completely opposed to Bill C-2 because of the human rights violations, because of the interference with and violation of privacy rights, which the member for Kamloops talked about. One example is allowing Canada Post employees to open personal mail.

[English]

I will just briefly list some of the organizations to give a sense of the breadth and depth of concern. There was OpenMedia, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the United Church of Canada, the Muslim legal rights association, Women's Shelters Canada, the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, and Amnesty International. A broad range of organizations said that Bill C-2 should not pass, that it was appalling.

I will quote the executive director of OpenMedia, Matt Hatfield, who happens to be one of my constituents. He said that Bill C-2 was all about one thing, which was “pleasing President Trump”.

Bill C-2 was a target. I know many of us as MPs received so many letters from constituents saying we have to stop Bill C-2. I thought we had won a victory when it was reported in the media that the Liberal government was going to withdraw Bill C-2 and replace it with something that was not odious.

I have had the great honour of serving in this place since 2011, but I have never seen a shell game as gross as this. In October 2025, the government brought forward the bill that is before us today, Bill C-12, which contains as many offensive elements toward the rights of refugees and violations of human rights law internationally as the original bill, Bill C-2. The Liberals sort of did a bait and switch. The Liberals withdrew the parts about being able to open our mail and have access to our data from Internet service providers. Those are not in Bill C-12, but the surprise is that they remain in Bill C-2.

Bill C-2 remains on the Order Paper. We have been informed more recently that, once Bill C-12 passes, the government will bring back Bill C-2, having removed the sections that they expect us to pass it quickly, and it will probably pass quickly because that is how things go around here. Bill C-12 will go through, and then we will get Bill C-2 back, but without the sections we have passed in Bill C-12. I hope members are following me in this attempt to explain what the government is doing.

Bill C-2 attracted widespread public opposition, so it was a bait and switch. We are replacing Bill C-2. We have Bill C-12. The provisions of Bill C-12 remain offensive to the same groups that say nothing has changed since the original Bill C-2. This process is still about pleasing Donald Trump. Bill C-2 had a catchy title: the strong borders act. Bill C-12 has a less catchy title: strengthening Canada's immigration system and borders act. They are pretty much the same animal. We will get Bill C-2 back, but with the sections that have been passed in Bill C-12 removed.

Government Orders

What is offensive about all this? I had hoped to have a chance to speak on December 10, on Human Rights Day, to talk about international human rights. Ironically, I am because I am presenting amendments to Bill C-12. Otherwise, Human Rights Day would go by unobserved in this place. We observe it by pushing through a piece of legislation that violates international human rights.

What about this bill makes it offensive? As I mentioned before, the so-called lawful access pieces, going into Canadians' mail and accessing Internet service provider information, have yet to come forward in a stripped-down version of what was put forward in June in Bill C-2. We will get that back again. Meanwhile, Bill C-12 takes away the rights of people who would ordinarily have the rights of refugees to come to Canada and say they need to claim refugee protection.

Here is the the catch: Bill C-2, and now Bill C-12, say that, if someone has been in Canada for a year, they no longer have the right to ask for refugee protection. They no longer have the right to ask for a hearing for a fair assessment of their case. I will just explain why it could be that someone who has been in Canada for a year has not yet asked for refugee status.

Let us say someone came to Canada on a valid work permit or a valid student visa. They had no reason to imagine they were not going to be able to continue their studies or continue their work. The situation in their home country could have changed, the government shifted and they suddenly knew that, if they returned, they would be jailed. Their previous activities or their exercising of free speech would put them in jeopardy. This does not automatically give anybody a claim to stay in Canada to be able to avail themselves of the rights that Canada signed on to in international treaties to protect refugee rights. It just says they are allowed to ask for protection and the system will decide if they are a valid refugee or not. Those opportunities have ended. The rules changed for people who have already been in Canada for a year and would have no reason to think they need to ask for refugee protection.

I have put forward numerous amendments here today, as we heard the Speaker read out, and I am grateful to the hon. member for Vancouver East for seconding them. These amendments, even if carried, could not remedy what is wrong with this bill. The appropriate thing to do would be to withdraw it completely and to not try to interfere with human rights in the guise of making Donald Trump happy. We do not have ICE in Canada raiding institutions, schools and workplaces to grab people and say they are getting shipped out of the country before they can get due process. That is not us.

That is not Canada, but we move closer to that actually being who we are if Bill C-12 is passed without amendment and without accepting the amendments put forward today by the hon. member for Vancouver East and me. We need to protect human rights.

• (1615)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member alluded to things in Bill C-2 compared to Bill C-12. One of the issues in Bill C-2 was that of lawful access. When we think of lawful access, I think it is important to note that Canada is the only one of the Five Eyes nations that does

not have formal lawful access legislation, and I would ultimately argue that there is a need.

Is the leader of the Green Party saying that there is no need for lawful access legislation, or are there just certain areas of concern she would have with respect to lawful access?

Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, my answer to the hon. member's question would have been different a month ago, for instance, before the United States under President Trump adopted a new national security strategy that makes me wonder if it is safe for Canada to remain in the Five Eyes. The new national security strategy of the U.S., the so-called Trump corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, is deeply distressing, but let us set that aside.

I would say, yes, a lawful access program makes sense. We need to know when there is probable cause to decide that we need to move to access to mail or information, but that should be the process of long consultation, deeply respectful of human rights and Canadian rights, and that was not where Bill C-2 came from.

• (1620)

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, for her amendment motions today. We in the opposition are here doing our level best to stop this; rightfully, Bill C-12 should be withdrawn.

With that being said, I wonder what the member's thoughts are with respect to this. During committee, I tried to move an amendment for the government to at least change the provisions related to the one-year bar: to, instead of deeming someone ineligible to make a refugee application if they have been here in Canada for one year, at least strike that provision, or, at minimum, instead of having the date be that of the first entry into Canada, move it to the latest entry into Canada.

I wonder what my colleague's thoughts are, because the Liberals, Conservatives and the Bloc voted against it.

Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Vancouver East and I are in the unenviable position of being forced, by motions passed by every committee, to produce amendments on 24 hours' notice, but to not be allowed to vote on our own amendments.

Yes, I completely support what the member for Vancouver East was trying to do. It only makes sense. Why go back and say it should depend on someone's first entry into Canada as opposed to when they last came to Canada? They could be asked whether it has been a year since their last entry into Canada as opposed to since their first. Much changes with time. Governments are toppled, and human rights are suspended.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I found the last question very interesting because democracy was thwarted during the committee's review of Bill C-12. Amendments were presented, duly voted on and supported by the majority. Unfortunately, the government used a sleight of hand to then overturn them here in the House.

I would like to hear my colleague's comments on this and on whether she feels that what happened was in keeping with democratic rules and the work that needs to legitimately happen in committee. Sometimes there are things we do not like. Sometimes there are proposals that are no longer in line with our political interests. At the very least, the institution must respect the work of the committees. That seems to me to be the minimum requirement.

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

Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, the problem with this minority Parliament is that MPs do not have equal rights. Members of parties with fewer than 12 MPs are at a disadvantage. That was the case for the Bloc Québécois in 2011. I remember it well, because I worked with the four Bloc Québécois members at the time, and we worked well together. Today, the voices of certain federal parties are absent from the committees. I respect the work done by committees, but members who are not on committees would like to bring forward and pass important amendments, and they cannot do so in committee.

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Madam Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the member for Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon be allowed to use the speaking slot allocated to the member for Winnipeg North for this debate. That the member for Winnipeg North not be deemed to have spoken, that he retain his right to speak, and that this right be used in the first of the slots allocated to the Bloc Québécois.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

Hearing none, 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)

Claude DeBellefeuille: Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in the House, particularly with you in the chair. You and I founded the all-party maritime caucus. That is proof that we can work together even if we are of different political persuasions.

I also want to sincerely thank the member for Winnipeg North and the member for Calgary Nose Hill for very generously allowing me to move up my speaking spot.

Teamwork is the calling card of the Bloc Québécois. Bill C-12 is a big bill, a massive bill, an omnibus bill. It has not been easy to work on this bill because it amends so many laws. In addition, we did not have a lot of time because there was an agreement between the Liberals and the Conservatives to cut certain witnesses' time short. The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration

and the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security split the work of studying Bill C-12. It was a monumental task.

Doing the clause-by-clause study of such a huge bill is a team effort. I would like to sincerely thank my colleague, the member for Lac-Saint-Jean, who studied the entire part dealing with amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

It was a big job for him, for the entire team in the offices of the leader and whip, for our researchers, Maxime and Michaël, for my assistant, Racim, and especially for the witnesses, who appeared before both the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. We must not forget our legislative counsel, our analysts, Sabrina and Alexandra, our clerk, Mr. Wilson, and, of course, all the staff who provide interpretation services.

The Bloc Québécois moved amendments to Bill C-12. One amendment was adopted. We take a very constructive and rigorous approach to our work. When we are considering a bill, we determine whether it is good for Quebec. If it is, we support it.

We worked hard and effectively. We listened. We supported amendments from the Conservative Party and adopted clauses proposed by the government. I also remember voting on an amendment from the member for Vancouver East. That goes to show the value of committee work, when we are conducting a clause-by-clause study of a large bill.

We also passed an amendment that I am quite proud of. It was drafted in the wake of a visit from the Privacy Commissioner, Philippe Dufresne, whom I salute and thank for his thoroughness, his work and his vigilance. He reads every bill to see if it can be improved.

The Bloc Québécois introduced an amendment to clause 4 in order to add clear and specific guidelines to ensure that a warrant is required to search a home. There was some ambiguity about that, because the clause was not entirely clear. This clarification helps protect privacy. Privacy and security are often pitted against one another, but the Bloc Québécois believes that it is possible to strike a balance between security and privacy. For us, these two elements are not at all incompatible.

We supported amendments that compel the government to be more transparent and more accountable. We supported amendments that sought to clarify the extraordinary power granted to the minister to cancel, vary or suspend various immigration-related documents. We opposed amendments that were too harsh, that violated the fundamental rights of asylum seekers or that went against the spirit of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

Even though all the committee members acted in good faith, I was still surprised by the deal that the Liberals and the Conservatives struck to have the committee sit until midnight to speed through the clause-by-clause study of the bill.

Government Orders

• (1625)

I thought that was unproductive and inconsistent with the concept of work-life balance. How energetic, productive and attentive can members still be when they are made to work until half past midnight?

There was this deal, which really surprised me, and it led to a long day. We sat until quarter past midnight. Unfortunately, this meant that we were unable to study the briefs. There were some briefs that we did not even get to read, because we received them after the clause-by-clause study had been finalized. In fact, about eight briefs were not translated in time by the Translation Bureau. The committee sped through its work so fast that the Translation Bureau could not provide us with the translated documents. That means that people took the trouble to write briefs and send them to us, but we did not have access to them before the bill was adopted.

I was also really surprised by the filibustering by some colleagues around the table who were strategically trying to buy time so they could debate certain clauses a little later. It was disgraceful of them to waste the time of the public servants and interpreters for the sake of parliamentary strategizing. I am not the most partisan member of Parliament, but it bothers me when public servants come to support us for clause-by-clause study and the time is not used for that. It was a waste of time for the public servants, interpreters, and also the members who were there to work.

Some of the amendments introduced at report stage, if adopted, would make Bill C-12 practically useless. We are obviously going to oppose some of the amendments proposed to us this evening. I think we worked diligently. In my opinion, we could have taken a little more time to study this bill. I feel a little disheartened for the people who asked me to invite them to testify before my committee on the very day the bill was adopted. Obviously, since everything had already been adopted, inviting them was no longer an option.

It is often said that there is no shame in looking foolish. An hour before we started the study, we listened to a witness make recommendations concerning Bill C-12. Obviously, we could not take those recommendations into account, since the amendments had been tabled several days earlier and everything was sealed for debate and for the work to begin.

I would still like to thank all my colleagues. I really enjoyed working with the member for Calgary Nose Hill. She is a hard-working and diligent member who explained her amendments to us with passion and determination. It was obvious to us how much knowledge she has accumulated over the years on the issue of immigration. We do not always agree, but we do share a mutual respect for parliamentarians' ability to express themselves calmly and debate their ideas. Sometimes we agree to work together, and sometimes we prefer not to. That is understandable, and we do not hold it against each other. I wish other parliamentarians could show the same degree of respect, given that this is meant to be a place for debate. I wanted to emphasize that I really enjoyed working with her, as well as with my colleagues from the other parties who, throughout the study of Bill C-12, seemed to have a genuine interest in improving it.

I will conclude by saying that we look forward to voting at report stage of the bill so that we can move on to third reading. Although

we are eager for the House to rise, we at the Standing Committee on Public Safety are eager to move on to another bill, because there is another important one waiting for us. We are supposed to start studying Bill C-8 on cybersecurity after the holidays.

Again, I want to thank everyone for putting in all the necessary effort to improve the government's bill.

• (1630)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think I will take advantage of the member's goodwill. There has been a great deal of co-operation, in terms of getting Bill C-12 through the system.

Especially in the last number of years, I have been looking for ways the House could update, modernize or potentially have legislation go through a certain process. I would be interested in her viewpoint. I always thought that with a standing committee, there were ways we could make changes that would allow for more time at the committee stage and ensure more actual studying takes place.

At some point, we will be reviewing the standing orders. The member may have some specific examples of what she would like to see, in terms of how we could better facilitate more dialogue that is, maybe, not as political, so we can go through legislation line by line. Does she have some thoughts?

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

Claude DeBellefeuille: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, which I find particularly interesting as a former whip.

We have studied the rules and procedures extensively and are always looking for ways to improve participation in debates in a constructive manner. I do not know whether we will manage to present any suggestions this time around to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to move in that direction, but I am a great believer in teamwork and compromise, which often make partisan games less likely.

Unfortunately, what currently dominates in committee, as the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights clearly shows, is not the pursuit of the common good or the consideration of the merits of a bill, but rather ways of working that I find horrifying, because partisan games take precedence over the common good. I find that very sad.

I will reflect on my colleague's question and perhaps get back to him with some suggestions.

Government Orders

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague as well for her collaborative efforts in amending Bill C-12. The member for Jonquière raised the issue that the government took several of the amendments we had worked collaboratively to pass and then, on its own initiative, exercised House procedure to strip out those amendments.

I wonder if my colleague could expand on the fact that, in regard to a lot of the measures we passed that were in the bill that came to the House, the government is probably going to have to undertake them anyway. We have been talking about House time being wasted. Would it have not been better for the Liberals just to let those amendments go through, rather than initiating House procedure to remove them?

[Translation]

Claude DeBellefeuille: Madam Speaker, that is a good question. The idea is that committees are masters of their own proceedings. When we study a bill and we come to an agreement on amendments, even if they do not please the government, it is strange, not to say unacceptable, that the Speaker of the House can then rule amendments that were duly debated and adopted out of order. That means that they disappear completely from the bill, which I find rather odd. To answer the member for Winnipeg North's question, perhaps we could look at the procedure to ensure that this does not happen anymore.

We had a similar situation with Bill C-3. The committee did a lot of hard work and then, because the government of the day was not happy with the result, it teamed up with the NDP to destroy all the democratic work the committee had accomplished. The Bloc Québécois was in a minority position in 2011 and 2015, and the rules provide that, when a party is not recognized, it does not get permanent seats on committees. That does not mean that the work done in committee should not be respected. In my opinion, that should be changed in order to safeguard democratic debates that are truly important.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about a major problem that Bill C-12 does not resolve. According to the union, the Canada Border Services Agency is short between 2,000 and 3,000 officers. Does my colleague have any thoughts on this?

Claude DeBellefeuille: Madam Speaker, Bill C-12 is full of intentions for border security, but I believe that the government does not have the means to achieve its ambitions and that 1,000 officers will not be enough to fulfill all of the ambitions that the government has set out in Bill C-12.

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, after a decade of Liberal mismanagement, describing Canada's immigration system as a tire fire sorely in need of competent management and dramatic reform would not be an exaggeration. Therefore, Conservatives, to show we are a government in waiting, proposed multiple constructive amendments to the immigration components of Bill C-12 in an attempt to improve the legislation and fix Canada's broken immigration system.

Here is what we proposed and why we did it. First is the why. Recently, Britain's governing Labour Party proposed drastic, sweeping immigration reforms in response to the ongoing illegal migration and bogus asylum claim crisis in its country. Those who think the situation is better on our side of the pond are profoundly wrong. In fact, between January 2022 and October of this year, the United Kingdom had around 375,000 people enter the country and make asylum claims, representing about 0.5% of their population. During the same time frame in Canada, we saw nearly 500,000 claims, or roughly 1.2% of our population today.

The fact that the Liberals also paired the surge in illegal migration and bogus asylum claims with allowing record levels of temporary foreign worker and foreign study permits is extraproblematic. This is an incredibly serious situation that has strained Canada's public health care system and many other taxpayer-funded social programs past their breaking point. It has made housing unaffordable, caused a youth jobs crisis and led to heavier reliance on social programs. It has also begun to tear apart Canada's social fabric, just as it has in the U.K.

The volume of people the Liberals have allowed to enter Canada has also made security screening difficult. A recent explosive news story claimed there are, at a minimum, hundreds of people in Canada with links to a state-sponsored terrorist organization. All of this has led to a precipitous drop, very concerning, in support for immigration among the Canadian public, and this must change.

If that is the why, then this is the how. Conservatives proposed a series of substantive reforms to address these issues, presented as amendments to Bill C-12 during its clause-by-clause review at committee. I want to thank my colleagues Miguel Ricin, Andrew Evans and Chloe Clifford for working literally endless hours with me, until 1 a.m. on a Friday a couple of weeks ago, over six months to develop nearly 40 substantive amendments that, taken in combination, present one of the most substantive sets of immigration policy reforms seen in decades.

Given Bill C-12's scope, our amendments had two objectives. The first was to truly fix Canada's broken asylum system. Once an efficient and compassionate means for Canada to welcome and protect the world's most vulnerable and truly persecuted persons, in the last decade the system has morphed into a backdoor, lucrative means for illegal migrants who likely would not have otherwise had a pathway to permanent residency in Canada to skip the line and stay here. The evidence of this is overwhelming.

Government Orders

Canada's asylum backlog has exploded from fewer than 10,000 claims in 2015 to nearly 300,000 today under the Liberals, due to their foolish #WelcometoCanada and open-border policies. We all remember the #WelcometoCanada tweet in 2017. We all remember the Roxham Road border crossing. We all remember the government lifting the visa requirement on Mexico with no plan to stop illegal, bogus asylum claims. Here we are today with a broken asylum system and a loss of faith in Canada's immigration system.

Unfortunately, the immigration measures in Liberal Bill C-12 would fail to substantively address these problems. Committee witnesses testified that the system changes Bill C-12 proposed were half measures, certain to face immediate court challenges that would further clog an already overburdened justice system instead of curbing their abuse. In effect, the Liberals would be off-loading their illegal migration mess onto strained courts and past the next election cycle.

Committee testimony exposed further flaws untouched by Bill C-12. It would fail to disincentivize people from coming to Canada to make bogus claims. For example, rejected asylum claimants have the right to appeal to a judge. While those cases work their way slowly through our clogged courts, they continue to receive full health care, housing and social benefits. The pedantic and loop-hole-ridden process for appealing a bogus claim and removing bogus claimants from Canada also begets system abuse and needs reform, which C-12, as written, would not provide. The asylum and deportation system also urgently requires greater accountability and transparency. It needs to be far easier for MPs to get the data they need in these areas in order to hold the government to account.

• (1640)

To fix these issues, Conservatives attempted to amend Bill C-12 to undertake the following system changes: removing the ability of migrants with failed asylum claims to claim any federal social benefits beyond emergency health care; disallowing asylum claims to be made by nationals of, or by those arriving in Canada having transited through, a G7 or EU country; modernizing security requirements; requiring educational institutions that accept foreign students to share the cost of any bogus asylum claims made by foreign students they welcome to Canada; requiring that claims made by migrants who return to their home country while their claim is pending be abandoned; rejecting claims made after a claimant is found to have lied to an officer; placing the onus on a claimant to prove they have made their claim in a timely manner, not the government; requiring asylum claimants arriving in Canada to immediately provide, on the record, their full grounds for seeking protection, preventing the later use of unscrupulous lawyers to game the system; creating a new, transparent and clear reporting requirement for the government to disclose the amount of federal benefits received by asylum claimants; updating the content of the annual report to Parliament; and introducing merit-based appointments at the Immigration and Refugee Board to better consider the provinces and to include more board members with law enforcement experience.

The second objective of our amendments was to strengthen Canada's border security vis-à-vis non-citizen criminals. Bill C-12 purports to strengthen Canada's border security, but it would leave gaping holes for non-citizens convicted of an indictable offence in

Canada, such as sexual assault, to avoid deportation penalties. For a non-citizen, our laws and practices state that staying in Canada is a privilege, not a right. Non-citizens who are convicted of an indictable offence, like sexual assault, in Canada should face deportation. To be effective, those deportations should be carried out in an expeditious manner, which currently they are not. Recent reports show that the Liberals have lost track of nearly 600 non-citizen convicted criminals scheduled for deportations, and that there are tens of thousands of deportations that should have been carried out long ago but have not been.

To fix these issues, Conservatives attempted to constructively amend Bill C-12 and make the following changes that would strengthen our borders: clarifying the definition of "serious criminality" under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to be conviction by an indictable offence or a hybrid offence where the Crown proceeded with an indictable charge; preventing non-citizens ordered removed from blocking deportation by barring repeat pre-removal risk assessments unless substantive new evidence of changed circumstances was presented; and modernizing the time period and processes related to the enforcement of removal orders.

It is deeply disappointing that the Liberals opposed most of our amendments, which I suspect they will have to work into legislation in the near future anyway. They missed an opportunity to immediately fix the system. That said, I want to thank colleagues in the Bloc Québécois, particularly the members for Lac-Saint-Jean and Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, for working in good faith with us to pass close to half of our amendments.

However, when the bill was reported back to the House, the Liberals initiated procedures to try to gut many of the proposals that passed. In spite of their best efforts, I am pleased to report that several still remain in the bill. It is my understanding that, after negotiations, the government intends to support the amendments that remain in the bill today in order to receive our collective support for the bill. This is possible, because Bill C-12 included some supportable, but in need of amendment, components of Bill C-2 that exclude the non-supportable parts.

These Conservative amendments include one that would see a pending asylum claim deemed abandoned if a claimant returned to the country they were fleeing from. This is a no-brainer. I would just like to say that Conservatives will support the clarifying amendment from the government on this matter. Other Conservative amendments that remain in the bill include new substantive quarterly reporting requirements and new processes for terminating bogus asylum claims.

• (1645)

Finally, Conservatives also successfully amended Bill C-12 to better constrict and make transparent the extraordinary powers in part 7 that would allow officials to mass change, extend or cancel immigration documents. This amendment should give recourse to committee witnesses who raised concerns about the lack of clarity on how these powers should be used and how the government should be held to account after. Additionally, thanks to a Conservative amendment, use of these powers would now require a substantive reporting requirement to Parliament each time the powers are used.

Conservatives also amended the bill to prevent the Liberals from using the powers to turn temporary residents into permanent residents en masse. We would not want that to happen. It is my understanding that the amendment I am presenting today and speaking to now, to ensure part 7 powers could not be used to mass extend temporary work visas or foreign student permits, will also be supported by the government.

Colleagues, a minority Parliament means the government has to work with the opposition to develop legislation. I am proud to say that we forced the Liberals to do something that resembled work.

• (1650)

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Madam Speaker, following the member's speech, I am trying to understand what it is that the Conservative Party actually stands for. In her speech, she started with anti-immigration conspiracy theories, which undoubtedly will be used to grift and fundraise. Then she blamed immigrants for destroying Canada's social fabric, which frankly is straight-up racist. Then she went into some MAGA-theory talking points about immigrants and migrants. This rhetoric is damaging. It is damaging to our democracy. It is damaging to Canadians. Just last month, we had anti-immigration rallies in Hamilton, which were roundly denounced by Hamilton leaders, as they should be.

Is the member from Oklahoma representing Canadians or just the MAGA White House?

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to report to my colleague that he will be voting in favour of many of our amendments. I am sure he will enjoy that, and I will enjoy watching him while he does it.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, the exchange we just witnessed is somewhat symptomatic of what we frequently see in the House. Let us just say that some people are extremely sensitive when it comes to immigration. The Bloc Québécois has spoken many times about the Roxham Road issue and the influx of

Government Orders

asylum seekers, which was putting enormous pressure on Quebec without the federal government agreeing to pay its share.

With Bill C-12, we realize that the federal government has finally conceded the argument, at least in part. However, the reputational damage has been done. Some members of the public have picked up this rhetoric, this idea that if anyone talks about immigration in a critical way, that automatically makes them racist.

Perhaps my colleague could talk to us about that.

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Madam Speaker, my colleague is exactly right. What we have seen from the Liberals over the last 10 years, including that incomprehensible tirade from a backbench Liberal member whom I just dunked on, is that the Liberals have lost the fact that calling things racist and not addressing the real problems Canadians have, that whole process, is what has undermined Canadian pluralism.

One of the things that I am very excited about in Canada is that, rather than like in the U.K., where we see people starting to blame immigrants for the problems that previous governments and the current government there had in terms of bringing too many people in too fast, Canadians are saying, no, that is not where the finger should be pointed; it should be pointed at the Liberal government.

I have been pleased to see Canadians reject the vitriol that we just heard from a backbencher, whom I think will remain a backbencher for some time. While I have the opportunity, I would encourage my colleague across the way, in good faith, to do something that resembles work here. We just worked together with the government and with the Bloc Québécois, and we amended a bill to make it better. That is how we earn respect in this place and how we earn the respect of our constituents. It is not by doing stuff like that in the House.

I want to thank my colleague from the Bloc Québécois, from Jonquière, for raising that really relevant question. I think that is where the debate on immigration in Canada is going to go. I would also encourage the government to undertake some substantive reform and to perhaps limit some of the disappointing rhetoric that we saw from their members tonight.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I do understand, and I was watching in committee, that there was collaboration between the Bloc and the Conservative Party, but I am not unhappy that those amendments have been removed. I agree that the process should be more open and that there should be a conversation. However, I was deeply unhappy with the member for Calgary Nose Hill's amendments to restrict access to medical care for people who are in this country and are not under deportation orders. They are awaiting their fate to be decided, and they could be told that they can only get access to medical care if their life is at risk. As I understand the amendment and as I recall it from close to the midnight hour, I thought that it was really not like my country and how we treat people who are in need of medical assistance.

Government Orders

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Madam Speaker, I do not agree with the member. Somebody who has made an asylum claim that is bogus should not receive federal benefits. Somebody who does not have the right to be in the country should not have better access to care than a Canadian senior who has paid their way here. It is that shift in thinking that needs to happen to restore order and sanity. My colleague is wrong. Most Canadians think she is wrong, and we should be undertaking legislation that fixes the system and does not perpetuate system abuse.

● (1655)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to rise to speak to very important legislation. It is legislation that Canadians want and have been asking for.

In fact, before I get under way with the specifics, I want to take a holistic approach in terms of what the Prime Minister and every Liberal member of Parliament have been very proactive on since the last election. We have a Prime Minister who made a solemn commitment to Canadians to deal with things such as securing Canada's borders, such as bringing in substantial bail reform legislation and such as reinforcing the strength of our RCMP and CBSA. Shortly after the election, what we saw was a commitment from the Prime Minister to upsize to the degree of 1,000 new RCMP personnel. We saw a commitment to upsize in regard to the Canada Border Services Agency by 1,000 personnel. We saw several pieces of legislation brought forward to the House for debate, ultimately in the hope that they would pass through the system.

It pleases me to a certain degree that we have had some co-operation with regard to securing Canada's border. It is something, but I and my colleagues in the Liberal Party would have loved to see more legislation get passed. I can recall standing here a number of weeks ago saying that the Prime Minister pledged that we were going to get bail reform legislation in the fall and we did that, yet we are not seeing that legislation pass. We saw actions today to try to turn the tables, as if the government does not want to see it pass.

Let there be no doubt. We have a strong agenda with respect to crime and safety in our communities, trying to make all of our communities safer, whether it is at the borders or in and around the neighbourhoods in which we all live. That is something that the government has been focused on. Canada's newly elected Prime Minister, just months ago, made that commitment and the Liberals have been working diligently to materialize that.

We have substantial pieces of legislation. We can talk about Bill C-2. We can talk about the hate legislation that is before a committee right now. We can talk about the bill that we are debating today, Bill C-12, respecting strengthening Canada's borders.

We can talk about the bail reform legislation. That is my personal preference, which I would have loved to see pass, and it is never too late to see that pass. We can still do that. It would require unanimous consent at this point, but we can still do it. It is something that I said weeks ago, and I know colleagues in the Liberal caucus would have loved to see that legislation and new bail laws in place before the end of the year. That is what I was asking for weeks ago.

In terms of how we operate as a caucus bringing forward legislation that is a reflection of election commitments and platform issues that we want to deliver for Canadians, we want to be able to co-operate where we can with opposition parties when there is a willingness to do so. In a minority situation, we are very much dependent on opposition parties. In fact, Bill C-12, the act regarding securing borders, is here because of the opposition parties' desire to break down Bill C-2. They did not like what was in that particular piece of legislation and gave a clear indication that they would give no co-operation in terms of passing it. However, if we take stuff out of that legislation and put it in another piece of legislation, that being Bill C-12, the strengthening Canada's immigration system and borders act, then we have a chance of passing it.

I am glad we did that. At least we are getting legislation through, so that is a positive. However, there is a negative side to it. I appreciate the co-operation that was put together to get the bill to this point, but let us look at what Bill C-2 also had to offer.

● (1700)

I asked the question about lawful access. Lawful access legislation is something that every other country in the Five Eyes has. That is why I posed this question to the leader of the Green Party: Does she support the principle of lawful access legislation? If I understood her answer correctly, it was, yes, she supports the principles but has a great deal of concern.

There is no reason why Canada cannot have lawful access legislation, which was proposed. Why is it important? Thinking in terms of money laundering or terrorist financing, these are very serious issues that pose a genuine threat to Canadians. It is one of the reasons why Five Eyes nations have that type of lawful access.

The Conservative critic raised the issue of the mail and the letters. I genuinely believed, when I spoke on Bill C-2, that we would not have letter carriers opening up mail. My concern is that we have northern communities and communities in virtually all regions of the country where someone could put a bit of fentanyl in an envelope and mail it, and we cannot do anything about it. Taking Canada Post out and allowing us to have access, I believe, is a good thing, with checks and balances, but we are not doing that either. Whether it is lawful access or dealing with the Canada Post issue, I think we have lost something that, ultimately, Canadians would have benefited from.

If we take a look at what is in this legislation, we do need to support the Canada Border Services Agency. We are enhancing its opportunity to build up the resources, space and equipment necessary by obligating ports of entry and exit. We are also beefing up our coasts, which is a really good thing, because when we think of issues like auto theft, drug trafficking or transnational organized crime, law enforcement officers have been calling for support, and the Prime Minister and government have responded to it.

Government Orders

This is why I say that I am glad that we are able to get something passed through, but I honestly believe that we could have done a lot more. We have a couple of days left before the session rises, and I would have welcomed the opportunity to speak on a number of other important pieces of legislation that deal with the crime file.

We have lost that opportunity, and it is not because the government did not want to see the legislation. We brought legislation in because we want it to become law. At the end of the day, for a wide variety of reasons I suspect, and I will not go into that kind of detail right now, it is not coming forward.

On the changes to immigration and asylum and the way we can better manage those so that they becomes more efficient, I think, at this time, we need to bring them into place. I understand the concerns that the New Democrats and the Green Party have, but I really and truly do not believe that it takes away from the integrity of the system when we say to someone that if they have been here for a year, there is still a need to enable that person. If someone came under a study visa, for example, and they have been here for a year, a year later, they could say that they are going to claim asylum.

The need for change is there within the system. As the Prime Minister has indicated, we need to stabilize our immigration system, and we are doing just that. This is one part of it. I look forward to any questions members might have.

• (1705)

Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague alluded a little to the important work of committees and to how, when we are able to take an issue that is before a committee and actually come together and work together to better address the issue, this is what is good for Canadians.

Can my colleague elaborate a little on why it is so important that committees function well? I understand that we have to play the game sometimes and that there are filibusters and so on, but the important work that happens in committees can make a real difference for Canadians.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I will speak as a parliamentarian first and foremost. We will find in Hansard that, when I was in opposition, at times I said that time allocation is sometimes a necessary tool in order to get legislation through. I say that only because I genuinely believe that it is time Canada modernized its rules, to enable the programming of government legislation.

I do not want to put limits in terms of hours or days, or in terms of how we would do it in the committees and bring it back into third reading, but I do believe that, if we were ultimately to move in that direction, we would have a better sense of co-operation. That goes both ways: from government to opposition and from opposition to government. I do believe that there is an opportunity for us to do something on that. What we have witnessed over the last 15 years, in my 15 years here, is that it does not matter whether one is in opposition or in government; at times it can be very difficult to get things through.

The best example I can cite is what happens with Private Members' Business. I am not saying we have to have the same as with Private Members' Business, but programming works for Private

Members' Business, and I would suggest that it could also work for government agendas.

Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Madam Speaker, part 1 of the bill would:

[amend] the Customs Act to provide [CBSA] with facilities free of charge for carrying out any purpose related to the administration or enforcement of that Act and other Acts of Parliament and to provide officers of that Agency with access at certain locations to goods destined for export. It also includes transitional provisions.

This would force operators to provide facilities for both import and export inspections. As CBSA can already compel operators to provide this, would CBSA, or the government really, actually compel operators to provide these facilities, or is that just words in the bill? Along with the fact that the agency needs to have qualified, trained people to carry out these inspections, I am just curious to know whether the government is serious about providing the inspections, the facilities and the training to complete the requirements under the bill.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, there is a high level of professionalism within our Canada Border Services Agency. A great deal of training goes into that, which will continue. Where there are ports of entry or exit, there would be an obligation for those entities to ensure that we have the proper space and to actually have the proper tools, whatever those tools may be, to ensure that we can enforce and protect the interests of the laws that we pass here in Ottawa and to protect and secure our borders.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. Is he replying to himself?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member cannot ask a question to himself, I believe.

The hon. member for Ponoka—Didsbury is rising on a point of order.

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Madam Speaker, I think if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent of the House to see the clock at 5:30 p.m.

• (1710)

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I do not want people to think I am going insane, or anything of that nature. That is what I was going to ask for.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS***[English]***ARAB HERITAGE MONTH ACT**

The House resumed from October 10 consideration of the motion that Bill S-227, An Act respecting Arab Heritage Month, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Hon. Ahmed Hussien (York South—Weston—Etobicoke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House to speak to Bill S-227, an act respecting Arab heritage month, which seeks to formally designate the month of April as Arab heritage month across Canada. It is a bill that speaks of the importance of recognizing not only a vibrant and diverse community in Canada but also the larger principle of what it means to belong, to be seen and to be celebrated in this great country. The bill has already passed in the other place, and I am proud to sponsor it here in the House of Commons as it makes its way through Parliament.

Some members may recall that this is not the first time the House of Commons has seen the bill. In fact, in the 44th Parliament, the hon. member of Parliament for Ottawa South introduced Bill C-232, which carried the very same purpose. That bill was passed unanimously at all stages in the House of Commons in a rare and powerful show of unity. Members from across the political spectrum and from every region and background stood in recognition of the importance of Arab heritage.

I want to particularly acknowledge some of my colleagues for their work on the bill, including of course the hon. member for Ottawa South, who was the first to bring the legislation forward in 2022. Without him, we would not be here today. He said, “in my own family...[my] Syrian Canadian godfather...[was] a man of great intelligence, kindness, and integrity. His origins were humble. In fact, [there was] poverty, and his values instilled in me a deep appreciation for hard work, giving back and public service.”

I would also like to express my gratitude to the member of Parliament for Edmonton Manning, whose steadfast support played a key role in moving the bill forward. He said, “As I said, my story is typical of so many [Arabs Canadians] who have come to this country to seek a better life and to give back to the community. I am proud of my heritage and am happy to see the establishment of Arab heritage month.”

I also want to recognize former members Sylvie Bérubé, Blake Desjarlais and Brian Masse, who all contributed meaningfully to helping the member for Ottawa South bring this important piece of legislation to life. Their collective efforts reflect a shared belief that Arab Canadians deserve formal national recognition for their long-standing and ongoing contributions to the very fabric of our country.

Unfortunately, despite unity and momentum, the bill reached third reading in the Senate but died on the Order Paper following Parliament's dissolution in 2024. Today we have an opportunity and, I would argue, a responsibility to complete that unfinished work, to reaffirm our commitment to diversity and inclusion and to ensure that the contributions Arab Canadians have made and continue to make are formally recognized every April of every year across this country.

Why should it be in April, and why should we do it now? Well, the choice of April is actually very deliberate. It would coincide with several cultural and historic celebrations in Arab communities and provide an annual opportunity to highlight the vast diversity of Arab heritage, culture, language and contributions to Canadian society.

We know that Arab Canadians are not a monolith. The community is very diverse and dynamic. The Arab world spans over 22 countries from North Africa to the Middle East, with a population of over 450 million people. It encompasses a rich mosaic of languages, religions and traditions. Arab Canadians include Christians, Muslims, Jews, Druze and others. They speak Arabic in many dialects, as well as French, English, Armenian, Syriac and more.

Their cultures are as diverse as the regions from which they originate, from the mountains of Lebanon to the deserts of Jordan, and from the cities of Egypt to the coasts of Morocco. Designating April as Arab heritage month would be a way to recognize that diversity and to celebrate the ways in which it has enriched our own social fabric in this country.

Arab Canadians have been building this country alongside others for more than 140 years. Immigrants mainly from what is present-day Lebanon were the first Arab group to come to Canada. The first documented Arab immigrant to Canada was Ibrahim Abu Nadir, a Lebanese Maronite Christian who arrived in Montreal in the 1880s. He worked as a peddler, going from town to town selling goods and eventually becoming a successful merchant. He paved the way for thousands of others from what was then known as Greater Syria, the Levant, which today is Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine.

● (1715)

These early pioneers helped establish some of Canada's first Arab churches and mosques. I had the opportunity to visit one of those mosques in Edmonton that was started so long ago, a former Ukrainian community church that was turned into a mosque, again another sign of diversity and inclusion in our communities. The new immigrants built businesses, raised families and contributed to the cultural and economic life of their communities, often while facing discrimination, isolation and economic hardship. April would be a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of these early immigrants.

Fast-forward to today, and Arab Canadians are represented in every field imaginable in Canadian life. Peter Baker, who served as an MLA in the Northwest Territories in the sixties, is believed to have been the first Arab Muslim elected to public office in Canada. Joe Ghiz, of Lebanese descent, served as the premier of Prince Edward Island. He was the first Canadian premier of non-European ancestry. His leadership, especially during constitutional negotiations, left a lasting mark on Canadian federalism.

Private Members' Business

In the arts, Paul Anka, born in Ottawa to Syrian parents, became one of Canada's greatest musical exports, known worldwide for his songwriting and his timeless voice. In business, Salim Rassy, later known as Rossy, a Syrian Lebanese immigrant, founded a small general store in Montreal in 1910 that would eventually evolve into the national retail chain we know today as Dollarama. In academia, Dr. Bessma Momani, one of Canada's leading voices on analysis of Middle East affairs, has contributed to our understanding of international politics and security issues.

In science, there is Noubar Afeyan, a Canadian Lebanese entrepreneur, inventor and philanthropist, best known for co-founding the biotechnology company Moderna. His family moved to Canada during the Lebanese civil war in 1975. He received his Bachelor of Chemical Engineering from McGill University in 1983. In 2022 Afeyan was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science from his alma mater, McGill University. He points to his immigrant background and mentality as the driving force of his philanthropic, scientific and business work.

A lot of members of this community give back repeatedly because of their appreciation of what Canada has done for them. These stories are not isolated; they reflect thousands of untold contributions from small businesses, artists, teachers, doctors, frontline workers, police officers, firefighters and paramedics who have quietly but powerfully shaped Canadian society and communities.

The bill is not simply a symbolic gesture; it is a practical and timely tool for inclusion, another powerful reminder of the importance of diversity and inclusion. It invites all Canadians to learn about, celebrate and appreciate the cultural richness of Arab Canadians and to recognize the obstacles many continue to face, including racism, Islamophobia, anti-Arab sentiment and misrepresentation. By celebrating the month of April as Arab heritage month, we would make space not just in our calendars but in our conversations, our classrooms, our workplaces and our communities for the voices, stories and contributions of Arab Canadians to be heard and honoured. It is a gesture of recognition, yes, but it is also a commitment to education, equity and dialogue.

The leadership of Senator Mohammad Al Zaibak, the sponsor of the bill, Bill S-227, has been exemplary on this file, and I wish to commend him publicly for championing the bill in the Senate and for his powerful second reading speech earlier in October. I have known him for many years and have seen him contribute so much to life, community life and good causes throughout the GTA and Canada, in fact. He has conducted extensive consultations with stakeholders across Canada on the bill. The bill is non-partisan and has already passed the Senate with broad support.

To conclude, Canada is at its best when we recognize our diversity not as a challenge but actually as a strength, a strength that allows us to understand others and to access other communities, other countries, other regions of the world and other markets and opportunities.

• (1720)

This bill gives us a chance to celebrate what makes us unique while reaffirming what also brings us together: community, faith, freedom, human rights, our commitment to our multicultural her-

itage, and our shared commitment to respect, fairness and mutual understanding.

Let us seize this opportunity to send a clear and united message that Arab Canadians are an integral part of Canada's past, present and future, that they belong, that their stories matter and that their contributions will never be forgotten. By celebrating and adopting this bill, we will acknowledge those contributions, but we will also celebrate those contributions.

I urge all members, all colleagues from all parties of the House, to support the timely passage of Bill S-227 and join me in ensuring that Arab heritage month becomes a permanent part of our national calendar.

As I said, it is more than just a placeholder in the calendar. It is about an opportunity to learn about our neighbours and their contributions. Let us finish what we began last Parliament, take this meaningful step together and pass this bill.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really do appreciate the member's bringing forward this legislation. I want to put it back into the context of education. I believe that education expanding on the diversity Canada has to offer is one of the ways we promote things such as multiculturalism, anti-racism and so forth. Having a heritage month celebrating Arab Canadians in the month of April could be used as a way to share within classrooms and other places, and there is value to that education.

Hon. Ahmed Hussen: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague could not be more right in this instance, because these heritage months allow us an opportunity to reflect on and then celebrate those contributions.

I think of Milman Industries in Sudbury, which was started by a Lebanese Canadian immigrant who came to Canada with nothing and who now has started 10 successful businesses that are employing thousands of people and paying a starting wage of \$41 an hour. In the member's own hometown of Winnipeg, Mr. El Tassi, a proud Lebanese Canadian, has done so much for the community, contributing to poverty reduction measures, creating jobs and establishing philanthropic drives every single year. I always make a new discovery about Mr. El Tassi when it comes to Winnipeg.

Yes, this bill is about making sure we recognize and learn about those contributions and teach them to the next generation.

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the hon. member for York South—Weston—Etobicoke for sponsoring this bill in the House. What message would he like to give to Canadian society on behalf of the Arab community, which has been in this beautiful country for nearly 160 years?

Private Members' Business

• (1725)

Hon. Ahmed Hussen: Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the hon. member for Edmonton Manning for really supporting this bill. Without his efforts and support, we would not be here today. Again, it showcases what the hon. member from Winnipeg was talking about earlier, which is that we should look for opportunities to work across party lines to advance meaningful work in this place. This bill is an example of that.

I think the Arab Canadian story has not been told enough. When I look at different Arab communities across the country, I am amazed at their diversity, the length of time they have been in Canada and the incredible contributions they have made and continue to make. From some of the smallest towns in southwestern Ontario to the Yukon and everywhere else I have been, I have seen those contributions, particularly from Lebanese Canadians, but also from others from Syria, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria and the Francophone world.

This bill and this heritage month, if enacted, will help us to educate Canadians about this community, which is now integral to our society, and all the contributions it has made and continues to make.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech. It goes without saying that the Bloc Québécois will support his bill.

I just want to say that something jumped out at me when I was reading the bill. It is safe to say that there are various Arab identities. It is not only one community. An intermingling has taken place in the Canadian context that also implies a plurality of identities. In my view, it is not the same thing as the intermingling that occurred between people from the Maghreb region and Quebeckers and, perhaps, other types of Arab identities in the rest of Canada.

If we want to truly promote the contributions of Arab communities, it might be a good idea to make that distinction. I want to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

[*English*]

Hon. Ahmed Hussen: Mr. Speaker, I am in agreement with my colleague. He is right that diversity is incredible within the Arab Canadian community.

I want to pay particular attention to the fact that, even in Toronto, we will find Francophone Arab communities that originate from Morocco and other French-speaking countries. The diversity is not just limited to the geography; it is also the language and the different customs and celebrations.

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise to offer my support for Bill S-227, the Arab heritage month act.

There are more than a million Canadians of Arab descent. They are found in every province and territory. Each one has a different story of how they or their ancestors came to this country. No matter where they came from originally, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, Morocco, Jordan or any of a dozen other countries, one of the things we will find that Arab Canadians have in common is

that they came seeking a better life. Another thing they have in common is their desire to give back to Canada.

I am one of these million Canadians of Arab descent. As so many have, I came to this country as an immigrant, escaping the dangers of war and economic upheaval. Here, I have made my home and raised a family, and I am proud now to be able to give back by serving all Canadians in the House. I am proud of my heritage, my Arab background, but I am prouder to be Canadian.

This means I will be pleased to celebrate April as Arab heritage month. I will celebrate the contributions of Arab culture and Arab people to Canadian society, but I will not allow myself to be defined by the hyphen that people use when they call me an Arab Canadian. When I became a Canadian citizen, I made a choice to become fully part of this country. I did not make a partial commitment; I went all in.

Like most Arabs, I love the land of my birth. Who I am has been shaped by that heritage, but my present and my future are found in Canada. As the late John Diefenbaker, the 13th Prime Minister of Canada, reminded us upon the passage of the Bill of Rights in 1960:

I am Canadian, a free Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship God in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, free to choose those who govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind.

When one is a Canadian, no hyphen is needed. There are no second-class Canadians. It does not matter what their race or religious beliefs are. Their background does not define them; their character does. This is the Canadian ideal. As individuals and as a nation, we do not always live up to that, but when we fail, we try again. Always striving to do better, we learn from our mistakes.

Wanting to do better is one of the reasons the Arab people want to come here to be part of Canada. We come from a region where old rivalries, sometimes going back thousands of years, can hinder progress. Canada offers an opportunity for a fresh start, and Canadians' values are also Arab values. Looking at the Bill of Rights, upon which the later Charter of Rights and Freedoms is based, I see the values that founded Canadian society and that resonated with me as a new Canadian.

We read:

The Parliament of Canada [believes] that the Canadian nation is founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, the dignity and worth of the human person and the position of the family in a society of free [people] and free institutions;

It goes on:

[and] also that [humans] and institutions remain free only when freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values and the rule of law....

As the Bill of Rights recognizes:

In Canada there have existed and shall continue to exist without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion or sex, the following human rights and fundamental freedoms, namely,

Private Members' Business

- (a) the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;
- (b) the right of the individual to equality before the law and the protection of the law;
- (c) freedom of religion;
- (d) freedom of speech;
- (e) freedom of assembly and association; and
- (f) freedom of the press.

● (1730)

Sadly, in many places of the world, including some Arab countries, some of those rights are not available to the citizens. There are places where none of them are. It is no wonder that Canada has become the destination of choice for Arabs seeking a better life. The lack of freedom in parts of the Arab world is perhaps one of the reasons we need an Arab heritage month. Canadians need to be reminded that there is so much more to the history and culture of the Arab people than the negative portrayals found all too often in the news.

The current political activities in the region do not always reflect the values of the Arab people, just as the actions of the Government of Canada do not always reflect the values of Canadians. Arab heritage month would be an opportunity for those of us with Arab roots to share the richness of our culture in a more deliberate way than is the case now. We could introduce others to the richness of the language, the literature, the cinematography and the food of the Arab world. We do that already, but this would provide an opportunity to share on a wider scale.

As such, let us, as a House, join together to support this bill. Let us declare Arab heritage month and let us celebrate the contributions of Arab Canadians to this great country. In making Canada their home, they have enriched us in too many ways to count. Who are the people whom we celebrate with this bill? They are employers and employees, doctors and nurses, athletes, singers, actors and audiences. They come from all walks of life and from every area of society, united by their heritage and a common identity as Canadians.

I am proud of my Arab heritage, and I am happy to see the establishment of Arab heritage month. I am prouder still to be a Canadian. It is a great honour to have been chosen by my fellow Canadians from all different backgrounds to represent them in the House. Recognizing my heritage, they have asked me to serve all Canadians and to affirm, as the Bill of Rights says, “that the Canadian Nation is founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, the dignity and worth of the human person and the position of the family in a society of free men and free institutions”.

Next April, and every April thereafter, let us celebrate Arab heritage month and the contributions of Arab Canadians to this great country. Since the 1880s, Arab Canadians have been enriching our nation, adding their ideas, energy and values to make this the best country in the world. As I have said before, Canada is an example of what a society can be when the people celebrate their heritage without forgetting what unites them in common purpose. Let us celebrate Arab heritage month, whoever we are and wherever we are from.

● (1735)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that the Bloc Québécois supports the principle of Bill S-227, which establishes Arab heritage month. Bill S-227 is a reincarnation of Bill C-232 from the 44th Parliament, which the Senate had not finished studying before dissolution in March 2025. Therefore, the House has already dealt with the bill's content at every stage of the legislative process between February 2022 and March 2023.

The Bloc Québécois participated in debating and studying this bill in committee and voted in favour of adopting it. We therefore reiterate our support for recognizing the cultural heritage of Quebecers of Arab origin or who speak Arabic. The Bloc Québécois would like to highlight the outstanding contribution that Arab Quebecers have made to Quebec society and Quebec culture. We would also like to remind members of the unique economic, political and cultural ties between Quebec and the countries of the Maghreb, as evidenced by the co-operation agreement on education and training between the Government of Quebec and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

The success of immigrants admitted to Quebec in recent years from countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Syria—as evidenced by statistics—is a sign of the importance of French language proficiency in ensuring successful immigration to Quebec. The Bloc Québécois has not forgotten that Canadian laws discriminating against Asian populations, in force from 1910 to 1950, had a negative impact on Arab immigration. At that time, Syrians were lumped into the Asian category. We acknowledge the courage of citizens of Arab origin at the time, particularly those who took political action to change laws and attitudes and promote the successful integration of new citizens of Arab origin.

Ultimately, it is questionable whether Canadians of Arab origin and Quebecers of Arab origin share the same history, particularly since the Quiet Revolution and the adoption of the Charter of the French Language. That difference is precisely because of the special bond that unites Quebecers of all origins and that shapes our shared history, namely our shared French language and Quebec culture.

Nevertheless, Quebec's history from 1882, which is when Arab immigrants first began arriving in Montreal, to the present day is also part of Canada's history, and Arab Canadians outside Quebec also have their own history. The Bloc Québécois welcomes the House of Commons' recognition of Arab heritage and its cultural contribution to our respective nations, the Canadian nation and the Quebec nation.

Private Members' Business

In reference to Arab Canadians and Arab Muslim communities, the text of the bill paints a picture of Arab populations in Quebec and Canada that does not entirely reflect reality, suggesting that the Arab diaspora forms a uniform community across Canada. This approach is not surprising, since it is consistent with the Canadian multiculturalist vision, which portrays the population of Canada as a vast cultural mosaic that is not influenced by the existence of nations within Canada. However, the respective national realities of Quebec and Canada do in fact influence how successive waves of immigrants have been welcomed over the decades.

While Canadian immigration laws and policies were applied across the entire country and influenced the pace of Arab immigration during what could be called its golden age, Quebec's explicit desire to strengthen its ties with the Maghreb countries and promote French-speaking immigration, which it has expressed since the Quiet Revolution, has necessarily had an impact on the trajectory of Arab immigration to Quebec that distinguishes it from the rest of Canada. Above all, and this cannot be emphasized enough, linguistic and cultural factors alone are enough to make a definite distinction between the life experiences of Arab Quebecers and those of Arab Canadians. In fact, they do not integrate into the same society. Immigrant populations settling in Canada outside Quebec integrate into Canadian society, in other words, the English-speaking majority. Immigrant populations settling in Quebec integrate into Quebec society, or the French-speaking majority.

• (1740)

Given the historical factors that explain why many Arab populations already share a francophone culture, it is normal for integration paths to differ depending on whether people settle in Quebec or Canada. It is entirely appropriate to recognize the cultural heritage of people of Arab origin in Quebec and Canada. That is why the Bloc Québécois intends to support the principle of Bill S-227. I would simply like to point out that it is unnecessary to equate Quebecers and Canadians as if they were part of a single community, "Arab Canadians" as the bill seems to mistakenly suggest.

We plan on supporting the bill while also fully emphasizing the unique contribution that Arab Quebecers make to Quebec society and the crucial role the French language plays in their successful integration. I will conclude by inviting all members of the House to read Rachida Azdouz's highly enlightening book called *Panser le passé, penser l'avenir: racisme et antiracismes*. It is a fundamental contribution to cultural reconciliation that demonstrates the richness of both Arab and Québécois intellectual traditions.

[English]

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the bill before us today, and to speak to the proud history of Arabs and Arab Canadians in Canada. I will try to contextualize how we can come to a moment at this time in 2025 when we have the prospect of an Arab heritage month but not yet an Arab heritage month for Canada.

My colleague for York South—Weston—Etobicoke described in some detail the history of the community in Canada, or more properly perhaps, the history of the communities in Canada. To our knowledge, the Arabs, or more specifically Syrian and Lebanese

immigrants, began to arrive in Canada in small numbers beginning in the 1880s, but the real waves of immigration began in the 1950s and 1960s. As we know from the history of immigration in this country, there were certain groups in the pre-1960s era who were more welcome in Canada than others.

The case of Arab Canadians and Arabs in Canada is a special case. I self-identify as Arab and I know some members of the House on both sides of the aisle also do. Thinking of the Arab world requires a bit of a feat of imagination. The Arab world is a geographical area, but it is quite a sprawling geographical area that starts in the west part of north Africa and goes all the way through the Levant and the holy lands and a bit further east into what we sometimes call west Asia.

Arab Canadians and Arabs are often identified with the Arabic language, a very beautiful language that is spoken in a rich array of dialects. Some parts of the language are not necessarily mutually intelligible. As we know, in its classical form, it is the language of the holy Quran for Muslim and Islamic adherents, so we have people from around the world who have some capacity to speak Arabic, even if they are not Arabs themselves.

The Arab world is sometimes seen as a geographical construct. My family is originally from Egypt, which was actually in a political union with Syria for a period of time, a confederation that created something called the United Arab Republic. We are a geographical group. We are in part a linguistic group. We are in part an ethnic group, and we are a state of mind, Arabs and Arab Canadians. In the more modern sense, especially since the Second World War, it has been difficult for us not to think of Arabs and Arab Canadians in relation to geopolitical issues, especially in the Middle East.

With all this context, I think it is important to lift up Arabs and Arab Canadians with whatever self-conception they have of themselves. That is why this month is so important. It is important for people who have some background or connection to the Arab world to say, and to have Canadians say back to them, that we see them.

I remember growing up in northern New Brunswick in the 1970s and 1980s. I had a sense that I was maybe a bit different and I had some idea that there were other Arabs or Arab Canadians around. Anyone who was a Maritimer in the 1970s and in the 1980s would have had some awareness of Joe Ghiz, the former premier of Prince Edward Island. Later on, they was a connection to the Zed family in Saint John.

If someone dug a bit deeper, they would learn more of the very fascinating history of Arabs and Arab Canadians, not only in Saint John but in Nova Scotia, in particular in Cape Breton. There are very fascinating connections that happened decades past between Arabs, Jews and Christians in what might be considered unlikely corners of interfaith harmony in places like Sydney, Nova Scotia.

This history was not available to those of us who had some sort of connection to an Arab identity. It was even less available to someone if they had Arabic language in front of them. As we know, many new immigrant communities and many frontier immigrant groups who come to Canada do not have language instruction available to them. It is often the case, as it was in my family, that Arabic was not something that was going to be passed down from my father to his children.

I want to take a bit of a personal tour through this. As with so many immigrant groups, and there are so many immigrant groups represented here, whether it is more recently or more distantly, our relationship to our identity is complex and we only learn things in the telling or the retelling of that history.

In our family's case, my father, Makram Wissa Henein El-Bardeesy, was born in 1928. His family was from a region known as upper Egypt, which is the southern part of Egypt, the higher land mass along the Nile River. Again, just to the complexity of whether Arabs are an ethnic identity, a racial category, a state of mind or a nationality, we believe that his ancestors were some of the original peoples who were there in the Nile delta. In fact Egypt, in part, had an experience of colonization from people from the geographical area known as Arabia.

• (1745)

My father was one of four children. His father was a civil servant, and his mother was a housewife. They practised a Christian faith. Although Arabs are a majority in the Muslim world, there are of course Arab Christians, Jews of Arab background, and others. My father's family moved to Cairo, and as in so many immigrant stories and so many stories of the progress of economic wealth and societies after the Second World War, family members were able to get an education.

My father's brothers ended up in pharmacy, and my father became a physician. He went to a country that had a close association with Egypt in that era of the 1950s: Sudan. He served as a family doctor and was the only doctor in the community in Sudan where he was serving when Egypt and Sudan had a connection.

Circumstances around immigration and the political situation in Egypt at the time led my father to eventually go to Britain for further education, where he met my mother. After a series of moves they ended up in Egypt, where they remained until soon after the Yom Kippur War, the October War, of 1973, when, hopefully for the last time, happily, Egypt and Israel found themselves in armed conflict.

Like so many other immigrant groups, the Arab diaspora is a group whose members often are here because of the experience of war or the apprehension of war. That was definitely the case with my parents. They and my two older brothers left at an early age and

Private Members' Business

were very fortunate to be able to settle in St. John's, Newfoundland, and eventually in Bathurst, New Brunswick.

The Arab identity and culture are strong, but they need to be lifted up, shown and showcased. We know that there are some historic prejudices and that popular media can help lift up the prejudices, especially against Arabs and Arab Canadians. We do not have to be too far away from the present to remember some of the especially damaging cultural portrayals of who an Arab was and was not that we saw in Hollywood movies in the 1980s, 1990s and especially in the 2000s after the grotesque September 11th attacks.

When I find another Arab or Arab Canadian, it takes a bit of an act of interpretation. I have to learn a bit more about the person, and then I eventually land on the fact that the person is an Arab or an Arab Canadian. There is that real finding of commonality. I know that in some communities in Canada it does not take much, because people are present in large enough numbers, whether it is Lebanese Canadians, Egyptian Canadians, Iraqis, Syrians or other Arab groups that have been able to come together and settle in sufficient numbers.

However, they too need to be lifted up and given affirmation that their culture, whatever they feel is their culture, is a strong one that deserves recognition. They need to be told that they are seen as Arab Canadian and that we see the rich history that, again, goes back to the 19th century and the passion with which they bring their culture to life in this country. That is why I am here to speak in favour of the legislation.

I want to thank my friend from York South—Weston—Etobicoke, who has his own very interesting family history of Arab connection, in his case to Yemen. I really want to thank him and thank all members for speaking to the issue in the House today.

• (1750)

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour and a profound privilege to rise in the House as the member of Parliament for Windsor West, a community known for its generosity, its diversity and its deep sense of belonging. Representing the people of Windsor West is one of the greatest responsibilities of my lifetime, and I carry their stories, their hopes and their aspirations with me every time I stand here.

Today, I am proud to rise in support of the private member's bill, Bill S-227, sponsored in the other place by Senator Al Zaibak and here by my colleague from York South—Weston—Etobicoke, to designate April as Arab heritage month in Canada.

I would also like to thank the member for Edmonton Manning and the defence minister, who worked on similar legislation in the past.

Private Members' Business

The bill carries deep meaning. It recognizes a community that has shaped Canadian life for more than a century. It acknowledges contributions that continue to enrich our country every single day. As someone from the Sikh faith whose community also celebrates April, as Sikh Heritage Month, I understand the power of recognition. I know what it means for communities to feel they are seen and celebrated, so I welcome the opportunity to share this month with my friends from the Arab diaspora.

In Windsor, the Arab community has a long and storied history. Early Lebanese settlers arrived in the late 1800s and began laying the foundations of a community that grew, thrived and became an essential pillar of our region. In 1924, over 100 years ago, they built St. Peter's church on Niagara Street, a place of faith, family and cultural identity. In 1960, the city welcomed its first mosque, built by Arab families who wanted a space where their children could learn, gather and pray. These institutions remain symbols of their courage, sacrifice and commitment to building a better life in their new homeland.

Over the generations, people of Arab heritage in Windsor have contributed to our region in extraordinary ways. We saw it in the leadership of former mayor Eddie Francis, the youngest mayor in Windsor's history, whose historic tenure helped modernize our city and position Windsor as a forward-looking community ready for growth and renewal. We see it in the dedicated service of health care professionals like Dr. Tayfour and Dr. Osman Tarabain, whose work and philanthropic efforts have benefited everyone in our region.

We especially honour the memory of the late Dr. Jasey, a remarkable man whose compassion and commitment to his patients touched countless families across Windsor-Essex. To his family, children and grandchildren, and to the many he cared for, his legacy will be a lasting source of pride and gratitude.

These are only a few names. Canadians of Arab heritage in Windsor include doctors who save lives, entrepreneurs like Tony Sleiman of Vengeance Power, Rabia Kirma of the WE CARE Association of Windsor, and many, many others who create jobs. There are educators who inspire and philanthropists who give generously without ever seeking recognition. There are police officers like Sergeant Oliver Jibrail of the LaSalle Police Service, who came here as a young lad from Iraq and is now serving the community.

These are families who built our neighbourhoods and local institutions and helped raise generations of engaged, compassionate citizens of a united country. Their values, devotion to faith, love of family, generosity, hard work and service to community are the very values that have built this country. They are values that resonate deeply with me personally and with many Conservative households across Windsor and, indeed, across Canada.

This is why Arab heritage month matters. It is not simply a symbolic gesture. It is an opportunity for Canadians to learn about and honour the diverse cultures, languages, traditions and histories that shape Arab communities from Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Jordan, Yemen, Morocco and so many others. It is a time to acknowledge that the Arab Canadian story is not a story of one group but of many, be they Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Zoroastrian,

Druze or people of various backgrounds, all of whom have shared values and a deep commitment to a unified Canada.

In Windsor, we know first-hand how much the Arab community contributes to our shared life. Walk through our neighbourhoods, visit our restaurants and shops, speak to our local business owners or visit our hospitals, and one will find this community serving, healing, building, teaching and leading. Their fingerprints are everywhere, in the best possible way.

• (1755)

I want to thank those in the Arab community of Windsor West and across Canada. I thank them for their leadership, their generosity, their resilience and their commitment to building a stronger Canada for all of us. Their story is part of Windsor's story and a part of Canada's story. Our country is better because of them.

As someone who celebrates April as Sikh Heritage Month, it is truly meaningful to stand here to say that I look forward to celebrating Arab heritage month alongside my Canadian friends of Arabic heritage. April can be a month of shared pride where our communities celebrate together, honour each other and look ahead to a future built on friendship and mutual respect under one Canadian flag.

I am proud to support this bill. Let us make April a time to celebrate the Arab community, which is a community that has given Canada so much and continues to inspire us every day.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me join my colleagues in supporting a wonderful piece of legislation. The member for York South—Weston—Etobicoke has done all of us a favour by working with the Senate to present this bill.

I think it is really important to recognize that, in Canada, when it comes to people of Arab heritage, we are probably talking about somewhere in the neighbourhood of just over a million people. In certain areas of Canada, the community has really grown. It has developed in a very strong and tangible way across the nation. I think of communities, such as those in southern Ontario and Edmonton. In the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, as well as Manitoba, there are strong Arab communities. That is why I genuinely appreciate the bill.

My friend and colleague made reference to Albert El Tassi. I have gotten to know Albert El Tassi over the years. He is someone who I always thought would have been a great lieutenant governor for the province of Manitoba. He is just an outstanding Canadian of Arab heritage. He was very happy to share that with me and many others.

Canada is so rich in diversity. We really and truly are. When I talk about the Arab community or other communities, I talk about how Canada is in a better position than virtually any other country in the world because of our diversity.

I think about how we could ultimately move forward. Although I disagree with how the United States handles multiculturalism, if I can put it that way. I am so proud of the way we deal with it. That is why, when I look at the celebration of a heritage month, I see a lot of good in that. It would provide opportunities for individuals from the Arab community, or of Arab heritage, who live in Canada and call Canada home today to celebrate a part of their identity, their ancestors and so forth. That is one way of looking at it.

There is also, I would suggest, even a bigger way of looking at a heritage month as an educational tool. Back in the late eighties and early nineties, I used to be quite involved in tourism in the province of Manitoba, as well as immigration and so forth. I saw the value of education when it came to combatting racism. The real value of education is there. It is tangible and real.

Thinking of the education taking place in our classrooms, if we were to pass this legislation, every April, every school in the country would have an opportunity to recognize Arab heritage month and do something with that. Whenever there is interest from someone who is on a parent council, a teacher, a child from Lebanon or their parents who were born in Lebanon and immigrated to Canada recently, or someone who has been here for generations, we could recognize how the people of Arab heritage could share their experiences and help educate others by providing a program, a celebration or whatever it might be in the school environment. I think that is good for all of us.

We also see events that could be planned in the workforce. There are many large companies with a workforce that appreciates the diversity that Canada has to offer. We have heard about numerous members, such as athletes, health care professionals and entrepreneurs. In every aspect of our society that we can name, we can find prominent Canadians of Arab heritage.

● (1800)

I would suggest that, at the end of the day, we all benefit, whether it is in a work environment, a community environment such as a community centre, or in our classrooms. When we have the opportunity to enhance knowledge and celebrate our heritage, I see that as a very positive thing.

Canada's heritage is evolving every day, and what gives us our strength is that we recognize first nations, indigenous people in general, people from France, people from England and people from all around the world. That is what ultimately creates and provides us with a sense of identity, and that identity is rooted in who we are as a nation and the values we have.

When I think of Canadian values, I think of things like human rights, whether it is recognizing what we need to improve here in Canada or with respect to human rights abroad. Because of our diversity, I would ultimately argue that we are in a great position to be able to lead the world, or be one of the leaders in the world, at the very least, with respect to providing and promoting things like peace, human rights and even things like trade.

The Prime Minister has travelled to the Middle East and has said that we want more trade. We have a natural asset in Winnipeg. Whether it is the introducer of the legislation's talking about connections on the continent of Africa, members who have strong con-

nections in the Middle East, or the business leaders and entrepreneurs I referenced, we are using our diversity to enhance peace missions, trade missions and goodwill, and are providing a contribution to the bigger picture.

In Winnipeg we are blessed in the sense that, every summer, we have two weeks of Folklorama, a way we can celebrate the world by attending the many different pavilions at the festival. If members want to get an appreciation of our diversity, I would suggest that during the summer months they might consider coming to the city of Winnipeg to really get that world exposure and see just how diverse and wonderful Canada is.

There are a number of issues we have to overcome as a nation, and some of them are very sensitive. The member who spoke before me talked about Sikh Heritage Month. We, as a legislature, have deemed it in Canada's best interest to recognize certain days, weeks and, in cases like this, months, to be able to celebrate, and I would always add the word "educate", as a way to deal with some of those sensitive issues. Whether we like it or not, there is racism out there. There are some aspects we need to work on with respect to the promotion of tolerance.

I have spoken about Sikh Heritage Month and about Filipino Heritage Month. I know that other members have brought other communities forward to talk about the importance of celebration. I believe in all those celebrations and in recognizing what people have to offer.

● (1805)

Where I kind of disagree with one of the members opposite is that it is okay for people to say they are a Canadian of Arab heritage. That does not offend me at all, just like it does not offend me when people say they are Canadians of Filipino or Indian heritage, whatever it might be. Having that sense of pride enables us to build on our diversity and education. This is something that, I believe, takes place when we have things like heritage month celebrations.

What I have noticed is that whenever we have motions or legislation of this nature, we always see substantial support from all sides of the House. That says a great deal about the type of society we have. I suspect that the member for York South—Weston—Etobicoke will be pleased when we see this hopefully pass with unanimous consent, as it did in the Senate.

● (1810)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): 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.

Adjournment Proceedings

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago I asked the government, while it was waving around its MOU, whether it could actually offer Albertans a guarantee on a pipeline and when it would be built, not just another headline or announcement. I was told that this memorandum would set out a comprehensive economic path forward for Alberta. The only problem is that there is no guarantee with this plan. It is more of just a pinky promise. Anyone can make a plan to do anything. That is not the problem. The problem is following through on that plan.

The Prime Minister has the ability to get several pipelines under way today. In fact, that was something that I was worried about after we passed Bill C-5 through this House. He has the ability to provide investors with certainty, so that communities and families can rely on the energy sector in northern Alberta. If the Prime Minister was serious about turning Canada into an energy superpower, as he said he would, we would have had shovels in the ground back in April. He had the ability back then, but even then he would not. This is because the government is not serious about Canadian oil and gas.

Really, the Prime Minister does not actually need to do anything; he just needs to repeal Bill C-48 and Bill C-69, and Canadians would build Canada. Pipelines would be built here in Canada. These are the “no more pipelines” bills. What is interesting is that Bill C-48 is a bill that is a shipping ban. It is not a tanker ban; it is a shipping ban. It is illegal to take oil off the shore of Canada and put it on a boat. That is what is illegal with Bill C-48. It is not at all about tankers travelling through the inside passage or travelling along the Canadian west coast. It is about preventing Canadian oil and gas from getting on a tanker. That is why we call it a shipping ban.

We recently had a vote on this agreement. The Prime Minister cannot get his anti-energy, “keep it in the ground” caucus to agree to getting pipelines built, but Conservatives actually want to succeed. We want to give Canadian families and investors the chance to have certainty from our government, so just yesterday we put forward a motion calling on the government to vote on its plan and memorandum. We thought that this would be an effective way to make sure that the Prime Minister lived up to his words, so we used the text right out of this comprehensive plan and included amendments proposed by the government itself.

If the government was serious about energy and pipelines, or at least about its own promises, one would think that it would have no problem voting for its own words right here in this place, but that is not what happened. Even members from Alberta who sit in the Liberal caucus were not able to vote for this. I do not know why, but the Prime Minister convinced his entire caucus and would not let even members from Alberta vote for a pipeline right here in Canada.

When the government votes against its own energy agreement, it sends a clear message to Canadians that Canadian energy jobs are secondary to partisan considerations, and the Prime Minister cannot have it both ways. He cannot claim to support Alberta's economy

and energy workers and at the same time block the infrastructure needed to make our economy thrive.

The hon. members for Calgary Confederation and Edmonton Centre will certainly have to explain to their constituents why they voted against Albertan jobs, the Alberta economy, Albertan growth and Albertan investment, and why they voted against Albertans.

The point of this is certainty, because when pipelines are delayed or uncertain, investment goes elsewhere. We have seen this over and over again, such as with the Carmon Creek project, which was cancelled in northern Alberta. Weeks later, the same company, Shell, announced a project in Kazakhstan. We have seen this time and time again. We saw the northern gateway pipeline cancelled, and they went out and built a pipeline in the United States.

Why does this government continually vote against Alberta?

• (1815)

Claude Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is in a trade war, one we did not ask for, but one which we must win. In a moment like this, we need to be united and focused on building our country up. We should not be playing partisan Conservative games. Canadians expect more from the House, and we are delivering for Canadians. That is why the federal government and Premier Smith signed and support the full memorandum of understanding.

The Conservative motion yesterday cherry-picked parts of the MOU, ignoring crucial parts of the agreement in an attempt to score cheap political points. I encourage the Conservative member to read the entire MOU. The Conservatives excluded from their motion that Alberta signed up to increase its industrial carbon price from a current effective price of around \$25 to a minimum of \$130. A report from Clean Prosperity says this measure could unlock over \$90 billion of investment in clean energy and clean technology.

The Conservatives also excluded the Pathways project from their motion, a crucial carbon capture and storage project representing over \$16 billion of investment in Alberta's clean technology sector, which is expected to create over 18,000 jobs for Albertans. The Conservatives excluded from their motion the importance of trilateral discussions with the Government of British Columbia, and that the MOU requires close alignment between Alberta and British Columbia on shared benefits.

Endorsing the Conservative approach of omitting parts of the MOU does not bring a pipeline closer. In fact, by ignoring the importance of indigenous co-ownership, engagement with the British Columbia government, the need for a private sector proponent and decarbonization efforts, the Conservatives are showing that they do not support the MOU signed by Premier Smith. The Conservatives are playing a game of pretending their motion can substitute for a real project proposal, real financing and the work needed to get a project built.

If the Conservatives were serious, they would have moved a motion with the full text of the MOU, including industrial carbon pricing, interties, nuclear, AI, engagement with B.C., consultation with indigenous peoples and indigenous co-ownership. While the Premier of Alberta says that industrial carbon pricing is necessary to stimulate investment in the emissions reduction technology needed to make Canada an energy superpower, federal Conservatives say they disagree with Alberta and continue to undermine industrial carbon pricing.

By refusing to support all elements of this MOU, including industrial carbon pricing, Conservatives are demonstrating that they disagree with Premier Smith and that they oppose the policies needed to grow Canada's economy while fighting climate change.

Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I would note that, right off the top, the member said that we are in a trade war with the United States. "I told them so" is not a great campaign promise, but the reality is that Stephen Harper told us that this was a great challenge and that we needed to move from being 100% or 90% reliant on the United States and get pipelines to tidewater. That is why he approved 14 LNG projects on the west coast. That is why he approved northern gateway, Trans Mountain and energy east. That is why we needed to do this.

Now, the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party are saying, "Oh, we are in a trade war." We warned the Liberals for a decade that

this was a reality. Besides all that, given the trade war that we are in right now, the Liberals had opportunities, time after time. They were two presidents. There was a bromance with Obama, and then Mr. Biden came to visit us. They had opportunities to fix this problem. Why did they not fix this problem when they had—

• (1820)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources.

Claude Guay: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to talk about history. I am going to talk about the here and now.

I would submit that the Conservative Party did not move a motion that supports the entire MOU, specifically because their caucus and even their leader, for that matter, do not support the MOU that Alberta signed, which includes strengthening industrial carbon pricing.

On this side of the House, the government is focused on outcomes. We will keep working with Alberta, British Columbia and indigenous people, so that we can deliver a better future for all Canadians and build Canada strong.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Calgary Crowfoot not being present to raise during Adjournment Proceedings the matter for which notice has been given, the notice is deemed withdrawn.

[*Translation*]

The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:21 p.m.)

Questions on the Order Paper

Lamoureux 4911

Motions for Papers

Lamoureux 4911

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**Budget 2025 Implementation Act, No. 1**

Bill C-15. Second reading 4911

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee) 4911

Strengthening Canada's Immigration System and Borders Act

Bill C-12. Report stage 4911

Speaker's Ruling

The Speaker 4911

Caputo 4911

Motion No. 1 4911

May 4911

Motions Nos. 2 to 21 4911

Anandasangaree 4912

Motion No. 22 4912

May 4912

Motions Nos. 23 to 47 4912

Rempel Garner 4912

Motion No. 48 4912

May 4912

Motions Nos. 49 to 51 4912

Caputo 4912

Lamoureux 4914

Simard 4914

May 4915

Lamoureux 4916

Kwan 4916

Simard 4917

DeBellefeuille 4917

Motion 4917

(Motion agreed to) 4917

Lamoureux 4918

Rempel Garner 4919

Bonin 4919

Rempel Garner 4919

Danko 4921

Simard 4921

May 4921

Lamoureux 4922

Romanado 4923

Motz 4923

Calkins 4923

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**Arab Heritage Month Act**

Bill S-227. Second reading 4924

Hussen 4924

Lamoureux 4925

Aboultaif 4925

Simard 4926

Aboultaif 4926

Simard 4927

Bardeesy 4928

Gill (Windsor West) 4929

Lamoureux 4930

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**Natural Resources**

Viersen 4932

Guay 4932

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