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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the following reports: the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum in Washington, D.C., United States of America, from December 4 to 6, 2023; the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association concerning its participation at the Spring Session in Sofia, Bulgaria, from May 24 to 27, 2024; the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association concerning its participation at the 70th Annual Session in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, from November 22 to 25, 2024; and the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association concerning its participation at the Joint Committee Meetings of Defense Security Committee, Economics and Security Committee and the Political Committee in Brussels, Belgium, from February 17 to 19, 2025.

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[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, entitled “Environment and Climate Impacts Related to the Canadian Financial System”.

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

[*English*]

David Bexte (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present today a dissenting report from the environment committee. This report, born amid global and domestic upheavals, threatens to shackle Canadian companies with expensive regulations that shove ideolo-

gy down the throat of reality. It is another top-down decree from ivory towers, fattening consultants while choking off capital to those who have built this nation's prosperity. These are the engines of untold wealth and jobs, whose success underpins millions of pensions and everyday investments.

While Liberal members on the committee will not publicly admit that their aim is to make it more expensive for companies, particularly those in the energy sector, to access capital, we are not afraid to call it as we see it. The reality is that other climate policies, such as the consumer carbon tax and the emissions cap, have failed, and now they have put their EV mandates on ice. They are struggling to come up with a way to bolster their climate credentials in a policy area that most Canadians will not see but that have an impact on the economy.

I would request a comprehensive response to this report from the House.

• (1005)

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, regarding membership of committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 13th report later this day.

* * *

FAIR REPRESENTATION ACT

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-259, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (fair representation).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table the fair representation act.

[*Translation*]

This law protects workers' rights.

[*English*]

This legislation would protect workers' fundamental right to organize freely and know that they are being represented by an independent and democratic union.

Routine Proceedings

The CLAC is the largest example of a company union. It claims to represent workers, but labour boards in Nova Scotia and Manitoba have ruled against it. The International Trade Union Confederation suspended CLAC for undermining labour conditions, yet the Liberal government gave CLAC nearly \$5 million in public funds just last year.

This has to stop. Real unions are democratic and accountable to their members, and only to their members.

[*Translation*]

Unions must be free and independent.

[*English*]

I urge all members to support this legislation when it next comes before the House.

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

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it being later this day, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present this petition, which deals with the issue of the threat of nuclear war.

The petitioners point out that the nuclear arms control architecture has all but disintegrated with the termination of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and Treaty on Open Skies between the United States and Russia, and that the New START Treaty negotiations are, at this point, not inspiring hope for a good conclusion.

The petitioners further go on to remind us that the House of Commons and the Senate approved a motion unanimously back in 2010 to encourage Canada to engage in negotiations for the Nuclear Weapons Convention and deploy a major worldwide Canadian diplomatic initiative in support of nuclear disarmament.

As well, petitioners remind us that in 2018, the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence made an all-party recommendation that Canada play a leadership role in NATO in encouraging work toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

Therefore, the petitioners ask the Government of Canada to make nuclear disarmament a foreign policy national defence priority and to engage with and accede to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to table a petition on behalf of constituents in my riding.

The petitioners believe that freedom of expression and freedom of religion are fundamental rights that must be preserved. They believe that the Liberal bill, Bill C-9, is an infringement on those rights.

As such, petitioners call on the House to withdraw Bill C-9 and prevent government intrusion into matters of faith.

● (1010)

TAXATION

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petition e-6753, which was signed by 7,175 Canadians who want the GST and HST removed from massage therapy services.

Registered massage therapy is recognized as a medical service by health care professionals, and registered massage therapists are licensed and regulated like other health professionals but still not exempt from GST and HST under the Excise Tax Act.

Failure to remove the GST creates double standards and inequity in the professions regulated by the colleges. It may also contribute to financial barriers for some patients.

These Canadians are calling on the Government of Canada to add registered massage therapy to the GST and HST exemption within the Excise Tax Act and remove the GST and HST from registered massage therapy services in Canada.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CANADIAN ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY

Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC) moved:

That, in the interest of restoring Canadian economic sovereignty, the House call on the government to immediately introduce a Canada Sovereignty Act that:

- (a) re-establishes Canada as a competitive resource-producing nation by repealing federal measures that block or penalize development, including,
 - (i) the Impact Assessment Act (formerly Bill C-69),
 - (ii) the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act (formerly Bill C-48),
 - (iii) the federal industrial carbon tax,
 - (iv) the oil and gas emissions cap,
 - (v) the federal electric vehicle sales mandate,
 - (vi) the federal plastics manufacturing prohibitions,
 - (vii) federal regulatory restrictions that impede communication and advocacy by Canadian energy companies;
- (b) rewards provinces, businesses, and workers who build and invest in Canada by,
 - (i) introducing a Canada First Reinvestment Tax Cut to spur domestic industrial activity,
 - (ii) providing free trade bonuses to provincial governments that remove internal trade barriers and fully open their markets to fellow Canadians; and
- (c) protects Canadian innovation by requiring the Minister of Industry to present plans to Parliament to keep Canada's inventions, discoveries and innovations from being sold off to other countries.

She said: Mr. Speaker, as a first-generation Albertan and the daughter of a Newfoundlander, a very common story in my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador, which is a place so near and dear to my fiery heart that glows strong and free like Alberta's wild roses, what an honour it is to split my time with a vibrant, kind, honest and happy woman warrior, the new Conservative MP for Long Range Mountains.

It is fitting that two MPs from two provinces on opposite sides of the country start debate today. Both provinces are relatively new in Confederation compared to most of the others, and we have built each other's homes to the benefit of the whole country for two main reasons: the resilience, tenacity and adventurous risk-taking of our people, and our natural resources.

Today, Canada is at a crossroad that has been visible and closing in for more than a decade. Canadians are vulnerable, struggling, worried about their futures and divided more now than ever before, because today, only press conferences and expansive rhetoric exist. There are no actual results for all the promises the Prime Minister made more than half a year ago about nation-building projects getting built at "speeds not seen in generations".

What of today? More than 60 major projects with real proponents in every natural resources sector are stuck in front of federal regulators with no end in sight. More investment flows out of Canada into the U.S. than the other way around, which is a historical anomaly that started in 2015. I wonder what happened then.

It has gotten worse every single year since. There is no pipeline being built to anywhere now, because the private sector will not attempt it alone. The Liberals outright vetoed and approved one a

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decade ago, from Lakeland to the Pacific, for export to Asia to reduce dependence on the U.S. It was supported by the majority of indigenous communities, but the court said that consultation had to be redone, just as the Liberals would have to do on TMX. They did not; they killed it.

My first speech here in 2015 was in support of a west-to-east pipeline for Canadian energy independence and security, to bring Western oil to eastern refineries and for export to Europe. I have to note that the Liberals killed that promise, too, by moving goalposts and death by delay.

Those were the chances to make Canada united, self-reliant, affordable and sovereign, but when a company spent years and \$1 billion trying to make it, the Liberals ignored its warning that regulatory uncertainty risked the pipeline, because that is what the Liberals wanted for politics in a province in the middle. After that happened, the company even dropped "Canada" from its name and built pipelines in the U.S.

After that and endless caps, bans, taxes, mandates and regulations, hundreds of thousands of Canadians lost their livelihoods and legacies, and many took their own lives as major private sector plans were shelved: \$670 billion in major natural resources projects and \$176 billion in 16 major energy projects alone have all gone, while the costs for energy, essential in Canada, have skyrocketed due to bad policies and uncompetitive taxes.

The Prime Minister claims to be different from the one he advised for more than the last half decade, but lots of rhetoric with no actual results is exactly the same.

While the Liberals did all this to Canada, the U.S., under Obama, by the way, and it just ramped up afterward, started crude oil exports outside of North America for the first time in four decades and vetoed KXL from Canada at the same time. American and other money funded campaigns to stop Canadian energy projects. Our biggest trading partner, the world's most important economy and still Canada's biggest customer just said that because of Liberal Atlantic and Pacific pipeline killers, it will soon get up to 50 million barrels of Venezuelan oil to compete directly with its Canadian heavy crude imports and put billions of Canadian dollars and thousands of jobs at risk.

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Meanwhile, our Prime Minister is clearly cozy with the regime he said was Canada's "biggest security threat". That is also the position of the current President of the United States, but the Prime Minister has let them all in our backyard. Talk about letting all the foxes in the henhouse.

The Liberals have the gall to spend millions of tax dollars on ads about Canada being an energy superpower. They hated that when Stephen Harper said it, but the Liberals now want support, help, accolades, co-operation and compliments from the Conservatives. I would say the Liberals should take a bow, if they can do that with their elbows up I guess, but they need only look in the mirror for who is to blame for why Canadians now find themselves vulnerable to bullies everywhere instead of being self-reliant, sovereign, united and thriving, not just surviving like they are, as this country could and should have been today, with all our blessings, our people and our natural resources.

• (1015)

No matter the magical thinking one favours, here is the truth: Despite the Liberal decade of anti-resource and anti-private sector policies and taxes, in 2024, oil and gas still employed half a million Canadians. It is still Canada's largest private sector investor and top export, but almost all of it goes to the U.S. Natural resources are still, by far, the main driver to close the gap between the rich and poor, and the biggest employer of indigenous Canadians in the entire economy from coast to coast to coast, but the Liberals' words differ from their actions, which shows they still want to risk and break it all for their ideology.

It is our duty to oppose the government when necessary and to propose solutions to create private sector jobs and bigger paycheques and cut costs for every Canadian. This is why, today, Conservatives bring forward a Canadian sovereignty act to legalize and turbocharge Canadian energy development and construction everywhere.

The act points out seven anti-development laws that kill projects and jobs in Canada for repeal and reform.

Bill C-69 is the unconstitutional, divisive law that makes it impossible to build and blocks major projects across Canada, which the Liberals admit to with a workaround in Bill C-5. Right now, the Liberals pick politically recommended projects behind closed doors and refuse to define the national interest or fix the actual laws for anyone else.

Bill C-48, the shipping ban, blocks Canadian oil exports from the west coast, while foreign dictators' oil and U.S. oil tankers still pass through every other coast and canal.

The federal industrial carbon tax hikes the cost of everything Canadians buy across the supply chain. The U.S., Canada's biggest competitor, does not have this federally.

The ban on gas and diesel vehicles will hike prices by up to \$20,000 for consumers, expose retailers to criminal charges and limit Canadians' freedom of choice. The U.S. does not impose this on itself.

The plastics ban hurts responsibly producing Canadian manufacturers and hikes the costs of groceries everywhere. The U.S. does not have this.

The Liberal energy censorship law stops Canadian businesses from talking about their environmental track record and innovation unless they match the government's talking points. It sounds a bit like that regime the Prime Minister waffles on about, does it not?

The Liberals also say they intend to make changes, but still have not actually axed the oil and gas cap, which is the only one of its kind in the world. It will kill 54,000 Canadian jobs by 2032 and cut \$21 billion from Canada's economy, and they know it. Who can afford this?

Do not take my word for it. Last April, in an extremely unusual Canadian action, 38 energy CEOs told the Prime Minister to simplify regulation and scrap Bill C-69, Bill C-48 and the oil and gas cap to "Build Canada Now", since the law impedes development, and existing processes are uncertain, as well as "complex, unpredictable, subjective, and excessively long", as we and every single expert have been telling the Liberals for a decade. In September, 96 energy CEOs sent a follow-up. It is now almost February.

I do not know what the Prime Minister considers generational speed, although the Liberals know a lot about generational theft. Thousands of major projects have been built faster than this in our country, and still nothing is actually being built. Right now, the U.S. Department of Energy's emergency permitting procedures can approve oil, gas, critical mineral and uranium projects on federal lands in as little as 28 days. The weird truth is that the U.S. Department of Energy and the Department of Defense can build projects faster than any private sector proponent in Canada can dream of. The Liberals want Canadians to believe that a \$246-million major projects bureaucracy will solve the problem they created, but it is still being set up and the process is still uncertain, complex and opaque.

Conservatives will give certainty to Canada, as we have always said we will. In addition to fixing the fundamentals, not ragging the puck with workarounds, we will create a Canada-first reinvestment tax cut to eliminate capital gains taxes on reinvestments in Canadian businesses and projects; create a free trade bonus that rewards provinces for removing interprovincial trade barriers; require the industry minister to table a comprehensive plan to prevent Canada's inventions, technologies, intellectual property and strategic assets from being sold to foreign state-owned or -influenced interests; and safeguard Canadian ownership and control of critical technologies to ensure Canadian economic sovereignty.

After all of those promises, nearly a year into the Prime Minister's term and 11 years into the Liberal government, Canadians do not need more grand speeches or photo ops; they need results. Conservatives want big projects built in Canada by the private sector, efficiently, safely and affordably, with the top standards and Canadian materials for Canadians' public interests. If the Liberals are truly serious about making Canada an energy superpower, they have to show it now. The stakes for our country are much too high to dither, debate and delay any more.

• (1020)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is interesting. We need to realize that when the leader of the Conservative Party sat in the Conservative cabinet with Stephen Harper, they did not build even one inch of pipeline going to the west coast through B.C. They did not build one inch. That is the reality.

They will say they built some pipelines that went down to the States. Yes, that is true. They did build some pipelines going to the States.

Having listened to the member opposite, I will provide the opportunity to show the contrast between the Conservative Party's agenda and the Liberal Party's agenda. That contrast is why, in the last federal election, Canadians voted for a new Prime Minister and 70 new Liberal members of Parliament. They saw the comparison between the words from the Conservatives, a lot of which were misleading, and what a Liberal government would do, which we are doing.

Can the member clearly indicate how many inches of pipeline they constructed between Alberta and B.C.?

Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, the 11-year-old government is really desperate when it keeps talking about a dude who has not been prime minister for 15 years or something.

To be clear, in case the Liberals have not googled it or listened to us over the last 10 years, four pipelines were constructed under Stephen Harper's government, including a Line 9B reversal, which fuels Ontario and Quebec with oil and gas. That is the actual record.

As for the intergovernmental pipelines for export to diversify markets beyond the U.S., those proposals were made under the former Stephen Harper Conservative government, with our leader as a top minister, because the private sector had confidence it could

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build and invest in major nation-building projects to the benefit of every single Canadian.

These guys killed every single one. That is the truth.

• (1025)

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, it is good to see my hon. friend from Lakeland back in this place and well. We were deeply concerned when she was in hospital during the time of the budget debate. I apologize, Madam Speaker, but it had to be said.

I also want to say that she will know we agree on more things than others might imagine. However, on the offshore tanker issue, where U.S. and offshore foreign tankers pass by Canada's waters and British Columbian waters, they pass on the outside, because that is the direct route from Alaska to Washington state. They do not come in through the inside passages that are covered by Bill C-48.

I wonder if we can agree that we should probably stick to the facts of the geography and the waters where tankers move and where they do not.

Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her kind words and her warm wishes. We have a bit of an unusual personal relationship. Her words mean more to me than people can probably imagine. I hope the people of Lakeland will continue to have confidence in me, despite the fact that I just said those words.

I agree with her that we have to set the facts straight about Bill C-48. Actually, this is a lesson in how effective the Liberals were at eating the NDP opposition whole while the NDP did not do its job. This is because, in fact, Bill C-48 did not give any teeth to the voluntary exclusion zone that the member references. It did not do anything of the sort, if one believes that marine tanker traffic is an irreparable ecological harm to the marine environment, because what Bill C-48 actually did, and this is why we know it was only to block oil exports from Alberta, was ban the loading and off-loading of crude and persistent oils at ports in that region and ban tankers of a certain capacity, a certain volume and a certain weight. Those would be the supertankers that take the direct and safest deepwater route to Asia.

This would have happened if the Liberals had redone indigenous consultation on the northern gateway, just as every single one of those indigenous communities that had mutual benefit agreements wanted them to. He never consulted them—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley.

Business of Supply

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Madam Speaker, the government is looking for some quick, simple, easy wins. A sovereignty act is obviously just that. There are so many great parts to it that would remove the barriers that industry has been telling us about for over a decade. The member and I have been on the same committee together many times, and we have heard this over and over again.

I am wondering if my colleague would like to inform the government about some of the conversations that have happened at committee with stakeholders about the need to pass something like a sovereignty act to try to kick-start development here in Canada.

Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, the member is a near and dear friend to Alberta and Albertans.

The Liberals know exactly what to do to fix the problems they have created, because they listed the laws and regulations that block building in the back of Bill C-5. That is why Conservatives are saying to fix the fundamentals, fix the law for everybody, set the rules of the game, and make sure that we can compete with and beat the United States so that the private sector can create jobs with the highest standards in the world and develop our natural resources to benefit the whole country and our allies—

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to start by welcoming my colleague and friend, with a strong connection to Newfoundland and Labrador, back to this House.

It is my honour today to get up and speak to this opposition day motion. Let me begin, first and foremost, by wishing my constituents in the Long Range Mountains, and all Canadians, a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.

As we look ahead to the challenges before us, this debate on a Canadian sovereignty act is about a simple, but urgent question: Will Canada once again be a country that builds, produces and invests in itself, or will it continue down a path that leaves its resources undeveloped, its capital fleeing abroad and too many communities, especially rural ones, falling behind?

This opposition day motion is about restoring Canadian economic sovereignty by making it easier to build, invest and innovate here at home, while recognizing the growing urban-rural divide in our country. It is about being straightforward with Canadians by calling on the government to remove the federal laws and taxes that block resource development and industrial growth, including policies like the electric vehicle mandate that disproportionately hurts rural Canadians; unlock our natural resources to rebuild the communities that depend on them; reward businesses that invest in Canada through a Canada-first reinvestment tax cut; and protect Canadian innovation so that Canadian jobs, resources and ideas stay in Canadians' hands.

We are proposing solutions that restore investment confidence and get this country building again, and it is in that spirit that this motion is also about affordability. Conservatives know that affordability starts with opportunity. When we build more at home, we create jobs, increase incomes and strengthen the economic foundation that makes life more affordable for Canadians.

This motion is also about an invitation to work together to produce real results for the challenges Canadians are facing. Canadians are doing what they are supposed to do. They are working hard, they are running businesses, they are raising families and they are trying to plan for the future. What they are struggling with is a system that keeps adding cost, complexity and uncertainty instead of applying common sense.

Canada is one of the richest nations in the world. It is rich in natural resources, rich in talent and rich in opportunity, yet Canadians are struggling. Families are making harder choices. Businesses are delaying decisions and investment. Communities are wondering what comes next. I hear it all the time from people in my riding in Newfoundland and Labrador. Canada is one of the richest places in the country when it comes to natural resources, yet we continue to experience some of the weakest economic outcomes.

Canadians are rightly asking why a country so blessed keeps holding itself back. That concern is exactly why the oil and gas emissions cap matters so much. For Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore industry, which is one of the cleanest and most highly regulated in the world, federal uncertainty and caps drive away investment, delay projects and threaten good-paying jobs.

I want to drill down into this a little further, because I know the government will hide behind the budget, which signalled a shift in how it approaches oil and gas emissions policy. However, the government did not definitively repeal or provide a clear direction on the cap. It talked about other measures and how, if those measures were met, the cap would no longer be required. This leaves uncertainty about whether and how a cap might be implemented in the future.

This lack of certainty matters for investors and industry, because without a clear legislative commitment on whether or not the emissions cap will exist or be enforceable, businesses cannot confidently plan long-term development. Investors need predictable, stable policy, not vague conditions on future technologies. This is exactly why a Canadian sovereignty act matters. Its explicit removal of the emissions cap would deliver the clarity and certainty that foreign and domestic capital require to invest in Canada's resource sector and support jobs across the country.

This is so important to Newfoundland and Labrador. Therefore, I want to re-emphasize that the government presents this policy as a cap on emissions. Conservatives have been clear that in practice, this is a cap on jobs, a cap on revenue and a cap on opportunity.

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Industry leaders have described this cap as not just a cap on production, but also a cap on investment. These leaders include Jim Keating, the chief executive officer of the Oil and Gas Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, who was responsible for overseeing and promoting the development of our offshore oil and gas resources. He warned that this approach undermines Canada's ability to attract and retain long-term capital. Investment decisions are made years in advance. Companies need certainty, clarity and confidence that if they invest in Canada, the rules will not change halfway through the project.

• (1030)

Global demand for oil and gas has not disappeared, and when Canada produces less, someone else produces more. Reducing Canadian production does not reduce global demand; it simply shifts production elsewhere. Canada produces energy with some of the highest environmental and labour standards in the world. When production is pushed out of Canada and into countries with weaker standards, global emissions increase. That does nothing to protect the environment; it simply costs Canadians jobs and investment.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, offshore oil and gas is not just a policy discussion; it is how families make a living. It is how young people see a future at home. It is also how we fund health care, education and infrastructure. This is why Conservatives have been honest about what this policy does. It is a job-killing cap that hurts workers without helping the environment.

The emissions cap also creates uncertainty across the broader economy. Energy projects support supply chains, service industries and local businesses. When investment slows, the impact is felt far beyond the energy sector itself.

Investment is so important to our economy and our country right now, which is why this motion also advances a Canada first reinvestment tax cut. This is a practical measure that would let Canadians reinvest capital back into Canadian businesses and projects, and keep investment, jobs and growth at home instead of driving them out of the country. If small businesses, housing providers, innovators and investors were to reinvest capital back into Canada, it would unlock domestic investment, boost productivity and keep capital from leaving the country. Even independent tax experts have described this idea as a potential game changer because it rewards reinvestment in Canadian companies rather than punishing success.

This is about keeping capital here, putting it to work here and strengthening our economy from the ground up. When businesses reinvest in Canada, Canadian workers benefit, communities grow and government revenues increase without raising taxes on families, which makes life more affordable for Canadians.

This matters deeply for Newfoundland and Labrador, where our economy is powered by small and medium-sized businesses. Family enterprises, fish harvesters, construction firms, tourism operators and energy-related service companies are the backbone of our community. These businesses are not asking for government handouts. They are asking for a fair chance to reinvest, expand and pass something on to the next generation. A reinvestment tax cut would help entrepreneurs in rural communities just as much as those in major cities, and it ensures capital stays local.

This motion also speaks to the electrical vehicle mandate, because forcing a one-size-fits-all target on Canadians, especially in a country with such vast and diverse geography and demographics, adds costs instead of delivering practical, affordable solutions. I want to be clear that this is not an argument against electric vehicles; it is an argument against the mandates. Conservatives believe government should not be telling Canadians what type of vehicle they are allowed to buy or drive.

Consumer choice drives markets. When Canadians choose a product because it works for them, demand grows, technology improves, prices come down and infrastructure follows. Mandates force compliance before systems are ready and push costs on to families and small businesses.

Even more concerning is that an analysis published in the Canadian Journal of Economics suggested that EV mandates could outpace cost parity and consumer demand, and that Canada could potentially face a collapse of its auto manufacturing sector and the loss of more than 100,000 jobs. In the face of this reality, the government's indefinite pause on electric vehicle mandates, with no clear timeline or answers, is simply unacceptable. People want openness and transparency, which is why Conservatives are clear and upfront about where we stand. All of these, the industrial carbon tax, the oil gas emissions cap and the vehicle mandates, collide and drive up costs at a time when Canadians are already stretched. Common sense tells us that this approach is not sustainable. Encouraging companies to reinvest here would strengthen our economy, reinforce our sovereignty and keep Canada competitive.

Canadians are tired of promises, fancy speeches and announcements that do not translate into real improvements in their lives. They want common sense. This is what a Canadian sovereignty act is meant to restore.

• (1035)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, one of the things that has been clearly amplified over the last number of months, and why Canada is being so well received by investors in foreign lands, is consistency. Investors do not want to see rules being changed. That is an important aspect, whether it concerns a private corporation or any other sort of investment firm looking to invest in Canada.

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Does the member realize that parts of the opposition motion promote the sorts of changes that cause uncertainty and could prevent investment from taking place in Canada?

Carol Anstey: Madam Speaker, that is certainly not what I see at this time.

What I see is government overreach. The Liberals want their hand-picked projects. They want to make Canadians reliant on government programs. Consistently and constantly, I hear investors, business owners and people who want to grow saying that the government just needs to get out of the way.

This is what a Canadian sovereignty act is meant to ensure. It is calling on the government to get out of the way so that we can grow as an economy right here in Canada.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I must admit that I am rather discouraged by the subject of the Conservatives' opposition day motion. It seems as though they have been talking about the same issues for a really long time. I have been on the Hill for 10 years now, and every time the Conservatives have an opposition day, they say that they want more oil.

It is astonishing that they are still saying that even after the Liberals cut subsidies for EVs, put an end to the consumer carbon tax, agreed to a new pipeline, paused the electric vehicle availability standard and introduced Bill C-5, which has now become law and which enables the government to circumvent all environmental regulations.

How can the Conservatives remain optimistic now that the Liberals have eaten all of their lunch? I get the impression that the only choice they have left is to become radicalized.

[*English*]

Carol Anstey: Madam Speaker, we continue to hope that the government takes our advice and reintroduces policy. We have been saying this for 10 years because this is what we are hearing from Canadians.

We welcome the fact that the Liberals are taking these policies and reintroducing them, but lots of times they are half-baked or are somewhere in the middle. The Liberals know what Canadians want, but they are not willing to go all the way.

I agree with the member. If Canadians want Conservatives, the real deal, then they need to vote for Conservatives in the next election instead of voting for the half-baked measures of the Liberals.

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague's terrific speech highlighted that the urban-rural divide is one of the biggest issues that Canada faces and that one of the best ways to tackle that issue would be through our proposed sovereignty act because there is a lot of nation-building potential that exists within it.

Could the member highlight a little of that?

Carol Anstey: Madam Speaker, I could not agree more.

What about the projects that are still caught up in regulatory paralysis, that do not qualify under nation-building projects? The government has given itself the ability to pick and choose what projects will go forward. We still have tons of smaller projects that want to advance.

That is really punishing to rural parts of the country. My riding is mostly rural, so that is definitely a huge concern that I have and something that I hear about on a consistent basis.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand to speak on a Conservative opposition day, which is kind of a flashback to the last election. If we take the time to read the motion the Conservatives put forward, we cannot help but think of the last federal election. I will remind my friends across the way that the things the Conservatives are talking about are the things that they incorporated into their last platform.

I would like to show some contrasts that will clearly demonstrate why Canadians as a whole rejected the Conservative Party and chose to elect a new Prime Minister and 70 new Liberal members of Parliament. This is, for all intents and purposes, a new government with a Prime Minister who has a single focus on building Canada strong, which is something that we can see in the many measures that have been taken since the last federal election.

We had an extensive party platform that Canadians understood and supported by voting for us. I will indicate very clearly that, as we all know, this is a minority government. It is a very close minority government, but at the end of the day, this shows the need for the government to work with opposition parties. It equally demonstrates that opposition parties also have to work with the government, but the contrast between the Liberals and the Conservatives is truly amazing.

The member who spoke just before me talked about the issue of affordability. Let us go back to the last election, when the Conservatives set their agenda on affordability and we put forward our agenda on affordability. Our new Prime Minister got rid of the carbon tax to give Canadians increased disposable income. Affordability was the reason the Prime Minister and the government reduced personal income tax, and 22 million taxpayers benefited from that.

Dealing with affordability, we will have to wait to see what the Conservatives are going to do in regard to yesterday's announcement on the groceries and essentials benefit, which is a program that would be there for all Canadians. Over 10 million Canadians would benefit from that. For many of them, it would be hundreds of dollars, going into well over \$1,000.

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I can say that the residents of Winnipeg North would benefit from that when it comes to affordability. We recognize the hardship that many Canadians are facing today. That is the reason, unlike governments in many other nations around the world, this Prime Minister and this government have brought forward that initiative, which was announced yesterday by the Prime Minister.

I would like to think that the Conservatives would support that particular initiative. It is hard to say because we have still not passed the budget implementation bill from last year, as the Conservatives have chosen to even delay and filibuster budget legislation, just getting it implemented, from last year.

It is interesting. The Conservatives have taken their platform, put it into a package and called it “a Canadian Sovereignty Act”. They would take their platform and put it into law.

I would counter that by looking at our platform from the last election, which was to build Canada strong. That is something that we said that we were going to do, and that is exactly what we are doing.

● (1045)

I take a look at what took place virtually immediately after the last election. We had a proactive Prime Minister who was aggressively working with all provinces, territories and others to take down interprovincial barriers.

An hon. member: How is that going?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member across the way asks, “How is that going?” The Prime Minister continues to meet and have dialogue with the provinces. This has had a positive impact on Canadians and our economy. Building Canada strong means trying to get those national trade barriers taken down. The member across the aisle from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman made reference to Crown Royal. There has been a bit of a discussion. Crown Royal is produced in the province of Manitoba. We do not want the Province of Ontario boycotting Crown Royal. Those are good jobs in Manitoba, and it is a Canadian product.

There are all forms of irritants between provinces, and the Prime Minister continues to work with the provinces in an attempt to bring down those irritants and to create, whether it is for labour or otherwise, freer mobility between provinces. However, what I really want to amplify is that when we talk about building Canada strong, Canadians know that there is a difficult relationship today with the United States, and we hope to be able to resolve that in a positive way and have a trade agreement continue on with the United States. We understand how important that relationship is, unlike the Conservatives.

When we had the first round of trade agreements with the United States and Donald Trump, I remember that the Conservative Party capitulated and said to sign any agreement. That is not what the Prime Minister is going to do or what this government is going to do. We are going to hold out and get the best deal for Canadians, and if that is going to take more time and cause the Conservatives to be uncomfortable, so be it. We are going to strive to get the best deal for Canadians. In the interim, we are looking outside of the Canada-U.S.A. border.

The Prime Minister and numerous ministers are travelling abroad, opening up opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses to export their products, while at the same time attracting billions of dollars of investment into Canada. This is because the Prime Minister and the ministers are aggressively looking for markets that go beyond the Canada-U.S.A. border, and we have already seen tangible results.

When we talk about the last election campaign and the platform issues, the number one issue was providing a sense of comfort related to trade, President Trump and the actions that have been taking place in the south, and the need to be able to bring Canada together. We have been very successful as a government because of that team Canada approach. There are premiers, mayors and stakeholders recognizing the value of a team Canada approach, and the government is aggressively looking outside of the Canada-U.S.A. border to improve exports.

● (1050)

We have legislation before us that would increase trade. We can look at Indonesia. Legislation is there. We have legislation regarding Northern Ireland and England before us. The Prime Minister travelled abroad with a contingency of ministers, including the Premier of Saskatchewan, to deal with some irritants that China had with Canada, and we were able to resolve them, at least in good part. Whether it is the canola farmers from the Prairies or seafood products from Atlantic Canada, dealing with these issues is going to provide opportunities, jobs and investment.

I am very proud of what is happening between Canada and the Philippines. I want to see a trade agreement between these two great nations. The potential is there. It is real, and the Prime Minister actually met with President Marcos and talked about how we should work towards getting a free trade agreement in 2026. However, it is not only the Philippines but also India. Again, we have a commitment from two world leaders to talk about the importance of trade and, in this situation, whether Canada can get a trade agreement with India.

The government is committed to doing what it can, upholding Canadian values and making sure that we are expanding our markets in a very tangible way, a way that is going to deliver for Canadians. Trade matters.

As I indicated yesterday, Canada's population is about 0.5% of the world population. We can contrast that to the amount of trade we do. We contribute 2.5% of world trade because we have a government that is looking for more markets and more investment. We can look at what happened when the Prime Minister went to the Middle East. There were commitments of literally billions of dollars of additional investment coming to Canada. These types of investments matter, because they are going to make a difference for all of Canada.

Business of Supply

The Conservatives are starting to criticize, saying that the Prime Minister does a lot of international flying. The Prime Minister is the single greatest asset ambassador that Canada has and will enable doors to open and allow us to get into these markets. We should not be discouraging it. We should be recognizing the true value of it and encouraging it if we continue to see the types of results that we are getting. That was a major part of our platform.

When we talk about other aspects of the platform, building Canada strong is more than just trade, international trade and bringing down provincial barriers. We need to build Canada's infrastructure in a very real and tangible way.

We got Bill C-5 passed last June. I would point out that the leader of the Conservative Party was not elected at that time, but we were able to get support from the Conservative Party in order to get that legislation through. Thank goodness we got it done in June, because it enabled the government to move forward, pushing and advocating for these major projects.

I would also note that the Major Projects Office is located in the Prairies. That in itself provides an additional incentive. Having that local office says something. Contrary to the member opposite who stood in her place to introduce the motion and be critical of the government on energy, the Prime Minister and the government recognize that we will be a superpower on both clean energy and all forms of energy. We can be, and we have demonstrated that, more so than Stephen Harper did.

● (1055)

When I asked the member to tell me how many inches of pipeline the Conservatives built directly to tidewater through B.C., she sidestepped the question. She said we built some that went down to the States. Four, I believe, is what she said. The leader of the Conservative Party can take credit for the four pipelines that he built down to the States. However, the market is to Asia. That is something we have been able to accomplish.

Members should take a look at those major projects, whether it is the LNG tube coming out of British Columbia, working with a New Democratic government, or the Darlington project in Ontario dealing with nuclear energy and the potential that is there, working with a Progressive Conservative government. In Montreal, we are expanding the port, which will create tens of thousands of jobs while supporting the jobs and infrastructure that are currently there. The impact of that on the community of Montreal and beyond is great. These are the types of major nation-building projects that this government has realized in co-operation with other stakeholders, including our provinces.

I know the Province of Manitoba wants to see the port of Churchill get off the ground. For the first time, we have a premier and I believe a Prime Minister who really want to make that happen if it is at all possible. I believe it is possible to develop that port. That could help all of Canada.

Major projects include things such as what is taking place in, again, B.C. with copper and gold, or with copper in the province of Saskatchewan. These projects are all part of the platform we presented to Canadians.

What the Conservatives are actually proposing today is a Conservative agenda. They want to replace the Liberal agenda with it. I would suggest that, at the end of the day, Canadians have already made that decision. What we should be working on is how we can meet what Canadians want this Parliament to do. That means, for example, supporting the initiative that the Prime Minister announced yesterday: a grocery and essentials benefit for Canadians that would take effect on July 1, putting money in the pockets of Canadians. Members should support that initiative. They should be clear and concise. They should not dither. It is just like when we made a commitment to make the national school food program permanent in our schools. We had one Conservative say it was garbage. We had other Conservatives mock the program. It is actually feeding hundreds of thousands of children.

We have an agenda before us with probably the largest pieces of crime legislation that we have seen in generations. It could make a difference. Unfortunately, the Conservatives are filibustering it. I can tell the House that there are Canadians in Conservative ridings who want the Conservative members to vote for many of the initiatives we are putting forward.

I think it is time for Conservatives to start putting the Canadian agenda ahead of their own Conservative Party of Canada agenda.

● (1100)

James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North is always up on his feet in the chamber. He speaks the most words in Parliament but never says anything. All we ever hear is Liberal propaganda and misinformation that really does undermine the seriousness of debate on the motions before us.

During his entire speech, the member refused to recognize that over the 10 previous years of the Liberal government, the Liberals chased away \$690 billion of actual investment that was going to go into natural resources and pipelines across this country. Because of their mandate, regulations, overreach and antidevelopment, all those dollars left. For the only pipeline they built, they had to go into the pockets of Canadian taxpayers to expand the western pipeline into Vancouver. We are still in the hole and are never going to see those dollars recouped, because of their mismanagement and incompetence.

The member has also been sitting quite quietly. He talks about interprovincial trade, but meanwhile, Manitoba makes the best whisky in the world, called Crown Royal. He has been completely silent as the Government of Ontario has threatened to pull Crown Royal off its shelves. If he is so adamant that Liberals stand up for interprovincial free trade, will he push back and force his government to stand in the way of the Province of Ontario's pulling Manitoba-made Crown Royal whisky off its shelves?

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Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, first of all, if the member was listening, he would know I talked about Crown Royal. I even referred to the member. He might want to do a retake on that.

When the member was the parliamentary secretary to the minister of national defence, the GDP level of financing for the military was just below 1%, likely the lowest in the history of Canada. The new Prime Minister has already brought it up to 2%, and we have made a commitment to bring it up to 5% in the coming years. Why? It is because it makes sense.

Whether it is industrialization for military purposes, protecting our sovereignty or meeting the commitments of our allied forces, we are investing in members of the Canadian Forces, we are providing the necessary equipment and we are going to be meeting our future obligations. Why? It is because the new government and the Prime Minister understand the importance of the Canadian Forces and the important role it plays going forward.

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to know what my colleague thinks about the fact that the Conservatives' motion seems to imply a weakening of provincial sovereignty. The motion encourages investments that would lead them to pull away from their laws and rules in accordance with their priorities in terms of the environment, language and their specific needs.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it will be an interesting vote. I am going to vote against it. Most of the people in my riding voted against the Conservative Party and the political platform it presented in the last election.

The government is on the right track. We are in fact building a stronger and healthier Canada. The proof is in the pudding; we have accomplished a great deal, and we continue to want to do more to support Canadians, whether it is building the economy, providing and protecting our social services or working with different provinces and stakeholders to bring forward good legislation, like the crime bills we have presented to the House of Commons.

Every member will have a choice. Do they support the Conservative agenda, or do they support the government agenda? It is a very clear choice. I support the government agenda.

[*Translation*]

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my ears are burning. The opposition's motion seeks, among other things, to repeal the Impact Assessment Act.

We are going back to the 19th century. Companies are being told they can do what they want and that Canadians will foot the environmental bill and pay the billion-dollar invoice. What does the member for Winnipeg North think about our vision, the vision of the Liberal Party of Canada, which, in my view, is based on reason and common sense?

Does he not agree that Bill C-5 does not diminish the importance of the environment and that, in fact, with its commitment to “one

project, one review”, it streamlines assessments and projects? That is what the industry wants. The rules are clear and the message is clear. We are providing a boost to the industry and protecting the environment at the same time.

Does the member agree that this is what the industry and Canadians want?

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, like my colleague, I genuinely believe in sustainable development. The development opportunities are there; for example, the technology that our oil industry brings forward is fairly world-leading. I think the EV industry and the potential for the manufacturing of electric vehicles continues to grow. There are many ways we can grow our economy and be respectful of the environment; they go hand in hand in sustainable development.

I believe Bill C-5 further advances good governance along with sustainable development. It enables those projects in the nation's best interest to move forward in a faster fashion. It protects the environment while at the same time ensuring that the proper consultations are being conducted.

• (1110)

Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, the country is not doing well. Admitting this is not a bad thing; it is the right thing to do, because then we can at least deal with the problem.

I have three questions for the hon. member. The first is, would he admit that the country is not doing well? The second is, will he take responsibility for the last 10 years of damage? The third is with respect to the CUSMA negotiations. What is happening there?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member asked if I would say that the country is not doing well. No, I believe the country is doing well. I do not believe what the Conservatives say when they try to mislead people. They travel the country saying that Canada is broken. Canada is not broken; it is a very healthy nation with great opportunities and capabilities.

I am not looking at the glass as being half empty; I am looking at it from the point of view that we have a government that is very proactive in promoting Canada, bringing in investments and allowing more exports to take place. We have a lot to be proud of as Canadians, and we should not be downgrading or downplaying our nation. Are there areas we can improve upon? Of course there are.

Do members remember the days of Stephen Harper? He was the most devastating prime minister when it came to the manufacturing industry in the province of Ontario.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member should look into it. The biggest devastation to ever take place in our manufacturing industry over the last number of generations was when Stephen Harper was the prime minister.

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I can be political too, but at the end of the day, when I look at Canada I see that it is a country we should all be very proud of—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I have to go to more questions.

The hon. member for Winnipeg West has the floor.

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman was denigrating the pipeline the Liberal government built to Vancouver.

I ask the hon. member this: When the Conservative Party was in government, how many pipelines did it get built?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it would have been better if the member had asked about the demand and the price points for our oil, which are greatest in Asia. That means we want a pipeline that goes to Asia, to tidewaters.

The answer to the member's question is “absolutely zero”; not one inch of pipeline, in over 10 years of governance, took oil directly to the west coast. All the Conservatives' pipeline activity went directly to the States, and now they are criticizing us because we ship all our oil there. Go figure.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Madam Speaker, first, I wish to inform the House that I am going to be splitting my time with my colleague and friend, the member from Repentigny.

Were it not for the calendar on the clerks' table, I would have thought that today was February 2, Groundhog Day. Why? Because today is a Conservative opposition day and, as they have done a hundred times before, they are proposing cutting environmental measures and providing more support for the oil and gas industry. Today, the Conservative Party is asking us to get rid of all environmental protection measures and to roll out the red carpet further for the oil and gas industry. However, there is a nice change with this motion, which is that they are making these traditional requests under the guise of sovereignty.

I would like to point out that members of the Pathways Alliance, which represents 80% of oil sands production, are mainly held by foreign interests. Canadian Natural Resources, Cenovus Energy, Imperial Oil and Suncor Energy are 73% foreign-owned and 60% American-owned, and yet the Conservatives are talking about Canadian sovereignty. ConocoPhillips Canada, the Canadian subsidiary of the American oil company, and MEG Energy, which was taken over by Cenovus Energy, are 85% foreign-owned. These businesses made record profits between 2021 and 2024, raking in \$131.6 billion. They paid \$79.7 billion in dividends, nearly three-quarters of which went to foreign shareholders, including 62% to American shareholders. That is what beautiful Canadian sovereignty looks like.

It would seem that trying to send more dividends to foreign interests is the Liberal and Conservative version of defending Canada's economic sovereignty. Federal politics looks like a cheerleading contest, with each party competing to win favour with this influential lobby.

Now, the Conservative Party is proposing getting rid of the industrial component of the carbon tax. However, the Liberal government has already eliminated the individual component of the carbon tax. Members will recall that up until March last year, the federal government had a carbon tax on fossil fuels in eight provinces that did not have their own carbon pricing system. Quebec and British Columbia were excluded because they had their respective provincial systems: the carbon exchange in Quebec and a provincial carbon tax in British Columbia.

Members will recall that 90% of the revenues collected through the federal carbon tax in the provinces were directly redistributed to residents in the form of quarterly rebates. The remaining 10% were invested in energy transition programs. The vast majority of households, or 8 out of 10 households received more through rebates than they paid in the carbon tax through the targeted redistribution that focused on individuals instead of businesses. However, all of that was abolished. As soon as he took office, the new Prime Minister signed an order setting the consumer carbon tax at \$0 per tonne. This measure came into force on April 1 last year before the tax was abolished through legislation.

Members will also recall that Ottawa decided to go ahead with one final rebate payment on April 22, which helped it at the ballot box. That decision cost the federal government \$3.7 billion. The rebate had always been paid in advance, in anticipation of household spending. It was not a reimbursement, meaning that the final round of cheques was intended to cover the period from April to June of last year, when the carbon tax for individuals no longer applied.

Obviously, Quebecers never received those cheques because Quebec has had its own carbon market since 2013. That did not stop Quebec taxpayers from having to pay for those federal cheques with their tax dollars during the election. The people of Quebec ended up paying for Canada's environmental recklessness. Quebec was penalized by Ottawa, by this government, for its efforts to fight climate change.

Members will recall that this injustice was condemned by the members of the Quebec National Assembly, including those of the Coalition Avenir Québec, the Quebec Liberal Party, Québec Solidaire and the Parti Québécois. Obviously, the Bloc Québécois supports Quebec and demands that Ottawa unconditionally pay Quebec compensation equivalent to the \$814 million paid by Quebecers for the \$3.7 billion in fake April 22 carbon tax rebate cheques that Quebecers were not entitled to get.

Unfortunately, the House approved that theft last spring, and I was deeply saddened to see that the Liberal and Conservative members from Quebec voted against the interests of the people they are supposed to represent. Here we see the party line and the pan-Canadian vision being put ahead of the interests of the people they are supposed to represent, at least for the two major parties.

At a time when the U.S. administration is sowing uncertainty by piling tariffs on our industries, it is important to strengthen our trade ties with reliable partners that provide a predictable environment.

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• (1115)

In this regard, Quebec, which accounts for one-third of trade between Canada and Europe, attracts close to 40% of European investment in Canada. Quebec therefore has an advantage. In a way, it is the bridge between North America and Europe. The Bloc Québécois hopes Quebec will double its trade with Europe, including the U.K., from \$42 billion to \$84 billion within five years.

This brings me to the carbon border adjustment mechanism. The European Union adopted legislation in 2023, Regulation 2023/956, establishing Europe's carbon border adjustment mechanism, or CBAM. In order to prevent carbon leakage and unfair competition from competitors located in places where it is free to pollute, Europe started to impose a tax adjustment on certain imported products from countries with no or low carbon pricing starting January 1, 2026. The U.K. adopted similar legislation in 2024, and it will come into force on January 1, 2027, which is next year.

Since the beginning of the year, when a product enters Europe, the European Union imposes an import tax equivalent to what the carbon pricing would have cost had it been manufactured in Europe. Initially, the tariff will only apply to certain categories of products, including aluminum, iron, steel, cement, fertilizer, hydrogen and electricity, and will be extended to other goods gradually. Although carbon adjustment is new, border tax adjustments are common and in line with trade rules. For example, the excise tax on tobacco or alcohol, which is charged when these products leave the factory when they are made in Canada, is imposed at the border when the goods are imported.

A number of countries have implemented measures to put a price on pollution. In 2023, the World Bank identified 73 carbon pricing mechanisms in 53 countries. That is 5 more than in 2022, 12 more than in 2021 and 69 more than 20 years ago. No country in the world has abolished carbon pricing, except Canada, which was the first to choose this path.

As mentioned earlier, federal carbon pricing does not apply in Quebec, which has its own cap-and-trade system. However, Quebec is not acting alone. Through the Western Climate Initiative, carbon credits are traded with companies in California and Washington State, two states whose combined GDP totals \$4.8 trillion, or two and a half times the GDP of Canada excluding Quebec, which is \$1.9 trillion. In the United States, there has never been carbon pricing at the federal level. It is the states that are taking action. In that respect, the election of the current U.S. President has not changed the situation.

Today, Canada finds itself swimming against the global tide, which puts Quebec at risk. In a world where pollution has a cost, Quebec enjoys a clear comparative advantage thanks to its abundant zero-emission energy production. As I mentioned, last spring the government abolished carbon pricing for individuals. Today, the Conservative Party is proposing to abolish it completely, including for polluting industries.

If Canada chooses to return to the 20th century and abolish or reduce carbon pricing for its industries, it will undermine Quebec's efforts to diversify its exports and intensify its trade with Europe. Since Quebec companies will be part of a country with no or low carbon pricing, their exports may be taxed. Consider our aluminum

smelters, which are taxed at 50% in the United States and are turning to Europe. What is being discussed here puts them at risk.

We know that the United Kingdom and the entire European Union have an exemption system. Exporters from countries that already have carbon pricing are not subject to tariffs. Otherwise, it is on a case-by-case basis. This undermines Quebec's comparative advantage. That is why the Bloc Québécois opposes any federal measure intended to counter the negative effects of the Trump administration that also undermines Quebec's efforts to diversify its export markets. That is why we oppose any reduction in industrial emissions pricing in Canada outside Quebec that undermines our comparative advantage.

• (1120)

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Madam Speaker, did I mention earlier that my ears were ringing?

Among other things, the opposition motion seeks to remove the federal ban on plastic manufacturing. There is that eternal fascination with oil again. However, Canada is internationally recognized for its commitment to fighting plastic pollution, and we are seeing that microplastics are now everywhere in our environment, even in the food we eat.

I would like to hear my hon. colleague's opinion on this part of the opposition motion. I want to know what he thinks.

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, obviously, that aspect is appalling and unacceptable. These are just more examples of backsliding in environmental action.

What I find even more appalling is the current government's backtracking on all the measures that Justin Trudeau's government had put in place over the past 10 years to protect the environment. Why is this government backtracking so much?

Also, why did my hon. colleague stand in this place and vote against compensating Quebecers for funding the carbon tax, that is, the cheque that went out to everyone else as an election gift? That was detrimental to Quebec's interests. Why did he do that?

• (1125)

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to build on what my colleague was saying.

His speech was quite clear and unequivocal. My colleague, our party and the government are denouncing the Conservative motion. However, what I find both fascinating and disappointing is seeing the Liberal members try to redeem themselves by denouncing this motion, even though they have been doing more or less the same thing since this government came to power last May.

I would like to hear what my colleague from Joliette thinks about this, since he has been watching how they operate for a long time now.

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Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, it is very disturbing indeed. What this shows is that we are in a petro-state. I spoke of a cheerleading competition. It offends me to hear talk of Canadian sovereignty when the oil sands industry is owned by foreign interests, most of them American. Are these really sovereignty-enhancing policies?

As for the environment, I would like to remind the House that the current member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie left the government. He still sits as a Liberal MP, but he left the government following its repeated backtracking on environmental measures. I would say it is six of one or half a dozen of the other. While the Liberals may not like to hear it, to support oil and gas industries and fight climate change is to walk a very fine line.

As I said in my speech, Canada is the only nation on the global stage that is backtracking on its commitments. It is shameful.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives are trying to raise the issue of affordability with this motion.

The Prime Minister, along with the Minister of Finance, made a wonderful announcement yesterday, introducing the grocery and essentials benefit for Canadians, which will take effect on July 1. This is an initiative that is ultimately going to see hundreds of dollars going into the pockets of Canadians to help them at a time when there is a great deal of concern around grocery prices.

Can the government anticipate that the Bloc will support that initiative?

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, this is the kind of measure that I feel is very effective in helping to combat poverty and address inflation among those who need it most. It is a very effective, direct measure that will truly help people. It proves that we are capable of agreeing with the government on some issues.

However, I am disappointed that the minority government is not seeking support from another party in the House to move all of its legislative measures forward, or at least pass them one at a time. That is the mandate the people of Canada and Quebec gave the government. They asked it to come to an agreement with another party to move its legislative measures forward.

It seems the government would rather poach Conservative Party members to buy or build a majority. In my opinion, this goes against the democratic opinion that was expressed in the last election. The Liberal leader should start talking to the leaders of other parties so that the government can govern as the people want it to.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be back in the House. Unfortunately, as my colleague said, today has a real Groundhog Day feel. Clearly, the true intention of this opposition day is to pad the already overflowing coffers of Canadian oil and gas companies. Are they actually Canadian? I will get to that.

The subject of the motion is something we have been talking about for ages. Essentially, it would grant oil and gas companies'

every wish by completely doing away with what little remains of the previous government's already inadequate measures to fight climate change. The truth is that the Liberal Prime Minister spent a year sabotaging his own political party's feeble environmental legacy, and now there are hardly any climate policies left. Basically, what we have here is an intention to fulfill oil and gas companies' every last wish.

We all remember that things got off to a Trump-style start. When the Prime Minister took office, his first order was to abolish carbon pricing for individuals, which is completely contrary to the Paris Agreement. Like Mr. Trump, the government is turning its back on the Paris Agreement. After that, everything fell apart as the federal government scrapped one after another of the country's climate policies.

The Conservatives were actually dismayed when the Liberal Prime Minister's platform in the last election mirrored their own playbook: slashing carbon pricing on polluters, including major polluters such as big Canadian oil and gas companies.

The irony is that over 60% of Canadian oil and gas companies' assets are held by U.S. investors. What the Conservatives are proposing, and what the Liberals are doing, is to claim to be fighting against U.S. economic imperialism while actually rolling out the carpet for Mr. Trump's billionaire friends and goosing the profits of these largely foreign-owned companies. For them, Canadian sovereignty means making it easier to transfer money from Canada and Quebec to the U.S. to boost companies' already excessive profits. Now the Conservatives are calling for the repeal of federal measures that they say are blocking or penalizing development in Canada. Members should know that development has been picking up speed since the Liberals came to power.

Let us take a closer look at what our Conservative friends are proposing. They are calling for the Impact Assessment Act to be repealed. I do not think our colleagues have been paying close attention to what has happened since the current government came to power. The government has passed Bill C-5, which allows it to suspend at least 10 acts and seven regulations, including some environmental ones, which means it can circumvent environmental assessments. There is no need to even repeal the Impact Assessment Act, since it has already been partially done. The government gave itself the power to do that.

Let us take a look at Bill C-15, the budget implementation act. It allows any minister to suspend any legislation under the guise of innovation. This has already been done. What the Conservatives are asking for has already been done by the governing Liberal Party, for the benefit of oil and gas companies, as I said, to expedite approvals for this industry's projects.

Business of Supply

The other demand in the Conservative motion is to repeal the west coast Oil Tanker Moratorium Act. I could talk about how appalling it is to call for a moratorium to be repealed in order to allow oil tankers to pass through a marine conservation area. Obviously, that would be environmentally risky, but it is also a complete violation of the rights of the first nations that have called for the moratorium to be upheld, because they do not want oil tankers on their territory. However, the federal government has already committed to building an oil sands pipeline that could carry a million barrels a day to the west coast for export, and the pipeline would pass through this area. Evidently, the government is already willing to do what the Conservatives are demanding. Bill C-5 is there to make it easier.

The Conservatives are also calling on the government to do away with the federal industrial carbon tax. I am pleased to tell them that the federal government is already working on that. Alberta backed down and has not raised the carbon price for its companies. The offset price is currently \$25 per tonne in Alberta, whereas the carbon price in Canada is supposed to be \$95. The federal government is letting Alberta do whatever it wants and is not forcing the province to raise its price on carbon. What is more, we know full well that the MOU between Alberta and Canada will weaken industrial carbon pricing policies, so once again, that wish has already come true.

● (1130)

Our Conservative friends are calling on the government to do away with the cap on oil and gas companies' polluting greenhouse gas emissions, but the government has already promised to do so under the Canada-Alberta MOU. That wish has already been granted. Is it a responsible thing to do? Does it make sense? From a climate perspective, it does not make any sense to impose zero constraints on the biggest polluters in the country, on the sector that is the largest polluter in the country, such as the oil sands, which emit as much greenhouse gas emissions as all of Quebec. The government repealed those regulations, but the Conservatives have obviously not realized it yet, because they are asking again for it to be repealed.

They are also calling on the government to remove the federal EV sales quota. The federal government suspended that EV sales quota just last fall. It is no longer forcing Canadian manufacturers to offer the public EVs or to offer a bigger supply of more affordable vehicles that would free them from the need to use gas. It has already suspended this quota, with no indication as to when it will be reinstated. We do not know for sure, but we strongly suspect that it could be significantly watered down, because Ontario is unequivocally demanding an end to measures like this. Western Canada's oil companies are calling on the government to drop such measures. As we have seen, the federal government has even abandoned the EV buyer incentives.

The government is already on track to fulfill the oil and gas companies' entire wish list, but my Conservative colleagues have failed to realize that almost all the climate architecture and measures put in place by the government have been dismantled since the Prime Minister took office. Of course, I will not even mention the fact that Canada is still not allowed to import European electric vehicles under the pretext of safety. This puts these far less expensive and

more technologically advanced vehicles out of reach, and it enables the government to shield Canadian manufacturers, which rank among the worst in the world when it comes to electrification and which are slowing the adoption of electric vehicles across this country.

My Conservative colleagues are also calling for the federal plastics ban to be lifted. Of course, 99% of plastic is produced from oil and gas. This is a potential market for oil and gas companies. It is easy to see why our Conservative colleagues are pushing for plastic production bans to be lifted, even though the world is heading in that direction and even though the international community is working toward a global agreement to get rid of plastic. Plastic poses serious risks to human health and the environment, and it is one of the world's fastest-growing sources of greenhouse gas pollution. Plastics are what oil and gas companies are counting on to keep making profits.

Well, I am pleased to inform my Conservative colleagues that the government is already backtracking on this. Canada was supposed to implement an international export ban on single-use plastics in December, but the government backtracked in the fall. Once again, the government is granting oil and gas companies' wishes before my Conservative colleagues even realize that it is doing exactly what those companies want.

The other thing my Conservative colleagues want is the removal of federal regulatory restrictions that impede communication and advocacy by Canadian companies. Basically, they want to eliminate rules that prohibit greenwashing by oil and gas companies. Once again, I am pleased to inform my Conservative colleagues that, in the latest budget, the government made it clear that it intends to soften anti-greenwashing laws, even though those laws protect consumers and ensure that they get the truth about how oil and gas companies are performing. Everyone knows they are among the world's worst offenders when it comes to telling the truth.

Unfortunately, this day is completely pointless. This is, yet again, what oil and gas companies want. They have gotten almost everything they want. When are we going to talk about real solutions to get off fossil fuels, which cause climate change, underwrite war, destabilize Quebec's economy, drain our wallets and escalate extreme weather events that are extremely costly to Quebecers, their health and their economy?

● (1135)

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the recent agreement reached with the Chinese government to allow 49,000 electric vehicles to enter the Canadian market.

Does he think that is a good idea? Does he think Canada will be able to derive economic and environmental benefits from that agreement?

Business of Supply

Patrick Bonin: Madam Speaker, it is important to understand that any discussion about bringing Chinese electric vehicles into Canada is really about distracting from the fact that Canada is backsliding when it comes to vehicle regulations and incentives for purchasing electric vehicles. The government no longer wants to force Canadian manufacturers to produce more EVs.

When it comes to Chinese electric vehicles, it is important to understand that the technology is much more advanced, that Canada is lagging behind, that Canadian manufacturers are lagging behind and that 50% of all new vehicles sold in China are electric. Still, we believe that bringing in these vehicles without considering the risks associated with espionage, the fact that China is engaging in foreign interference, the fact that China uses forced child labour and a type of modern slavery and that China does not respect human rights means that Canada is signing an agreement without taking any action against forced labour, for example, as the Bloc Québécois had proposed in a bill. It is important to be careful about that.

We have to wonder why the government did not act first by allowing European EVs into North America. These vehicles are less expensive and more technologically advanced than those of Canadian manufacturers. This would also help lower the cost for consumers who are interested in these vehicles. However, the federal government is not allowing them to enter the country. That is the real scandal, and it is yet another major setback from a climate perspective that has a huge impact on the economy and on consumers' wallets.

• (1140)

[*English*]

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, would my hon. colleague not recognize that his rhetoric in the last speech is maybe a little antiquated, as the world is moving away from the concerns around climate change and is more concerned about human poverty and human suffering? Even Bill Gates has moved away from this. I am just wondering if he recognizes that.

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin: Madam Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, we believe that it is possible to grow the economy, improve people's quality of life and fight climate change.

What they want is to get rid of all climate measures. This attitude is completely irresponsible and worthy of the biggest climate deniers, given that we know full well that climate change still exists.

Instead of saying that we need to scrap all environmental protections, what I want to hear them say is what we could do to break free from oil and gas and improve the financial situation of Quebecers, who spend more than \$10 billion a year on oil and gas that needs to be imported. Instead of doing that, we could be electrifying our transportation, sending the money to Hydro-Québec and generating profits that could be invested in health care, education, roads and improved public transit, for example. There are plenty of solutions out there, but the Conservatives would rather turn a blind eye.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Madam Speaker, first, I would like to congratulate my colleague and friend for his incredible demonstration of how the Liberal Party's backtracking on environmental measures shows that we have two parties that are two sides of the same coin. Almost everything that today's motion calls for has already been done by the current Liberal government or is in the process of being done.

I would like to ask my colleague a question about the fact that the World Bank has identified 73 carbon pricing mechanisms in 53 countries. To my knowledge, no country has backtracked on these mechanisms except Canada, under the current government.

What message does this send to the international community about the effort it takes to care for the planet?

Patrick Bonin: Madam Speaker, I think that the message is very clear, from both the Conservatives and the Liberals: They want to impose as few regulations and constraints as possible on oil and gas companies. They want to increase oil and gas production, and they want more new pipelines.

The idea of abolishing or weakening industrial carbon pricing would be a major setback. It flies in the face of what we should be doing and what economists are telling us. If the big polluters are not going to pay for pollution-related impacts, then the cost will be passed on to consumers, to Canadians and to Quebecers. That is what they really want: the oil and gas companies spending less and the public spending more.

[*English*]

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga.

In the coming months, the world will be watching a mission to space called Artemis II, the first crewed flight of NASA's Artemis program, that will fly around the moon. It is an incredible time to be alive, that we can witness this iconic moment of human innovation in real time. For Canada, this is not just another launch. It is a national moment. For the first time, a Canadian astronaut, Jeremy Hansen, will fly as part of the crew. Canadian space robotics will be part of this visionary pursuit, and Canada's role will, once again, prove something we already know: When this country sets a clear objective and aligns its talent, capital, innovation and institutions behind it, we can compete with anyone.

We have done this before. Canada became, in fact, the third spacefaring nation in world history in 1962 with the Alouette-1. We became a world leader in space robotics with the Canadarm in the 1980s, so trusted that this innovation in robotics became indispensable to our allies. Today, through our contributions to the Artemis program, particularly Canadarm3 for the lunar Gateway, Canada has secured astronaut flights and meaningful roles in the next era of space exploration.

Business of Supply

Let me say this clearly at the outset of this debate today on our important opposition motion on sovereignty, and economic sovereignty therein. Canada can build, we can invest, and we can lead. However, there is a hard truth in this. Too often, we are not translating our capability into lasting national strength. That is why I want to focus my remarks today on a critical part of our motion: protecting Canadian innovation and requiring the Minister of Industry to present plans to Parliament to keep Canada's inventions, discoveries and innovations from being sold off to other countries.

Right now, Canada is not building enough national champions. We are too often building sales listings, for example, that other countries come and take their pick of. Canadian taxpayers fund the research that trains the talent and creates highly valuable ideas and inventions. In other words, that is Canada's intellectual property. At the most important stage, when firms need to scale, when they should be growing into companies with hundreds, if not thousands, of employees with good-paying jobs, Canada's business environment too often nudges them toward selling, relocating or being absorbed by larger foreign competitors. We fund the discovery here, but the long-term prosperity goes elsewhere. Time and time again, this is happening. This is not an accident. It is a predictable outcome of a policy environment that is fragmented, slow and largely indifferent to the results that it funds.

The Business Council of Alberta has noted the problem with high taxes on capital combined with regulatory friction. We hear this all the time from our business leaders: High taxes and high regulation are the biggest problem in Canada. They reduce incentives for firms to reinvest and grow domestically here at home. For many Canadian start-ups, the problem is not that they want to leave Canada, but the gravitational pull of a faster, larger American economy, one that actively attracts talent, capital, and intellectual property and jobs, is just too inviting. With government inertia in this country, it is just too tempting to go down there, where it is more rewarding in many ways.

Keeping innovation in Canada is not just an academic exercise for discussion. Our Canadian innovation is our economic power. It determines whether Canadians earn high wages. It determines whether our communities grow or are hollowed out, and whether this country controls the industries that underpin its security and prosperity.

When we talk about sovereignty in 2026, it is not just about our borders or our territory. Innovation sovereignty comes down to three things: who owns the patents, who controls the data and who builds the capabilities here at home. Whoever owns those things owns the future tax base, owns the high-skilled jobs and leverages that in our trade negotiations, for example. That all goes together. Without sovereignty and innovation, we cannot be sovereign in our economy.

I have spent the last eight months as Canada's industry critic meeting innovators across this country: builders in aerospace, advanced manufacturing, AI, robotics, defence and advancing technologies. Their message is remarkably consistent regarding the problems that Canada is facing. They want to scale in Canada, and they want to hire more Canadian workers, but our system is working against them.

In fact, Canada has well over 100 federal innovation programs spread across various departments and agencies. Of course, each was created with good intentions by some minister, but together they form a system that is busy without being very strategic. They are not aligned. They seem very generous, but in fact, they are not disciplined at all toward a strategic goal. Governments measure success by announcements and spending, by how many press releases they do, not by whether Canadians can pay their bills, afford their mortgages or have confidence that their children will have more opportunities and a better life than they do.

The link between innovation policy and everyday life is, of course, productivity, which we hear a lot about these days from economists. The Bank of Canada, for example, has been clear that Canada's productivity problem has reached emergency levels. Governor Tiff Macklem warned that unless we change course, Canada's standard of living will be lower than it otherwise would have been. We will be poorer if we do not change course, which is a pretty drastic message from the Bank of Canada governor.

● (1145)

The deputy governor, Nicolas Vincent, reminded us that Canada's affordability problem is fundamentally a productivity problem, because the only sustainable way to raise incomes in this country is to raise our productivity. However, productivity is not about working harder, which I think is what a lot of people think when they hear that word. It is in fact about whether workers have the capital and the advanced technologies to produce more and work less to create more value more easily.

Right now Canada's productivity is trailing that of the U.S. by 30%, and the gap is widening. Canadians can work just as hard and be just as educated, and still fall behind because our system does not support investment and scale, and that is where innovation policy becomes central. It is not because Canada is lacking ideas; we have so many ideas and much talent, but we are lacking focus and ownership over those ideas, especially in the long term.

Governments announce many programs, launch consultations and publish frameworks, but our outcomes have not improved. For example, Canada ranks last in the G7 for turning innovation inputs into economic outputs. More than half of industry-directed intellectual property generated at Canadian universities is owned abroad, for example, which is pretty shocking. Once intellectual property leaves, it rarely comes back, which means other countries are being enriched by our talented idea creators.

Business of Supply

This problem is especially clear in strategic industries like space and aerospace. These are not “nice to have” science projects; they are critical in the domestic and international terrain that we are seeing changing at a geopolitical level today. They underpin communications, navigation, wildfire monitoring, Arctic domain awareness, disaster response and national defence, and they are central to NORAD modernization and allied security. If Canada cannot build, own and control these capabilities, we become dependent on other countries for functions essential to our sovereignty, which is something Canadians have become acutely aware of in recent months. That is why space, for example, is a powerful indicator of what Canada must and can in fact do better.

As shadow minister for industry, I have seen these capabilities first-hand. I have toured Magellan Aerospace in Winnipeg, where skilled Manitobans build critical components for the world's best fighter jet, the F-35. Here in Ottawa I visited Mission Control, a Canadian company developing lunar rover capability. It is quite amazing. These are the kinds of innovations that strengthen Arctic research and security, and they secure maritime safety and really the role of Canada in the emerging space domain, which is critical for our national security. We have the talent, we have the capability and we have the ambition, but what is missing is a federal innovative program and framework that really treats sovereignty as the objective, not an afterthought.

This brings me to part c of our Conservative motion today. It would require the Minister of Industry to present plans to Parliament to keep Canadian innovation in Canadians' hands, which is really not a radical concept. In fact, I would argue it is the responsible thing that the Liberals should be doing right now. It asks essential questions: What technologies must we be controlling? What supply chains must be anchored here? What capabilities are critical to economic resilience and national security? Importantly, how do we keep these innovations here in Canada now and in the long term? Without any answers, innovation from the government becomes a scattershot plan such that we are working harder but not together.

The motion also recognizes that innovation cannot scale without capital: without more money, so to speak. That is why part b proposes a Canada first reinvestment tax credit, which would defer capital gains when the money is reinvested in Canadian businesses and productive assets. If capital stays in Canada, innovation has a better chance to scale here rather than leave to the U.S., and it creates more good jobs, higher wages and more opportunities for our kids. This matters, because investment per worker right now in Canada is half that of the United States. William Robson of the C.D. Howe Institute told the industry committee that U.S. firms invest roughly three times as much per worker. This needs to change if we are going to secure our economic sovereignty.

To be clear, the tax measure must support a larger strategy. Tax policy alone cannot fix a system that lacks focus. The central point of the motion is that Canada needs an economic sovereignty strategy that prioritizes keeping Canadian innovation in this country. We cannot keep funding innovation and exporting our values.

When Artemis II launches, Canadians, especially young Canadians, will be watching and inspired. These are the future innovators of our country. We need to make sure that they can produce amaz-

ing jobs and innovation for today and into the future, and our motion is a central part of making that happen.

• (1150)

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in the 2021 election, the then leader of the opposition ran under a platform that said, “We’ll finalize and improve the Clean Fuel Regulations to reduce carbon emissions from every litre of gasoline (and other liquid fuels) we burn.... This will generate emissions reductions at lower cost, and protect Canadian jobs”.

Since the finalization of these regulations in 2022, they have driven billions of dollars of investments and created thousands of jobs across Canada. Where did the member of Parliament, who supported these regulations and Canadian farmers, go, and what have they done with them?

Raquel Dancho: Madam Speaker, I am a bit perplexed by the question. The member is talking about something that came out five years ago in a platform, under much different circumstances than today. I find it interesting that she is not interested in talking about Canadian innovation and how to safeguard jobs today and into the future and that she is not asking about what the Conservative ideas are; there are many more than the ones I have talked about, which would support the government's efforts, really improve them and deliver actual results to secure Canada's future.

It is just interesting that the member is looking back several leaders ago and several elections ago, five years ago in fact. I find it perplexing that she has nothing to say about improving Canada's jobs, wages and innovation today.

• (1155)

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the polluter pays principle, which requires polluters, particularly oil companies, to bear the costs associated with managing the effects of the increase in greenhouse gases they produce.

As we said earlier, these companies rake in over \$130 billion in profits, 60% of which goes to the U.S. Instead of helping to ensure that these companies pay for all of the environmental disasters we are seeing, which cost taxpayers huge amounts of money, the Conservatives would rather help these companies lower their costs by doing away with the industrial carbon tax, for example. This tax enables the government get back a bit of money that it can use to cover some of the costs of climate change. In short, the Conservatives are supporting the revenues of these companies, which privatize their profits, while leaving the public to deal with the consequences. It is up to taxpayers, the public, to pay for the negative effects caused by these companies.

Business of Supply

[English]

Raquel Dancho: Madam Speaker, we hear some of these questions, and frankly I have been hearing them for years: “Make polluters pay.” It is veiled language for making families pay more for food, transportation and home heating. That is what people need to understand. When folks in this place talk about making polluters pay, they are talking about us and about our constituents. They are talking about the seniors who are struggling to afford food, because our main fuel, oil and gas, is what heats most of our homes in Canada. It is what the farmers use to produce food. It is what the truckers use to ship the food to the manufacturing facility. It is the fuel the manufacturing facility uses to make goods that we buy at the grocery store. It is the fuel that fuels the grocery store to keep it heated and cooled.

The main source of our energy, the pollution that they are talking about, is the reason that we can heat our homes and eat the good food that we have. I encourage people not to be fooled when they say, “Make polluters pay.” They are talking about everyday families' paying more for transportation, heating and food.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate being in the chamber to hear the speech from the hon. member from Manitoba. She has done an excellent job at the industry committee.

In her speech, the member touched upon the need to have more Canadian innovation, particularly Canadian patents that are held in Canada. I know of several entrepreneurs who have told me that it can be years for the patents office, which has one job, to approve patents that can be used here in Canada. Entrepreneurs said that many of them will go to the United States instead, not because they do not want to have the IP here in Canada but because they get protections immediately because the United States has a faster process.

Does the member believe that the minister responsible should make this her job, in order to fix that one job the patent office has, which is to approve patents that are worthy?

Raquel Dancho: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's feedback and his question. It is very critical when we are talking about innovation policy and keeping our ideas, which the taxpayer often funds to the tune of up to \$15 billion in this country. We are funding innovation through our SR&ED tax credit and through university funding, yet over half of university funding for innovation goes to enrich American and other countries' economies.

When we talk about patents, Canada has in fact some of the slowest patent approval times in the western world, and there has really been no progress on this from the Liberal government in the last decade. Therefore, if we are going to improve safeguarding of our own innovations, it starts with investing in improving our patent speeds. We have to safeguard these if we are going to have an innovative future in Canada.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise today to speak to our opposition day motion on the reintroduction of a Canadian sovereignty act.

Before I get to the act, I would like to talk about the change in the political landscape between its first introduction and today.

Canada is at a precipice. We are facing a very real economic threat. The proposed Canadian sovereignty act is a strong step in the right direction. It would remove barriers and red tape that have held Canada back. It calls on the Prime Minister to promote investments by removing capital gains tax on reinvestments in Canada, entice provincial governments to open their markets up, build pipelines, improve access to the Ring of Fire in northern Ontario and start at least one new Greenfield LNG project.

Numerous ministers have stood up in this place signalling their willingness to work with the opposition. It is time to make good on that promise, and it needs to happen as soon as possible because Canadian industry and jobs are suffering. For nearly a year, Canada has been at the receiving end of unprovoked and unjustifiable tariffs. The rationale behind why Washington decided to implement these taxes can be debated ad nauseam, but functionally, the answer to that question is irrelevant. The decisions of the President are out of our hands, but how we as elected representatives, and more importantly, Canadians as a society, respond is not.

There are two pieces of advice that should be obvious to anyone looking in from the outside of the negotiations that even the most casual of observers will conclude. First, we are stronger together than we are apart. That applies to the negotiating table just as much as it does to the floor of the House of Commons. Second, patience is wearing thin. Offering at least some form of openness and transparency to stakeholders, opposition parties and, more importantly, the families and business owners suffering under these tariffs would go an extremely long way in dispersing the fog and noise surrounding the negotiations.

Before going any further, I need to reiterate that the tariffs the President of the United States has implemented are unjustified, unfair, unprovoked and, most importantly, unnecessary. They are causing untold levels of harm in strategic sectors on both sides of the border. They are shuttering plants and foundries. Their immediate effects on the Canadian economy are paralyzing.

The response of Canadian workers and voters is predictable and more than understandable. Canada is responding. The government is making efforts, as is the opposition. We are doing that through our proposed Canadian sovereignty act, which would allow Canada to build more, extract more, import more and, most importantly, to thrive more.

Canada's Conservatives, despite the claims of certain members on the other side, have shown a willingness to work with the government when the government proposes sensible, results-oriented policies like Bill C-5. A Canadian sovereignty act would build on that economic stewardship by giving the government the tools to help spur on private sector development across the nation by removing the regulatory shackles the Prime Minister's predecessor bound the government with.

Business of Supply

The legacy of the unfair, unjust Trump tariffs will be an extremely painful but valuable lesson for Canadian policy-makers. The importance of diversification and self-reliance is an increasingly unstable global threat environment.

While the outlook is bleak, there has been a noticeable shift in at least the rhetoric coming from the other side of the House since the previous election. For a decade we had a government that was staunchly anti-pipeline. Any resource development project posed an immediate and direct existential threat to the planet. Defence spending was seen as unnecessary and abrasive, ironically enough because our geography and proximity to the United States meant we did not have a need for an efficient independent military. Multi-lateral dialogue with despots in Iran and China were the approach of the world's most recent postnational state.

Despite having largely the same caucus and much of the same cabinet, the Prime Minister, who campaigned on acting as a foil to what he calls “unstable and unpredictable” actors, has committed verbally to adopting some of the positions we have championed, at least in principle.

The government worked with the Conservative opposition to pass Bill C-5, which gives the government the capacity to fast-track natural resource projects in the national interest. The government, after a decade of pressure, finally agreed to the Conservative-led push to increase defence spending and increase border security, coupled with reduced immigration targets. In my mind, this sizable shift in direction from the government, its cabinet and caucus can be explained by only one thing: U.S. tariffs.

● (1200)

Having campaigned myself on many of these issues, I will not fault the Prime Minister for coming to his senses, even if it took crippling tariffs from a foreign government to prompt a moment of clarity that I highly doubt his predecessor was ever willing to entertain. Once again, I would like to reiterate that these tariffs on Canadian goods and services are unjustified, unfair, unprovoked and unnecessary, but they have forced Canada to make difficult decisions that it should have made a decade ago. I applaud the government for making those select few difficult decisions in principle, which have caused a rupture in his caucus that we are seeing play out in real time.

The Prime Minister's speech at Davos was well written, trading in Ted and Samantha on main street with Thucydides and President Havel. However, writing a speech and delivering a speech are the easy parts. What is difficult is actually delivering on those promises.

To that end, to achieve that goal of diversifying trade and kick-starting our domestic supply chains and building independence and economic sovereignty here at home, the Conservatives have introduced a Canadian sovereignty act. It calls for a battery of changes to the Liberal government's decade of stifling economic growth by repealing unnecessary regulatory and statutory caps like the oil and gas cap, the industrial carbon tax, the EV mandate, the plastic bans, Bill C-69 and Bill C-48. It calls for serious investment in our natural resource sectors by fast-tracking projects that create Canadian goods with Canadian resources by Canadian companies creating Canadian jobs.

The Prime Minister would do well to follow in the footsteps of his former boss and continue the generational trade diversification carried out by former prime minister Stephen Harper. His prowess serves as an excellent blueprint to follow as he and his cabinet navigate the treacherous waters of international trade and relations in 2026. The best time to continue diversification was a decade ago. The second best time to diversify is now.

Canada, Canadians and especially policy-makers need to remember that the relationship between Canada and the United States will go past the President and the Prime Minister. The current occupants of 24 Sussex and 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue are minor actors in a much larger, deeper and historic relationship. We need to remember that. Trade is not finite. We can and should aim not only to increase trade with our European and Asian allies but also to seek new emerging markets in Africa and on the subcontinent, and most importantly to repair, renew and reinvigorate our trade relationship with the United States.

During his lauded Davos speech, the Prime Minister glibly dismissed “this aphorism of Thucydides” on the international order by simply countering the Greek historian's observations with a powerful and deeply insightful quote. It will not. The Prime Minister assured us that his dealings with petro-dictators and autocrats in Qatar and China instead of like-minded democracies is not naive multilateralism. I will leave Parliament with this quote from that same Greek polymath:

...and their judgment was based more upon blind wishing than upon any sound prediction; for it is a habit of mankind to entrust to careless hope what they long for, and to use sovereign reason to thrust aside what they do not desire.

● (1205)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to give my hon. colleague some good news. Some of the things she talked about, in terms of driving the economy forward, actually reside in Bill C-15, which is still before Parliament. I would encourage the member and her Conservative colleagues to work collectively with the government to advance those measures.

The question I have for the hon. member is this: She represents a rural riding. She has a lot of farmers in her riding. She talked quite negatively about the engagement of the trade arrangement that the government has established with China, which is removing tariffs from five billion dollars' worth of exports that are being tariffed right now. That matters for the prairie provinces; that matters in Atlantic Canada on seafood. We do not disagree that, of course, the United States will remain an important trading partner, but this government is looking to diversify.

Business of Supply

Does she really believe from her position in the Conservative Party that we should not have done this for Canadian farmers, that we should not have opened up markets with the second-largest economy in the world? Is that her position?

Shelby Kramp-Neuman: Mr. Speaker, the government has had 10 years. This is too little too late. It is pitting province against province and sector against sector. With all due respect, it has been a year. If we want to talk numbers, the current deficit has doubled and food inflation is the worst in the G7. If we want to talk crime, Liberal bail continues to release violent repeat offenders. No pipelines have been approved. New and increasing tariffs are shutting down mills, factories and businesses across the country.

If the member thinks I am talking negatively, it is because we have a really dire situation here in Canada, and something needs to be done about it.

• (1210)

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on something in the Conservative motion.

The motion talks about providing free trade bonuses to remove internal trade barriers, but what are these barriers if not each province's respective language laws, environmental laws, public rules, workforce training and labour standards?

This is basically a direct attack on the sovereignty of the provinces, which are supposed to be sovereign in their areas of jurisdiction.

[English]

Shelby Kramp-Neuman: Mr. Speaker, I mean no disrespect, but we are talking about the opposition day motion for a Canadian sovereignty act. This would touch energy, the economy and the environment. The bottom line is that we need to cut taxes, unlock investment and let builders build.

Canadians have no appetite for partisanship and throwing stones both ways. We need to get rid of the politics and partisanship. We need pragmatic plans that restore and support economic sovereignty here in Canada.

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have said this is the time for diversification. I hate, as much as anybody, the “I told you so” phrases, but I remember back in 2007 when Stephen Harper said we needed to diversify our markets. He then became prime minister and signed 43 free trade agreements around the world, built pipelines and pursued pipeline projects to both the west and east coasts. The time for diversification was decades ago.

I am wondering if my hon. colleague has some comments about that.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman: Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize that Canada and the U.S. still have the largest bilateral trade relationship in the world. We have been diversifying with other nations for many years, long before the current government came into play. Diversification does not need to be an either-or. We do not need to stop international trade with the U.S. We need to restore and rein-

vigorate that relationship while, at the same time, fostering the new and current trade relationships we have with other countries.

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Burlington North—Milton West.

Hello. *Tansi. Aaniin. Boozhoo. Kwe kwe. Ullukkut.*

The Conservatives propose a Canada sovereignty act, which calls for a sweeping repeal of federal measures, including the Impact Assessment Act, the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act, carbon pricing for industry, the oil and gas emissions cap and other regulations, all in the name of economic sovereignty.

Canadians want a strong economy. Northerners want jobs, infrastructure and opportunity. Indigenous peoples want development that advances self-determination and long-term prosperity. However, sovereignty in Canada is not built by erasing obligations; it is built by honouring them.

Section 35 of the Constitution Act is not a talking point; it is a binding law. Any approach to development that treats indigenous rights as obstacles to be swept aside is not sovereignty. It is a step backwards to decisions made far away and consequences carried for generations. Any repeal of law that affects indigenous lands, waters and rights must be done in full partnership with indigenous peoples, consistent with section 35, the duty to consult and Canada's commitment under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This motion is striking not only for what it proposes to repeal, but for what it refuses to answer. There is no clarity on how indigenous consent fits into the plan, and it raises a serious question. If key frameworks are stripped away, how do we avoid weakening consultation in practice, and how do we prevent years of uncertainty and litigation? There is also no clarity on whether or how the Conservatives believe Canada will continue to honour UNDRIP, which Parliament has affirmed in law and set a framework to advance at the federal level.

Here are the questions that northern and indigenous communities deserve answered: Where does indigenous consent sit in the Conservative plan? From the text of the motion, it appears as if that consent has not been considered. Does UNDRIP still apply, even when it is inconvenient?

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This proposal is highly relevant to northern and Arctic affairs, because it would fundamentally reshape the way resources develop and environmental protections and economic policy operate in indigenous and northern territories. It would change how decisions are made, whose voices count and whether treaty-based government is treated as a foundation or as an afterthought.

The north and Arctic are not theoretical. I represent Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, home to first nations, Inuit and Métis communities who live every day with the consequences of decisions that are made in the House. When we talk about economic sovereignty, I ask colleagues to pause and truly listen. In the north, sovereignty is not a slogan. It is indigenous nations deciding what happens on their lands. It is protecting waters that sustain food security. It is development done with communities and not to them. That is why blanket repeal is so dangerous.

In northern regions, modern treaties and land claim agreements are not optional. They are constitutionally protected. They establish co-management systems and review processes that reflect indigenous jurisdiction and northern realities. Sweeping those aside without co-development would undermine stability, and it would invite the very outcome Canadians say they want to avoid, which is conflict, court challenges and delay.

We also need to speak plainly about environmental stewardship. The Arctic is warming faster than the global average. Permafrost thaw, coastal erosion and changing ice conditions are already putting northern homes, roads and community infrastructure at risk. This is not ideology. It is reality happening in real time. This reality is what northerners see first-hand each and every day. Climate change has significant impacts on the daily lives of northerners, from being able to access seasonal food to wildfires, traditional hunting practices and food sources. Any plan that weakens environmental protection without a credible replacement does not make Canada stronger. It makes northern communities more vulnerable.

● (1215)

I want to acknowledge something important. Many indigenous governments and northern leaders want approvals to move faster. They want projects that bring revenue, training and good jobs. They want fewer redundant steps and clearer timelines. That is a legitimate conversation. At the same time, however, many indigenous leaders and rights holders have been clear. Repealing assessment rules without a credible replacement risks weakening rights, consultation and public confidence. Support exists where policies strengthen indigenous economic sovereignty and reduce one-size-fits-all approaches. Opposition centres on any framework that prioritizes speed over consultation, indigenous decision-making, environmental stewardship and UNDRIP commitments.

The choice is not development or rights. The choice is good development versus bad development. Indigenous leaders are not asking for their rights to be bypassed. They are asking for indigenous-led development, where decision-making, benefits and stewardship are shared and where consent is built from the start. That is the approach our government supports: getting to yes faster by building it right, with indigenous partners, with treaty-based governance, with strong environmental safeguards and with credible rules that stand up in court and stand up in communities.

Communities know what they need better than anyone sitting in this House. If the opposition wants a serious debate about streamlining approvals and strengthening Canada's economic resilience, we will have that debate, but a motion that demands sweeping repeal while sidestepping section 35, modern treaties and UNDRIP obligations is not a plan for prosperity. It is a plan for instability.

In closing, I will say plainly that sweeping calls to repeal laws without understanding northern realities risk repeating old mistakes, projects that moved fast and communities that paid the price. In the north, we do not have the luxury of political theatre. We build with care because we live with the consequences. Prosperity and reconciliation are not competing goals. They are inseparable and must be treated that way. Canada's strength will never come from weakening rights. It will come from honouring them and building together.

● (1220)

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the speech, and I think the member is making a false dichotomy. I think we can streamline the effectiveness of a lot of these approval processes while maintaining the constitutional rights of Canadians.

Would the member not agree that she is perhaps making a straw man in this argument?

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand: Mr. Speaker, when we look at the reality in northern Canada, specifically Nunavut, the Nunavut agreement clearly states that it is a tripartite agreement between the federal government, the Government of Nunavut and NTI. We cannot change those processes. The Nunavut agreement clearly outlines the steps that have to be taken, in sequence, to move projects along, whether for resources or land. We cannot change that. We have to abide by it.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am intrigued that the Conservatives are portraying their motion and the course that they want to take today as a vision for a Canadian sovereignty act.

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Personally, I have always believed that sovereignty means passing laws, collecting taxes, and signing treaties with other nations. However, when we look at what the Conservatives are actually proposing in their motion, which indirectly lays out their definition of sovereignty, all that we really see is the elimination of environmental measures and the introduction of measures that promote oil and gas development.

This raises a question in my mind that I would like to ask my colleague. As the Conservatives see it, does sovereignty not necessarily mean Canadian sovereignty, or are they confused about the difference between sovereignty and oil? Is some education needed?

[English]

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, there are already established regulatory requirements, which include environmental assessments. These are things we cannot override. It is really important that we understand the jurisdiction of the north, where 80% of the land mass is covered by modern treaties or settlement agreements. Those rules around regulations and environmental assessments are baked in. We want to make sure we are always honouring those processes.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the efforts that my good friend has made in Manitoba, in particular with the whole concept of the Churchill port. Recently, we were at a press conference at the Manitoba legislature where we saw three important entities coming together to advance the interest of the Port of Churchill, which has a profound, positive impact on all of Canada.

Could the member provide her thoughts on the Port of Churchill and explain, from her perspective, why that is such an important project?

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand: Mr. Speaker, yes, the Port of Churchill in northern Manitoba is a huge opportunity for Manitoba and Canada to support our efforts to diversify our economy, but also to support national security. Churchill was previously a military site, so there is already established infrastructure there. We know it as the gateway to the north. Last week, there was an MOU signed between AGG, which is the Arctic Gateway Group, the Winnipeg Airports Authority and CentrePort Canada to create the type of ecosystem that is needed to support this very critical infrastructure.

We will see land, air, road and rail come together like never before to ensure that we are utilizing the infrastructure we have in Manitoba. This is a good opportunity to identify that these processes are being led by indigenous stakeholders and rights holders in the north. What we are seeing is early engagement, something that is being led by AGG, which is indigenous-owned. That is the path forward, working hand in hand with indigenous peoples, not sidestepping them.

• (1225)

Hon. Adam van Koevorden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak to this important motion today, particularly in the context of where our nation is in early 2026.

Our government is restoring economic sovereignty to this country. We are encouraging resource development, strengthening com-

petitive investments, both foreign and domestic, and spurring on innovation here at home. Being from the beautiful riding of Burlington North—Milton West, which is right on the fulcrum of Canada's innovation corridor, that last part on innovation, with our universities, our researchers and the private sector, could not be more important at this time.

All of these goals, including building on our economic security, our ability to encourage and protect innovation and our incredible capacity, particularly lately with the Prime Minister's ability to go around the world and incent the interest in investing in Canada, attracting those global investments, could not come at a more important time. Those are all goals that should unite us, not divide us. They are the goals that inspired the Building Canada Act, the creation of the Major Projects Office and the streamlining of all of our nation-building projects in things like LNG, critical minerals, clean energy, infrastructure and affordable housing.

Our government is fast-tracking major projects like the Montreal port expansion. We are fast-tracking the LNG Canada phase two project and other projects that will bolster Canada's economy and create jobs and more economic sovereignty right across our great country. These represent some of the biggest private sector investments in Canadian history. We are fast-tracking the Iqaluit hydro project and the Darlington small modular reactor to provide clean and affordable energy to Canadians. This work is also creating tens of thousands of jobs and higher wages for Canadians right across this country.

Today, what the Conservatives are trying to do with this motion is to further mislead Canadians into thinking that important measures to combat climate change, spur on innovation and ensure that we are skating to where the puck is going are actually having a negative impact. They are projecting that these are having a negative impact on affordability here at home, but the truth could not be more contrary. Investments in innovation are skating to where the puck is going.

Farmers know this. Farmers in my riding recognize that climate change is the leading impact on food cost inflation right now. Conservatives have stood in this House time and time again to talk about the price of coffee. I love coffee; I drink too much of it. Coffee is too expensive, but we do not grow coffee in Canada. We roast some coffee, but to suggest that domestic climate-change-fighting policies are having an impact on the cost of coffee is foolish.

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Farmers know that the leading cause of crop yields being more challenging and less reliable, and food costs going up, is climate change. They also know how to leverage exemptions and rebates, how to access clean tech funding, how to upgrade old equipment to more efficient operational costs. They know that reduces energy costs and consumption. That is how we lower food costs and make sure that Canadians are able to buy the fresh food, the produce, meat and dairy products, that their families need every single month. It is about making sure we have energy-efficient grain drying here at home, barn upgrades and precision agriculture. We already know the agriculture sector is one of the most innovative in Canada, and our government is working hand in hand with farmers and agricultural experts from across the country to ensure that they have the tools they need to skate to where the puck is going, to use that hockey analogy again.

As the Prime Minister said at the World Economic Forum just a few days ago, our goals of making Canada an energy superpower demand that we respond with openness, not retrenchment. We must build on pragmatic collaboration rather than go headlong into a reactive or fortress-building mentality.

It is critical to Canadians that we continue to fight climate change and lower the likelihood of things such as wildfires, floods and other climate-related tragedies that have already claimed too many lives and homes, all while we strengthen our economy, build resilience and provide reliable and affordable energy to communities right across this country.

The Conservatives have been playing the same game that they have played over the last couple of years with climate action. They want to position climate action as something that is too expensive for Canadians, while in fact, climate action brings costs down. They are trying to position the industrial carbon pricing mechanism we have in this country, which is providing farmers with the opportunity to innovate and with reliable innovations to change some of their practices to lower consumption mechanisms that will naturally cost less money, as something that is contributing directly to the costs of food.

We import a lot of food from other countries, so one of the things our government is undertaking is to grow more at home and make sure we have more abattoirs, meat-producing facilities, farms and greenhouses. In my riding, which is one of the largest mushroom-producing regions in the country, we produce a lot of mushrooms, and we want to make sure that can grow. Mushrooms grow quickly. Let us make sure that we are doing everything we can to support those food sectors.

● (1230)

The motion the Conservatives put on the table today would not strengthen Canadian sovereignty. It would do quite the opposite. In fact, their misleading rhetoric over how climate action has an impact on the pocketbooks of Canadians has been soundly refuted by farmers, researchers and food experts. We know that industrial carbon pricing has a tiny, if not zero, price impact on the food we all need, but the Conservatives do not care about facts. The Conservatives are more focused on supporting a nostalgic view and looking back into the rear-view mirror for inspiration. They are not like this government. We are going forward.

In order to accelerate the approval and construction of innovative major projects, collaboration is key, and that is where the Conservatives could choose to skate.

The Olympics are coming up. The Paralympics are coming up. Athletes from different teams come together to compete on team Canada for the benefit of our country. They will compete together for the maple leaf. They will inspire people to undertake more healthy lifestyles or try a new sport, and they will encourage kids to dream.

I encourage every member of this House to collaborate and help refine legislation so that it reaches and helps more Canadians, not just the wealthiest Canadians. Yesterday, in the House of Commons, when we started talking about the Prime Minister's new plan to bring forward a groceries and essentials benefit, the Conservatives wanted to suggest that it was not going to help very many Canadians. That is false.

I remember when I was a kid and my mom used to receive the GST rebate, because it helped my family a lot. We went out to buy running shoes. Maybe we went to Swiss Chalet those nights. It paid for our guitar lessons. It paid for my canoe club. Those things really made a difference in my young life, when I was a kid, and I know that an enhanced groceries and essentials benefit, as the Prime Minister has laid out, is going to do just that for 12 million Canadians in every single riding: Conservative ridings, Liberal ridings, New Democrat ridings, Bloc ridings and Green ridings. Ridings across the country will benefit.

Lower-income Canadians deserve that support, and I am very proud that this government has undertaken to provide the groceries and essentials benefit, because it is precisely what food experts have been calling for. Food Banks Canada, oft cited by the Conservatives, did not say anything about industrial carbon pricing or any of the things in the Conservative motion today. Experts who know how hard it is to get food on a low-income budget say we need a groceries and essentials benefit. They said we need to grow more food here in Canada. They said we need to support low-income earners and make sure that the northern food security priorities are advanced, but that is not what the Conservatives put in their motion today. It is just about the industrial carbon tax. That makes it very clear who the Conservatives are working for.

As I said, the Olympics and the Paralympics are coming up. Athletes know how to go for Canada. They are all going to compete for Canada. They are going to come together, promote the maple leaf and fight for our country. I consider us to be one big team. We can take a team Canada approach here. At this time, it is more important than ever that we come together, provide good ideas in this House, have robust debate and work together on advancing important supports and programs for Canadians that the most vulnerable in our society, particularly, will benefit from.

The Conservatives have spilled a lot of ink and talked a lot about food banks over the last couple of years. Now let us listen to Food Banks Canada. They said we need a groceries and essentials benefit. Let us not try to distract with this motion today. Let us support the legislation before the House from our Prime Minister and support low-income Canadians.

Go, Canada, go.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe I heard my hon. colleague refer in his speech to projects being fast-tracked. I wonder if he could clarify that for me, because my understanding is that all the government has done thus far is refer projects to a new bureaucratic office and that no decisions have yet been made. In fact, no projects have been fast-tracked today; they have just been shoved to a bureaucracy to consider further.

Am I correct, or have there actually been decisions made?

• (1235)

Hon. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to correct the record.

Unfortunately, the Conservative member is mistaken. We have fast-tracked many projects, including recreational facilities across this country. Those were outlined in the budget. If the Conservative members allowed time on the legislative schedule, voted in favour of the budget implementation act and supported the supports that are going out to Canadians, those recreational facilities would fill the gap in a lot of communities that require support in our great big beautiful country.

There is a list in the budget. I would be happy to send it across to the hon. member. There are at least 10 recreational projects, and many others, for the member's information.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to the World Bank's data, there are 73 carbon pricing mechanisms in 53 countries. Out of all these mechanisms and countries, only one has been walked back, and it was done by the current government. We also see that the current Prime Minister and the new government have scrapped almost all of the environmental protection measures that Justin Trudeau's government had adopted over the past 10 years.

How does my colleague feel about these decisions to walk back the climate change policies and the fact that Canada is the only one out of 53 countries to do so?

Hon. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for speaking up for the environment and for the fight against climate change. It is a cause that is close to my heart. It is one of the many reasons that prompted me to put my name on the ballot.

Fighting climate change is a priority for our government. We have many programs and tools to achieve this. Industry and the energy sector can do their part. A lot of Ontario's energy comes from nuclear power.

[English]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that when I looked at this opposition mo-

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tion, I could not help but think, "Holy, the Conservatives are so lazy." What they have done is literally take the entire platform they ran on nine months ago and put it into an opposition motion, but here is a news flash: Canadians voted against that platform. They did not give the Conservatives the ability to form a government.

I wonder if the secretary of state would provide his comments on how he thinks the Conservatives approached this motion today, and how it seems to lack any sense of their responsibility to be a proper opposition in the House.

Hon. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, just a couple of days ago, there was a fad on Instagram where everybody was looking back to 2016. The Conservatives were saying exactly the same stuff in 2016 that they are saying today. That was 10 years ago. They are still talking down climate action. They are still ignoring lower-income Canadians. They still think climate change is a hoax. Some things never change.

What has not changed in the last year is that the Conservatives do not have any new ideas. This motion is literally, word for word, their platform, which was soundly rejected by Canadians last year. It sounds as though in the last year, the only thing they have been willing to do is parrot their talking points and read the speeches given to them by the Conservative leader's staff. It would be nice to see a bit of creativity, individuality or individual thought from the Conservative members, but I think that is too much to ask.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon.

Our motion today requests that the House call on the government to adopt what we have proposed in a Canada sovereignty act. A sovereignty act is our proposal to re-establish Canada as a competitive and world-class nation, confident in its ability to build national pipelines, projects and ports and all other manner and means to enable Canadians to again feel confident in their future.

We have often heard criticism that the opposition does not provide enough solutions. Here they are, before the House, and we will continue to provide Canadians with common-sense solutions to the inaction of 10 years of Liberal governments.

We want Canadians to feel confident that the opportunity for them is on the horizon, that a better future awaits them and their children and that a sense of pride in our country could return. The sovereignty act, therefore, is really, fundamentally, a proposal of hope for Canadians that the future will be better than the past and that we can move our country in a positive direction.

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I am sorry to say that, in my estimation, Canadians do not feel confident in their future right now. In fact, lots of public polling will support my position. Canadians are more anxious than they have ever been. They are more concerned than they have ever been about what the future holds for them, where their next paycheques will come from, how they will feed their families and whether or not they will have a job in the future. In fact, many feel that their children will no longer be better off than they were at the same time in their lives.

It feels like a nation divided, where the government has allowed division to percolate and simmer: west versus east and Canadians of faith versus Canadians who have a different view. Over and over, those divisions of region versus region and Canadian versus Canadian have percolated and simmered. Of course, there is our more belligerent neighbour to the south.

It seems to me that these are echoes of our history. My hon. colleague who spoke before me chided the Conservatives for looking at history, but our history is a proud one. We should be proud of it and draw inspiration from it and the great men and women who came before us in this House.

It seems to me that there are echoes of our past in our present situation. Indeed, in my estimation, our current circumstances are not dissimilar to some of those that faced our infant nation in the late 1870s and 1880s during the debates in this House around our great national project, the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

During the great parliamentary debates in late 1880 and early 1881, our great founding father, John A. Macdonald, lamented on the failure of the earlier attempt to organize the construction of the railway. In his speech to the House, he noted that in the intervening period between the first and second attempts to build the railway, “We have had tragedy, comedy and farce from the other side.” The parallel of those days is strikingly similar to me. We, too, have had tragedy, comedy and farce from the Liberal government.

The tragedy in our present time is that we have similarly lost a decade. For 10 years, no progress has been made by the government to develop Canada's great endowments. For 10 years, no priority has been given by the government to building anything. It is quite the opposite in fact. The focus of the government has been frivolities rather than the fundamentals of our country. There has been concern about banning plastic straws rather than building our future, and about figuring out how many selections there should be in the gender section of a government application rather than focusing on how Canadians will find their next meal.

The comedy is that in the present time, we are seeing members of the government who thought one way and said different things last year or the year before now speaking and professing to believe things in an entirely different way. For a decade, we were told that the carbon tax and other Liberal environmental measures were the only way to preserve our future for our children and the only way to reverse environmental decline, but now, the Liberals have eliminated their own proposals. For a decade, we were told that Canada is a genocidal and racist country with a history not worth remembering, and that we should tear down statues of our great founding father, John A. Macdonald. Now, the government wraps itself in the

flag when it is convenient for it. The hypocrisy on the other side is the sad comedy that we face today.

• (1240)

Then there is the farce. The farce of our present time is that the new schemes of the government will not achieve anything. A new government bureaucracy will not build more homes. A new government bureaucracy will not see grand national projects started. Despite what the secretary of state said, the Major Projects Office has not given final approval for a single project. Liberals can spread their misinformation, but others can also google it for themselves.

Moreover, we live in a time when the average time to get a building project done, a mine, for example, is 19 years. This is the farce of our current time, but Conservatives have provided a solution, a Canada sovereignty act, which would make a meaningful difference in the sovereignty of Canada. It is not complicated. In fact, its elegance is its simplicity, which is to get the government out of the way and remove the obstacles that are holding back our national success.

I think John A. Macdonald knew that was the way, too. Indeed, the speech from the throne in 1880, in determining the manner to construct the Canadian Pacific Railway, argued and proposed that it should be constructed “by means of an Incorporate Company...rather than by the direct action of the Government.” Those are wise words from our history, which I hope the government will take to heart, because when we export more, build more and develop our nation more, incomes go up and life becomes more affordable for Canadians. A sovereignty act would do that.

Now I will say a word on the cost of failure. Failing to adopt the changes that we have proposed in our sovereignty act will have a cost. Failing to repeal the Impact Assessment Act, the oil shipping ban and the emissions cap will mean that a pipeline to the west coast may never happen. Failing to remove the industrial carbon tax will saddle our industries with a burden that their competitors do not share and make them uncompetitive in the world economy. Maintaining the EV mandate will force our auto manufacturers to pay millions of dollars to foreign companies in credits.

We will bleed our auto manufacturers, feed foreign companies and add to foreign wealth. How does that enhance our sovereignty?

In his great speech of January 1881, John A. Macdonald also warned of the cost of failure to complete our great national project wholly and entirely in Canada. He warned that Canada would become “a bundle of sticks, as we were before, without a binding cord, and that we should fall, helpless, powerless, and aimless, into the hands of the neighboring Republic.”

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The costs of failure in our present day are no less severe, and that is why Conservatives have proposed their solutions in a Canada sovereignty act. They are not complicated. In fact, I do not think we disagree on some of them, but the comments from the other side lead me to believe that Liberals will not consider them. Therefore, they must accept the cost of that failure, the cost to our next generation.

I reiterate the Conservative belief and offer to do what we can to maintain, enhance and build our sovereignty, to once again be a nation proud in its history and in its great national projects, just as John A. Macdonald was in 1881.

• (1245)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Kingston, I find it really interesting to listen to the member tell me about Sir John A. Macdonald. I would like to tell him something about Sir John A. Macdonald, and that is that Bellevue House in Kingston, which was one of Sir John A. Macdonald's residences, was completely revamped recently to showcase the full display of who Sir John A. Macdonald was and his contributions throughout Canada's history.

Would the member like to know who travelled all the way from Saskatchewan to Kingston to participate in that ceremony? It was none other than the member for Yorkton—Melville, who decided she wanted to participate in that great ceremony.

I take slight offence, but I am sure city council in Kingston would take more, to this member's depiction of how it is, or in his words, is not, properly representing Sir John A. Macdonald's legacy. I would like to give the member the opportunity now to direct his comments directly to those on the Kingston city council about how they could do a better job representing a member who came from their community.

• (1250)

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I will direct my comments to the member who should be representing John A. Macdonald's history and who has unfortunately and shamefully failed to do so.

I ask the member to tell me when the statue will be put back up in the park in his riding. Tell me when and where, and I will join you in raising that statue to John A. Macdonald again, but I suspect he will not.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will remind the member to address his comments through the Chair.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the mind boggles at the Liberals' and the Conservatives' debate over which party's actions are more inspired by John A. Macdonald. What Quebeckers remember John A. Macdonald for is his statement that Louis Riel would hang though every dog in Quebec bark in his favour. That is John A. Macdonald's legacy in Quebec.

I can hardly believe what I am hearing, especially on the heels of the Prime Minister's remarks about the Plains of Abraham and how the conquest was the best thing since sliced bread. I see no reason why we should be part of this country.

[*English*]

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I did not hear a question in that, so I will take it as simply a comment.

What I would say to the hon. member is that Canada has had great men and women, both French and English, in our history and we should celebrate all of them. We should not do as the Liberals have done, which is tell our country that those great men and women were racist colonialists and tear down their statues, erasing our history and our pride.

Hon. Adam van Koevorden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after listening to the member's speech, I think we live in alternate realities. Times are tough and food is too expensive, but we have solutions and things have been going well, particularly on the jobs front.

Will the member acknowledge that Canadians built 190,000 jobs in this country between September and December of last year; that Canada's real GDP growth is forecasted to be higher in 2026 than it is in Germany, France, Japan, Italy and the majority of the G7; that our GDP changed and improved by more in 2025 than it did in Italy, the eurozone, the U.K. and Japan; and, because the member talked about confidence, particularly confidence in the Prime Minister, that confidence in our Prime Minister is the highest it has been in decades?

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, we certainly do live in an alternate reality, because what I hear from people is that they are struggling to find their next meal. The 2.2 million Canadians at food banks would also agree with me on that. Investment is fleeing our country. Times are tough.

Instead, the member seems to live in an ivory tower of elitism, suggesting that things are fine and things are great. Things are not fine; things are not great. We need our sovereignty act and the proposals we have made to lift our country and move it forward to build great things again.

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave an impassioned speech on the history of Sir John A. Macdonald. I was wondering if he had any other pieces he would like to share with us on why respecting our history is so incredibly important in today's context.

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate a quote that I took to heart when reading John A. Macdonald's speech from 1881, where he said, if they could not complete these national projects, "that we should become a bundle of sticks, as we were before, without a binding cord, and that we should fall, helpless, powerless, and aimless, into the hands of the neighboring Republic." I fear that is the case today.

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[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our country should be the most self-sufficient and most affordable country in the world, because we have the most resources per capita in the world. We have the fourth-largest oil reserve in the world. We rank fifth in natural gas. We have the longest and most accessible coastline. We have the largest reserves of uranium and other ingredients used in fertilizers. We have the largest reserves of drinking water. We should therefore be the richest, most self-sufficient and most affordable country in the world.

However, how do we rank? Canada currently has the worst housing prices in the G7. We have had the worst economic growth for the past 10 years and the worst investment levels in the G7. We now have the highest food inflation in the G7. Half a trillion dollars in Canadian investment has left Canada for the United States over the past 10 years, and that amount has increased since this Prime Minister came to power.

We know what the problem is. We have a country that is paralyzed by bureaucracy, which is preventing us from accessing our own resources. Because of this bureaucracy, it takes 19 years to get a mining project approved. This bureaucracy has blocked the construction of two major pipelines to our coasts, which would have allowed us to export our greatest resources overseas. Bureaucracy is also preventing us from building natural gas liquefaction facilities.

How do we solve this? The Prime Minister's solution is to create even more bureaucracy. Since taking office, he has not repealed a single anti-development law or eliminated any of the anti-development bureaucracy. He has not given the green light to a single pipeline. What he has done is add new laws on top of existing laws, new regulations on top of existing regulations and new agencies on top of existing agencies. If we all agree that bureaucracy is preventing us from building in Canada, then more bureaucracy cannot be the solution. On the contrary, the government needs to get out of the way so that Canada can build economic sovereignty.

That is why we are proposing the economic sovereignty act today. The act aims to eliminate capital gains taxes for those who reinvest in Canada, which will help us attract the \$500 billion in investments that have gone to the United States. This will enable us to develop technologies and build mines, factories and other economic infrastructure. We need to eliminate anti-development laws, such as Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, so that we can export our energy overseas and approve a pipeline to the Pacific now rather than in two years. We must also immediately pass laws that prevent our technology from being sold overseas and to other countries. Finally, we must give provinces a bonus for every interprovincial trade barrier they remove in order to accelerate true Canada-wide free trade. The Prime Minister has given the illusion that he is taking action with signing ceremonies, photo ops and grand speeches. We do not need speeches. In fact, we do not need him to do anything but get out of the way.

We are moving this patriotic motion in good faith to liberate our entrepreneurs, investors and workers, to bring production and paycheques back to Canada and to allow us to truly be masters in our own house. By passing the sovereignty bill, we will become masters in our own house and we will control our own destiny.

● (1255)

[English]

Canada should be the most affordable and autonomous nation on earth. We have the biggest oceanic coastline. We are number one in uranium and potash. We are number four in oil. We have the sixth-highest production of natural gas anywhere on earth. We have the most fresh water. We have the sixth-largest amount of farmland per capita, yet somehow we cannot feed, fuel or defend ourselves.

It should be dirt cheap to live in Canada because we have the most dirt to build homes on, to dig resources from and to grow food in, yet we are one of the most expensive places to use energy, to buy homes or to buy food. In fact, food price inflation is now the highest in the G7 after a year of the Prime Minister promising to bring prices down. We have 2.2 million people who line up at food banks. We have the most expensive real estate in the G7. Our energy costs are soaring while we cannot get our own resources out of the ground and to markets.

What is worse is that our economy has become even more dependent over the last decade. Half a trillion dollars' worth of net investment has fled to the United States of America. Canada has had the worst economic growth of any G7 nation under the Liberal government. We have the worst investment. In fact, we get 15,000 dollars' worth of investment per worker, while the Americans get \$28,000, both measured in United States dollars. This has left us poorer, weaker and more dependent on other countries.

We all understand the problem. Canada's economy is paralyzed by the high cost and slow pace of our massive bureaucracy. Everybody agrees that the permitting times are too slow. We know the only thing standing in the way is this bureaucracy, because we have trillions of dollars in pension fund investment waiting on the sidelines or invested overseas, tens of thousands of construction workers ready to get to work, and the most resources per capita in the world. The only things standing in the way are federal permits. Because these are interprovincial projects, they only require federal permits.

The Prime Minister's solution to the problem of too much bureaucracy is to create even more bureaucracy. We have too many agencies blocking resource development, so he creates a new agency to stack on top of it. We have too many laws that stand in the way of safe and responsible resource development, so he creates even more laws. He is confusing the problem with the solution. We do not need more signing ceremonies, more summits, more laws, more agencies, more corporate buzzwords or more abracadabra. What we need from the Prime Minister is one thing: for him to get out of the way and grant a permit. The unique power to build inter-provincial pipelines is a federal power under the Constitution, and the legal power is with the Prime Minister, under Bill C-5. He only needs to get out of the way and grant the permits for these things to happen.

We propose a Canadian sovereignty act, which would make us strong and self-reliant and would let us stand on our own two feet. It would repeal the anti-energy laws, Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, so we can ship energy off our coast. It would rapidly approve a pipeline to the Pacific in order to move 30 billion dollars' worth of our oil to overseas markets, which is bigger than the total exports to China in an entire year. It would eliminate the capital gains tax on reinvestments in Canada, causing an economic boom and bringing that half a trillion dollars' worth of investment back. It would require incentives and other rules in order to keep the new Canadian technology we invent here in Canada. It would create bonuses for our provinces when they open up their markets to free trade across Canada.

This is a real and serious plan to make Canada the most affordable and autonomous country anywhere on earth, a nation that is strong enough to stand on its own two feet and sovereign enough to never have to bow before any other nation. We call on all parliamentarians to rally for this mission because our country is worth the fight.

• (1300)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the same rhetoric and the same speech over and over for years now. We saw the entire opposition motion in a platform the Conservatives put forward. The Leader of the Opposition ran on everything in the motion in the last election, but he lost. Canadians chose not to go with what he was proposing.

My question is very simple and I hope the leader uses this opportunity to be a little self-reflective. Has he learned anything from April 28 that would suggest he should do something different? If he did, what is that?

• (1305)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member seems to be astonished that we would say the same thing after the election that we said before the election. I can understand why he finds that counterintuitive, because the Liberals do exactly the opposite.

The Liberal Prime Minister promised he would get a deal with the Americans by July 21. There is still no deal. He said there would be countertariffs. There are no countertariffs. He said he would spend less. He is now spending \$90 billion more, having doubled Justin Trudeau's deficit. He said there would be more investment. Investment has actually gone down. He said he would

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“build, baby, build”. In fact, he has not approved a single, solitary pipeline or removed a single anti-development bill.

The Liberals do the opposite of what they promised before the election. We keep our word.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I notice that the leader of the official opposition and the Conservative Party tend to link oil production to sovereignty because they share the same vision, the same party and the same organization.

I am not sure that this appeals to Quebeckers in general. When we talk to them about sovereignty, I do not think oil production is the first thing that comes to mind. If they do think about oil production, they may see it as more of a reason to leave this country.

Beyond that, let us look at what the government has done since it was elected. It paused the electric vehicle availability standard, put an end to carbon pricing for individuals and eliminated the electric vehicle subsidy. It introduced Bill C-5, which became law, allowing all kinds of environmental regulations to be circumvented. It even signed a pipeline agreement with Alberta.

This is my question for the opposition leader: Does he not feel as though the fact that the Liberals are eating his lunch is forcing him to be more radical, when he was already radical enough?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I find it funny that the Bloc Québécois thinks that Canadian sovereignty is radical.

The Bloc Québécois thinks that using our own resources rather than depending on other countries is a radical idea. The Bloc would rather import American oil than use oil that is produced here in Canada and that helps to fund health care, education and roads in Quebec.

The Bloc Québécois thinks it is radical to let consumers choose their own cars and wants to force people to use EVs in the regions of Quebec, where they are not practical. The Bloc wants to impose a tax on gas and diesel in the regions of Quebec where people have no choice but to use traditional energy.

It is not radical to take back control. More importantly, it is not radical to be masters in our own house.

[*English*]

Hon. Mike Lake (Leduc—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Stephen Harper Conservative government. After a decade of being in power, the Harper government left with a balanced budget and what The New York Times referred to as the richest middle class in the world.

I would ask our hon. leader to reflect on what we did well under the Conservative government that led to those circumstances, which seem so distant now.

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Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his important role in the Harper government and in creating, of course, the richest middle class in the world, as declared by the ultra-liberal, internationally famous New York Times in 2015.

Can we imagine if somebody said that today? They would be laughed off the stage. Here we are, a decade later, and housing costs are the most expensive in the G7. Food inflation is the worst in the G7. The Liberals have given Canada the worst economic growth in a decade. Half a trillion dollars' worth of net investment has left. All these things have worsened since the Prime Minister took office.

It does not have to be this way. We demonstrated it before. The best is yet to come.

Corey Hogan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun.

It is great to be back in Parliament. I think it is important to begin by taking stock of where we are right now, because a lot has changed since we were here in December, debating another opposition motion, this one on the Canada-Alberta MOU. Since then, the Prime Minister has given a landmark speech, which the Leader of the Opposition rightly pointed out was well crafted and eloquently delivered. I would go slightly further and say that it was a sobering reminder of the gravity of the situation we find ourselves in.

In this new world of uncertainty, standing still leaves us vulnerable. Unfortunately, I believe the Conservative motion proposed today is the equivalent of standing still. The world has changed, and the motion is nostalgic for a moment in time that has passed. As the Prime Minister said in his speech, "Nostalgia is not a strategy."

However, even with those criticisms of the motion, it is important to recognize the Leader of the Opposition's new-found willingness to work with the government on behalf of all Canadians. This is really important. It will require the Conservatives to work constructively, to stop obstructing crime legislation, to pass the budget implementation act and to work together to put more money in the pockets of Canadians.

I would point out that the motion, in fact, includes things we have already done, such as creating the conditions for an emissions cap not to proceed. On that basis alone, I believe the Conservative motion reveals a leader stuck in repetition rather than reflection, and it falls short of what Canadians expect of their political leaders during this critical moment for our country. It is ultimately a distraction from the real work needed to make life more affordable for Canadians, to grow our economy, to achieve greater sovereignty, to diversify trade and to make Canada an energy superpower. It seems designed for one audience, and that is in Calgary this weekend.

This is why, today, Canada is advancing its most ambitious trade and investment agenda in a generation. We set a bold, \$1-trillion target for new investment over the next five years in order to allow us to build the strongest economy in the G7. This is not simply optimism. It is a fundamental reset of Canada's economic ambitions.

By establishing the Major Projects Office, we are creating the pathway and the expectations needed to mobilize billions in capital

for nation-building projects. We are already hearing from companies that it is a positive signal for global capital. The first two sets of initiatives referred to the office already represent more than \$116 billion in combined investments, demonstrating real momentum on jobs, on productivity and on economic capacity. This unprecedented strategy of investment is bolstered by over \$280 billion in government funding and incentives over the next five years, designed to trigger even greater private sector participation. This is how we turn ambition into steel in the ground, put paycheques in people's pockets and create long-term prosperity for Canadians in every region of the country.

Crucially, this work is not happening in isolation. It is being done in partnership with the provinces, with indigenous communities, with workers and with industry because serious nation-building in Canada has always required collaboration, not confrontation. As we speak of the Harper years, we remember how they fizzled out in a series of court challenges and broken projects.

That is where the Conservative motion fundamentally misses the moment we are in. The motion before us is framed as a bold act of sovereignty, but, when we look closely, it is not a plan to build; it is a plan to tear down. It offers to repeal instead of to resolve, slogans instead of strategies and nostalgia instead of answers. Repealing laws does not, on its own, build a single project. Scrapping frameworks does not, on its own, unlock a single dollar of investment. Picking fights with provinces, indigenous partners and trading allies does not make Canada stronger. It makes us weaker.

Canadians learned this lesson the hard way. They know that ramming projects through without consultation leads to court challenges, delays and cancellations. They know that uncertainty scares away capital. They know that economic sovereignty is not achieved by pretending the global economy no longer exists. Real sovereignty means having the capacity to build and the credibility to attract investment. It means stable rules, predictable processes and a government that brings people together rather than pitting them against one another.

We are doing exactly that as a government: bringing people together. Through the Major Projects Office, through regulatory efficiency without abandoning environmental responsibility, through trade diversification and through unprecedented investment in clean energy, critical minerals and Canadian supply chains, we are strengthening Canada's economic independence in a way that will endure.

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The Conservatives, by contrast, are offering a familiar tactic dressed up as urgency. They present a long list of things to repeal, as though the complexity itself were the problem. They reduce economic strategy to a checklist of grievances. They ask Canadians to believe that, if we simply get government out of the way, prosperity will magically take care of itself. However, Canadians are not looking backwards, and they are certainly not interested in magical thinking. They are looking for seriousness. They are looking for leadership that understands the risks we face from global instability, climate change and shifting trade relationships, and that is prepared to meet these head-on.

• (1310)

The motion falls well short of that test. It does not grapple with how we actually get projects built in Canada. It does not explain how to reconcile provincial jurisdiction, indigenous rights and investor certainty, and it does not acknowledge that the world has changed and that Canada must change with it. In a moment this consequential, slogans are simply not enough.

The government is choosing the harder path but the right path, the path of doing the work, building consensus and mobilizing capital at a scale Canada has not seen in generations. It is a path focused on outcomes, not outrage, and on nation building, not political theatre. That is why we will not support the motion, and that is why we will continue to work day by day, project by project, to build a stronger, more sovereign and more prosperous Canada for the long term.

• (1315)

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the member opposite cannot see the action plan that is the Canada sovereignty plan. He said slogans were not enough.

Does he believe that empty words without action are enough? That is all we have seen from the Liberal government.

Corey Hogan: Mr. Speaker, we have seen the Building Canada Act, which the members opposite supported. We have seen new trade deals with every continent in the world, and we have seen significant momentum on the acquisition of capital, including major acquisitions, deals with the U.A.E. to bring in over \$70 billion. I understand that does not meet or match the narrative the opposition is trying to forward here, but it is the reality, and Canadians see the good work that is going on.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the fact that, as he said earlier, the Liberals have already adopted several of the measures set out in the Conservative motion, including doing away with environmental protection measures, providing additional support for oil companies and axing the carbon tax.

Can my colleague explain why the Liberals are shifting toward favouring oil companies and away from protecting the country from climate change?

[*English*]

Corey Hogan: Mr. Speaker, we are trying to be a pragmatic government. I do not agree that we have weakened environmental reg-

ulations, but we are looking to streamline them, run them in parallel in many cases, so rather than there being a waterfall of regulation A and regulation B, we are exploring both at the same time. We do know the world has shifted. We know Canada can meet this moment. We do know the Canadian ability to both grow the economy and meet environmental obligations is not just a hypothetical; it has been proven. We increased oil and gas production 34%. The population increased 15%, and in the last 10 years, over that same time period, emissions went down 6.5%. It is possible.

Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just wonder if my hon. colleague could either agree or disagree that something like this has happened, because this is something I have experienced. The Conservatives are standing in the House disparaging the Major Projects Office, talking down our initiatives to build up Canada, create more projects and ensure that more projects get built in Canada. Publicly the Conservatives are against all that, but in my personal email inbox, they are asking how their ridings can have access to this funding and these opportunities.

I am curious. As parliamentary secretary or as a member of Parliament in Calgary, has the member experienced the same thing: that the Conservatives say one thing in the House of Commons in public and something totally different in the inbox?

Corey Hogan: Mr. Speaker, this is obviously occurring; I do not begrudge it. I welcome anybody standing up to do the right thing, even if it is in private, but I do hope they will join us by doing it in public as well.

Elizabeth May (Saanic—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I note that we are debating something today on supply that is titled as something for economic sovereignty.

I am concerned about the growing movement toward separatism within Alberta. I am wondering if the member, as an Alberta MP, has noted whether the leader of the official opposition, as a fellow Alberta MP, has chosen a lane. What can we all do, as members of Parliament who have sworn an oath in this place, to defend our country, to be loyal to Canada and to provide an alternative and an effective way of ensuring that any Alberta vote is not contaminated with foreign interference?

• (1320)

Corey Hogan: Mr. Speaker, I sincerely appreciate the question. This is a topic that is of course near and dear to my heart and, I hope, to the hearts of every Albertan member of the House.

Separatism in Alberta has been a pervasive background thing my whole life, at around 20%. We have not seen major changes to that in the last while. However, we are certainly hearing much more loudly the 20%, and that seems to be going unchallenged far too often.

I implore my colleagues from Alberta to stand up and say no, to stand up and say we love this country, we stand for this country, we support Canadian sovereignty and we support Alberta's ambitions within that, and to be unequivocal about that. We may have our differences now and then in Confederation, but we are one family, and we love this country.

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Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the opposition motion before us. I have been spending time listening to this today, and I cannot help but wonder who the real audience for it is.

I believe that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources really hit the nail on the head a few moments ago when he said that the intended audience of the motion is the folks who will be assembling in Calgary this weekend. That is probably the best answer to that question that I have heard today.

The reality is that when I look at the motion, I just think to myself that it is literally everything the Conservative Party ran on last April, and it was rejected. Canadians said, “No, we are not interested in that platform. We are interested in something else, something that the Liberals are offering.” That is what we ended up with; that is where we are. We formed a government based on our platform. The Conservatives did not form a government based on their platform, which is basically what the motion today is.

The parliamentary secretary's explanation is probably the best one: that the motion is intended for an audience in Calgary later this week and weekend, when there is an opportunity for the membership of the Conservative Party to have its say as to whether or not the current Leader of the Opposition should continue in that role.

I found it really interesting. The Leader of the Opposition spoke a few moments ago, and I had the opportunity to ask him a question afterwards. I stood up, and I am sure if members go back and watch the tape they will see I was offering him an opportunity. I very plainly said to the Leader of the Opposition that the motion is basically what Conservative members ran on, and Canadians rejected it in April last year. I asked him why Conservatives were putting the motion forward and, more importantly, if could he talk about what he had learned since then and how he was going to do things differently.

This was an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to genuinely be reflective. He could have used that clip, without my question, looked at the camera and talked to Canadians about what he learned from that experience of going from a 25-point lead in the polls to getting clobbered by the current Prime Minister. He could have used the opportunity to reflect on that and say he did learn a lot, and what he would start to do differently.

Did he take that opportunity to be reflective and to genuinely put to Canadians how he will be different? No, and, as a matter of fact, he seemed to double down. He used the opportunity to make a little partisan jab toward me, and he basically said that this is what he ran on in the last election, what he still believes, and what he is still going to be suggesting to his Conservative membership that they should keep pushing toward.

If I were a card-carrying Conservative and I were heading into this—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: I know. I agree. The words were even difficult coming out of my mouth.

Mr. Speaker, in any event, if I were one of the members who are going to be assembling this weekend to pass judgment on the Lead-

er of the Opposition, I would seriously reflect on that and ask, “What has he learned? Has he learned anything? Is he going to be different? Will he do anything differently than he used to?” I gave him the opportunity to very plainly suggest what that might be, and he completely neglected to suggest even one thing that he might do differently.

This comes back to the theme of my discussion, how I started, and what I have spoken about a number of times in the House as it relates to the opposition. The Conservatives are just not understanding what they are supposed to be doing here. His Majesty's official opposition has a role to play, and that role is to challenge the government to do better, and to encourage the government to make better policy better. It is not to just block everything and to systematically, every single time, prevent anything from moving forward. Unfortunately, that is what we continue to see.

This is an opportunity for Canadians, in particular, to sit back and actually reflect on this and to think about where the Conservative Party of Canada is going and who the Conservative Party of Canada is.

Earlier the member for York—Durham talked about Sir John A. Macdonald. I will remind him that when Sir John A. Macdonald sat in the House, he was a Liberal-Conservative. It was a completely different political party. He has nothing to do with that party, and I think I could go out on a limb and say that even Sir John A. Macdonald was more progressive than the newly reformed party that we have now.

• (1325)

More importantly, the member for York—Durham brought up that city council has decided to remove the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald from City Park in Kingston. I want to ask the member something, because he brought it up in his debate today. Does he know that not only did 12 out of 13 city councillors vote in favour of removing the statue but, more importantly, that the Conservative candidate who ran against me in the last election, the mayor of the city, the Conservative candidate in Kingston and the Islands, voted in favour of removing the statue? If he had his way, he would be sitting next to the member right now.

Of course, the good people of Kingston and the Islands saw better than to send a Conservative here. The last time they did that was in 1984, when they sent Flora MacDonald here, a truly progressive Conservative. However, I digress. The reality of the situation is that the current Conservative Party is not the Conservative party of Sir John A. Macdonald, and it is certainly not the Conservative party of Flora MacDonald or any relatively contemporary Conservative.

I certainly got a kick out of one of the Conservative members when asking a question of the Leader of the Opposition a few moments ago. Let us hark back to the days of Stephen Harper. The member said that this was the 20th anniversary of Stephen Harper and that he was so great. Meanwhile, if we try to bring up Stephen Harper in the House, we are always criticized, asked why we are bringing him up as it was so long ago, and why we are living in days gone by.

I will end with this. The reality of the situation is that this particular motion is just in line with everything else we have seen from the Conservatives, everything I have become accustomed to seeing over my 10-plus years in the House, which is theatre. The motion is intended to drive donations. It is intended to help the leader, supposedly, with his position as he goes into his judgment convention this weekend. This is nothing more than theatre. I would really encourage and ask the Conservatives to actually come here with something meaningful, to bring forward some solutions and propose some ideas that can genuinely change the lives of Canadians.

I heard the member for York—Durham give his speech earlier. He was trying to answer questions by asking what we are doing and what we are putting forward. The Conservatives offer nothing in terms of solutions; all they do is criticize. The member got up and started to go on about how people on this side of the House are not focused on the issues of the day and not living in reality. Then I had to listen to 10 minutes of his talking about Sir John A. Macdonald.

It is time for the Conservatives to wake up, realize what their job is in the House and start to actually do things that are meaningful for Canadians, not just fundraise off the clips they make in the House and prime themselves for the conventions that are coming up later this week.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member is talking about John A. Macdonald in the House. However, I think it is shameful that he represents our former founding father's home yet has refused to take a position on whether the city council should put his statue back up in City Park. I will give him the opportunity today: Does he believe that John A. Macdonald's statue should be returned to its rightful place in City Park?

• (1330)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I will totally leave it to city council to decide what to do with a statue that belongs to city council. I will leave it in the very capable hands of the individual who still serves as the mayor there, whom I am extremely grateful for, to make that decision, the same individual who ran for the Conservatives in the last election.

While Conservatives focus on days gone by and whether or not we need a statue to celebrate people, I think it is much more beneficial for us to focus on the legacy of the individual and use it to determine how we can do things differently. What are we doing differently now to help address some of the problems that have been raised with respect to Sir John A. Macdonald's contributions—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Joliette—Manawan.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague that the European Union adopted a carbon border adjustment mechanism in 2023, which took effect on January 1 of this year. The United Kingdom has passed similar legislation that will apply as of January 1, 2027.

The concern here is that, if Canada were to eliminate its carbon pricing, Canadian exports to Europe would be subject to tariffs to compensate for the fact that Canada backtracked on its carbon pricing system. This would hurt Quebec's exports because, even though

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Quebec has its own system, it is part of a country that would have scrapped its system.

What does my hon. colleague think of his government's backtracking, particularly when it comes to the fight to protect the environment and consumer carbon pricing?

[*English*]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, for starters, the policy that he is referring to in terms of Quebec's pricing of carbon existed long before the federal government ever got involved in it. As a matter of fact, Quebec and Ontario signed deals with California and a number of other states back in the early 2000s to make sure that pricing carbon was done properly.

The reality is that we spend time here arguing with Conservatives all day long about whether or not climate change is real and what the contributions are. There are other parts of the world, including in Europe, including in Asia, that are actively doing something to change the environmental impact that the world is having right now. We can get caught up in these discussions all day long, but eventually we get to a tipping point where it really does not matter what the west does or in particular what we are doing in North America, because the rest of the world is pushing forward. I only wish that we could have been completely on the front end of this, rather than fighting with Conservatives all day long on whether or not climate change is real.

Parm Bains (Richmond East—Steveston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my dear friend and colleague from Kingston for his passionate speech and for talking about the importance of having meaningful dialogue in the House. He spoke about opportunities. British Columbians in Richmond and people from across the country want to know what opportunities we are working on right now.

Could he shed some light on real, meaningful things that are happening for Canada and what our Prime Minister is doing for this country, with a focus on what really matters? Like the legendary artist DJ Quik said, "If it don't make dollars, it don't make sense".

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Prime Minister, as Canadians have witnessed, has realized and recognized the fact that the world has changed in terms of where our primary trading partners are and where our economic strength is from. He has been spending a lot of time looking at other opportunities and creating new opportunities throughout the world. That is what he is doing in terms of our economic perspective and what we are doing about our economy to strengthen it and diversify it.

One of the initiatives that I am extremely proud of that the government has worked on is the national school food program. While Conservatives voted against, shouted down and called the national school food program names, Canada was the last of the G7 countries to officially adopt one. There have been meaningful impacts that I have seen in the school my children attend. I know the impact it has on kids, in particular making sure that kids have food when they start school.

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• (1335)

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank our pages for all the great work they do to keep us on the straight and narrow.

Before I start, I would like to mention that I am splitting my time with the wonderful, esteemed member for Northumberland—Clarke, who has a new riding name. I am sure his speech will be absolutely excellent.

It is important that we are here today at this moment to discuss areas in which the government may find collaboration and co-operation opportunities with members of His Majesty's loyal opposition. There is a list of what I will call wish-list items that Conservatives have put forward that Liberals would have support from Conservatives in moving ahead, but I would also mention that this is about creating an environment in Canada where we make more things more quickly. When Canadians make more things, we also make and receive bigger paycheques for our people and our standard of living increases.

As members know, our standard of living has been on the decline. In fact, if we measure it by GDP per capita, our standard of living today is worse than it was in 2019, so the Conservatives are willing to work with the government. We are suggesting ways we can do this, but generally speaking, we are proposing to drastically reduce and reform regulatory systems to help spur development.

We recommend cutting taxes on investments when companies and individuals reinvest those proceeds in Canada. I will give an example. If an individual sells a building or somebody sells an investment and those proceeds are reinvested within Canada, within our borders or in a Canadian company, we are proposing that the government can either defer the capital gains tax or eliminate it completely. That would absolutely have the immediate effect of spurring investment in this country.

We should be rewarding provinces that take down trade barriers between other provinces. I remember that the government said, very famously, that by Canada Day we would have free trade in Canada. It is well past Canada Day and we do not have free trade in this country. Provinces will likely only respond to financial incentives to make the right decision, so the government should provide provinces with that monetary incentive and basically say that if they remove their trade barriers, the federal government would provide to them, in greater transfers, a share of the revenue that comes from the increased business activity that happens.

Finally, it is a long-standing recommendation of Conservatives, and in fact even of parliamentary committees in previous Parliaments, that intellectual property created in Canada and funded by Canadian taxpayers has to remain in Canada. We are encouraging the government, through the industry minister, to find ways to make that happen, but here is an easy example: With the scientific research and development credits, when a company that has received that tax preference and has gotten very generous tax deductions for making investments in scientific research and development creates Canadian IP using taxpayer subsidies to do so, and that company or intellectual property is sold to anyone outside of this country, why not ask or require that company to repay the fed-

eral government and taxpayers the money that it received or the subsidies that it benefited from when it developed that IP?

If that IP stays in Canada, they would not have to pay it back, but when it leaves, we have to require that the subsidy be repaid. That is just the most appropriate thing to do. In fact, some countries actually make those companies repay a multiple of the subsidy that they received when that intellectual property is transferred out of the country. We would support the industry minister going in that direction.

The Prime Minister has told the world and this country that he has embarked on an ambitious agenda, but he has to start putting some wins on the board. Signing a few agreements and making agreements to agree is not putting shovels in the ground.

• (1340)

In fact, the Prime Minister's Major Projects Office, which the Liberals will tout as a serious accomplishment, is yet another layer of bureaucracy on an already unmanageable bureaucratic regulatory system to get things done. It is a complete admission that the existing regulatory system does not work when the government has to put itself in a position to create a new system in order to fast-track projects. Also, 90% of the projects that have been listed or referred to the Major Projects Office are already nearing completion. These are not net new projects.

We need net new development and investment in our natural resource sector to get our resources to market. We need to support the business community to do that, but not by forcing everyone to come to the government, hat in hand, begging to be put on the major projects list. If the last 10 years have taught us anything, it is that for Liberal ministers, or those they appoint to choose favour, the temptation is too great and they often end up currying favour to their friends. We need to not give ministers this additional power. We need to allow the system to work better by drastically reforming it and removing government, not by putting more government on top.

This leads me to one of the other areas we have recommended to work with the government on, which is the electric vehicle mandate. Do members know why the CCP, the Chinese Communist Party, desperately wants us to allow its Chinese vehicles into Canada? It is monetary. There may be some non-monetary issues, but the average profit on a car is about \$3,000 to \$5,000. Every electric vehicle that is sold by a Chinese company in Canada will immediately be eligible to receive a \$20,000 purchase of credits by an automaker in Canada.

What does that mean? It means that \$980 million will go from Canadian automakers that have footprints and manufacturing here to a Chinese automaker. That is four times the profit margin on that car already. The CCP wants access to the Canadian market because of the regulatory system the government has set up, which makes absolutely no sense. We would be willing to work with the government on that basis.

The Prime Minister also is developing a bit of a credibility deficit. He was for increasing carbon taxes and then he abandoned them. He was against pipelines and now he might be for them. He said he would spend less and invest more, but his deficits are bigger than former prime minister Justin Trudeau's. He said he would deliver a closer economic and defence security partnership with the U.S., and now he says we need a new world order. The Prime Minister said that when middle nations negotiate with larger powers bilaterally, they are in a worse position. That was just days after signing a bilateral deal with the CCP. He said that China is the largest security threat to Canada and now inks a deal with it.

Perhaps the most devastating is that after the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands voted for the budget and the MOU was signed with the Alberta government, she said that the Prime Minister intentionally misled her in those negotiations. We should take those accusations by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands very seriously. She has developed a very good reputation in the House. When she says that she was misled by the Prime Minister, I believe that he is growing a credibility deficit.

These are the opportunities that we are offering to the government. We will work with the Prime Minister's government in this trying time to help him put some wins on the board. Hopefully the Liberals will take these comments into consideration, and I welcome their questions.

• (1345)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be really clear. What we have before us today is nothing more than the Conservative election platform from last year. Canadians made a decision back then that the Conservative platform would not build a stronger, healthier Canada. We have a Prime Minister who has taken a number of initiatives, along with the government, to build the country and build Canada strong.

The member made reference to trade. We have two pieces of trade legislation before the House today, numerous agreements in the making and a Prime Minister who is bringing hundreds of millions in investments into Canada.

Would the member not recognize that the greatest asset to and ambassador for Canada in increasing exports and bringing in investments is a Prime Minister who—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Simcoe North.

Adam Chambers: Mr. Speaker, I would like to update the member on some developments. We are working with the government. In fact, we just had the Minister of International Trade at committee today to help the Liberals fast-track their bill on the U.K.'s accession to the CPTPP. We have also told them that we will help them get their Indonesian trade deal passed.

However, Canadians voted for a minority government. The only reason that the government and its MPs are trying to lure anybody from any other party to join theirs is so they do not have to collaborate with any other opposition party in this chamber.

Business of Supply

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very detailed speech. I would like him to elaborate on one point he raised.

If an innovation—

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. I will ask members to stop the back-and-forth, especially when it is going right between the line of the Speaker and the member speaking.

I will pause the time and invite the member to restart his question.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that, if a company gets a grant to develop an innovation and then sells that innovation to foreign interests, the company has to pay back a portion of the grant.

I would like my colleague to elaborate on that. To his knowledge, which countries already apply the kind of measure he referred to in his speech?

[*English*]

Adam Chambers: Mr. Speaker, in other countries, including Israel, if a company has been subsidized by the government for the research and development of its intellectual property, when that company is purported to be sold or the IP is transferred out of the country, the company is required to send a payment back to the government that is a multiple of the subsidy it received. That money then provides additional research and development dollars that can be reinvested in new research and development.

I think that is a model the government should consider. If it does not want to do the multiple, it should at least require that dollar for dollar be repaid to the Canadian taxpayer to be reinvested in research and development to develop intellectual property that remains in this country.

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to respond to some comments made across the way with respect to the minority parliament and Newfoundland and Labrador, where gains were made for the Conservatives after decades of Liberal members.

One of the things that resonated with people back home is how Conservatives were addressing the urban and rural divide we often see in this country. I am curious if the member would like to expand on how the opposition day motion speaks to that and could help bring development into rural Canada instead of hand-picking projects as the Liberals seem to want to do.

Adam Chambers: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question from a wonderful MP. It is the first time I have received a question from her in this chamber, and it definitely will not be the last.

Business of Supply

Forty-one per cent of Canadians voted for the Conservative platform in the election. That is a substantial number of Canadians, and a record, in fact, in this modern age. I think the government would be well placed to take some of these ideas and recognize that they resonate in cities, of course, but they also resonate in areas in rural Canada, where people want and need more development but do not need to come cap in hand to ask the government to please put them on the list or to hire the right lobbyist to get them on the list.

I appreciate the opportunity to address these issues today.

● (1350)

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, just to clarify my comments, I was not relying on the Prime Minister's verbal comments. They are still found on page 348 of the federal budget, as they did not use disappearing ink. It actually does say that there will not be investment tax credits available for enhanced oil recovery, and that was contradicted 10 days later in the MOU with Alberta.

Adam Chambers: Mr. Speaker, I would like to just let the member's comment stand and correct the record. I appreciate that, but I do appreciate her judgment when she said that she has been misled by the government in what she has read and what its actions are.

Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to rise in this House.

Over the past year, Canada has been subjected to unfair, hostile and even capricious economic actions by the current administration of the United States. Most Canadians are united in our resolve to stand up against these actions. Many would even call it bullying. What many are starting to realize, though, is that in order for Canada to stand up, our economy must stand on its own two feet.

In the face of these challenges, the Liberal government has conveniently discovered a new-found respect for economic growth, resource development, reducing taxes and even government efficiency, although, having expressed a desire to make Canada stronger, the record is clear. Over the last 10 years, we have actually seen the lowest GDP-per-capita growth across the G7; in fact, it is nearly zero. We have seen the worst economic record since the Great Depression. In the first year of this Prime Minister, it has not gotten any better. In fact, it has gotten worse.

The Liberal government has the opportunity, though, to act on its rhetoric, to actually engage in actions that promote economic growth, government efficiency and international trade and move away from the Liberals' socialist death spiral, which always starts the same way: They need more taxes to give more things away. The problem is, the more they tax, the more they impoverish citizens. Dollar for dollar, citizens get poorer and poorer, which then increases the need for additional social welfare programs, which then increases the debt, which increases taxes, which repeats the cycle, and before we know it, we have more poverty and more of the socialist poverty that we have seen in countries like Venezuela, the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Will the government finally put a line in the sand, go no further and in fact turn around and acknowledge that those policies of the last 10 years are a failure? We have seen, to the government's credit, a repudiation of many of the Trudeau-era policies. In fact, it is

somewhat unbelievable sometimes when I hear these members brag about eliminating the carbon tax, when many members, including me, for more than a decade have been shouting that the carbon tax is not the right way to go. Now, somehow, the Liberals take credit for the elimination of the carbon tax and the benefits it has had. Will the government finally take that step in the right direction, away from socialism and toward prosperity? Will the UN's former climate czar really build a pipeline? I have my doubts.

As shadow minister for intergovernmental affairs and one Canadian economy and interprovincial trade, my speech will focus on interprovincial trade and some of the Liberal promises. Michael Jordan, the famous basketball player, once said, "Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen." Conservatives are here to be the ones who make it happen, and we can see on the other side that, at best, they will wish and dream of its happening.

There are many, many people who are favourably disposed to eliminating interprovincial trade barriers. In fact, nearly every economist and nearly every expert has opined on the importance of eliminating interprovincial trade barriers and the benefits that it would have on the economy. However, there are very few leaders who have demonstrated the will and the fortitude to get this done. The calculation of the benefits of interprovincial trade and the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers varies. Experts go anywhere from tens of billions of dollars to even hundreds of billions of dollars, but at the heart of it, everyone believes that it would have benefits and that it is only common sense to eliminate these barriers.

As an example, here are some of the things that just do not make sense. Why should a nurse in Manitoba require different accreditation from a nurse in Nova Scotia? Presumably, the human body is the same in Nova Scotia as it is in Manitoba. Why should beer being produced in Prince Edward Island not be available in Ontario? If it is delicious on the east coast, it will be delicious here in Ontario. Why should a construction site in Manitoba require a different type of portable toilet from a construction site in Ontario? These things do not make sense, and we all agree on it. The challenge, once again, is not just dreaming about it and not just wishing for it; it is about getting it done.

• (1355)

The Liberal government made a bold promise. It promised that by Canada Day, it would eliminate all interprovincial trade barriers. Canada Day has come and gone. No longer are we in the warmth of July. If anyone has been outside, it is pretty cold. We are well past July, yet the vast majority of interprovincial trade barriers are still in place. Many of the ministers and members on the other side promised there would be hundreds of billions of dollars. I have asked government officials, and they have not been able to quantify one single dollar from the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers. These billions of dollars that were supposed to help grow the Canadian economy, create jobs and strengthen our sovereignty are not here.

To be fair, the government did make some baby steps with the help of Conservative members, with Bill C-5, toward eliminating federal interprovincial trade barriers, but that was a mere drop in the bucket. Most trade barriers are provincially legislated and, therefore, require provincial legislative changes. Despite the many eloquent speeches and photo ops with premiers, the Liberal government has failed to eliminate these barriers.

While leadership has definitely been a problem, at the heart of it is also a framework. The reality is that some interprovincial trade barriers are simply there because of the division of powers in our Constitution. That is the way that the system has sort of evolved, but also, in many cases, those interprovincial trade barriers were put in place intentionally, to protect local industries, local economies and provincial industries in those areas against large national corporations or other things that would disturb and disrupt local economies.

If, in fact, we do not acknowledge this, we are asking provinces to act against their own self-interest. What Conservatives pledge to do and what a Canada sovereignty act would allow us to do would be to provide financial benefits and incentives. This would mean that instead of provinces being punished for doing the right things, which they are right now and which may be hurting their own industry to help the national cause to make us more sovereign and more autonomous, we would provide that financial benefit, which would help them instead of hurting them as the existing framework does.

We need to look forward in eliminating these barriers from coast to coast, but we need to make sure it happens in a way that helps all of our economy. The reality is that over the last 10 years, this economy has been weakened by socialist policies that have brought our GDP per capita to nearly zero. The first year under the Prime Minister has accelerated that decline. If we are going to be an independent country, we need to get our resources out of the ground and build Canadian energy and the Canadian economy. We simply will not do this by just adding more bureaucracy.

More government agents are not the answer here. The answer is not the Canadian government; it is the Canadian people. We need to embolden and unleash Canadians to do what they do best: create jobs, create wealth for our wonderful country and create prosperity from coast to coast. The sovereignty act would allow free trade throughout the provinces. It would allow our resources to get to market. We will build a stronger nation that is truly autonomous,

Statements by Members

and that will not happen because of some speech given in Davos. Our country will become stronger, more sovereign and more autonomous and be the best country in the world to live in, because we have the greatest people in the world in Canada.

That is why I call upon this government to do the right thing: Pass our motion, support us and make sure that Canada stays a sovereign, independent country, so that we have generations of success and prosperity, and we do not fall into the trap of the socialist death spiral.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

ARCTIC SECURITY

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, please join me in welcoming the new Government of Nunavut, Premier Main and his cabinet, to Ottawa this week.

Canada's Arctic security is particularly important. Liberals meeting with the Government of Nunavut can show that Arctic policy is more than language in a throne speech. Parliament must look beyond megaprojects in the south. Decades of chronic underinvestment means northerners are in overcrowded housing, with limited health services and aging infrastructure. This reality creates security threats. The Arctic cannot be secure if the people who live there are not.

During *Qaummagiaq*, a time of the return of the sun, Inuit start celebrating the passage of *Tauvigjuaq*, a time of great darkness. Canada, like the return of the sun, must bring hope that life will bustle again. Working with the new Government of Nunavut can ensure that investments are provided to help keep the Arctic secure.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, small businesses in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia and across Canada are being targeted by organized extortion. Businesses are receiving threats. Families are afraid, and communities are under real pressure from criminal groups that use fear and violence. This is happening in our neighbourhoods and on our streets, and it requires urgent action from Parliament.

Our government has introduced important public safety legislation, including Bill C-2, Bill C-12 and Bill C-14, to give law enforcement stronger tools to fight organized crime, strengthen Canada's bail system and toughen sentences for serious and violent crimes.

Statements by Members

I call on the Conservatives to stop delaying and allow these bills to pass quickly, so law enforcement can confront organized extortion and better protect Canadians.

* * *

COST OF FOOD

Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last year I met with Holly Laird, executive director of the Regina Farmers' Market, whose organization had developed a program that was both inspiring and depressing.

The Regina Farmers' Market had partnered with the YWCA to hand out food coupons so that families could afford to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. While it is inspiring to see neighbours helping neighbours, it is depressing that we now live in a country where food banks and food coupons are increasingly becoming the norm.

Last year, the Prime Minister said that Canadians should judge him based on the prices at the grocery store. The best way to bring down grocery prices is to cancel the industrial carbon tax, the federal fuel standard and the burdensome labelling and packaging requirements that are driving up food costs in the first place. This would be much better than the Liberals' makeshift solution of temporary tax credits, which only serve to make people even more dependent on another government program.

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ROBBIE BURNS DAY

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents in New Scotland, proudly wearing the Nova Scotia tartan thoughtfully given to me by my sister-in-law at Christmas, to recognize that this past Sunday, January 25, was Robbie Burns Day.

This tradition honours the bard, who was an 18th-century giant of poetry and literature. At a time when Scottish culture was on the decline, Robbie Burns reinvigorated Scottish pride. He is called the poet of the people because he wrote in common language for all readers, using his poetry to advocate for important causes like women's rights. Burns continues to be rightfully regarded as one of the greatest Scots.

I look forward to attending the annual Robbie Burns dinner on the Hill tonight, and I encourage my colleagues to attend. They should wear their plaid, get a plate of haggis and enjoy performances by pipers and Highland dancers.

Slàinte mhath.

The Speaker: We shall see the member there.

The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore.

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AUTO INDUSTRY

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear about this new trade deal with China. All we see is that Canada gives and China gets.

The Prime Minister is calling this a strategic partnership, but for Windsor workers it looks like a raw deal. He is opening the door to

nearly 50,000 Chinese electric vehicles and flooding our market while getting nothing concrete in return for our auto sector. There is no permanent tariff relief for Windsor and zero protection for Canadian auto jobs.

Windsor is the backbone of Canada's auto industry. Thousands of families depend on these jobs, yet this deal undercuts the very companies investing in Windsor. Even Canada's auto sector is warning us that this creates uncertainty and threatens long-term stability.

Canada deserves trade deals that protect our auto workers, not deals that sell them out.

* * *

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today we remember the victims of the Islamophobic attack at the Quebec City mosque. I remember Mamadou Tanou Barry, Ibrahima Barry, Aboubaker Thabti, Khaled Belkacemi, Azzedine Soufiane and Abdelkrim Hassane: six lives cut short in a place of peace, spirituality and reflection, and 17 children left fatherless.

I am also thinking of the survivors, including Aymen Derbali, whose life was forever changed. This tragedy reminds us of an essential truth: Hatred thrives on silence, prejudice and the trivialization of hate speech. Since racism can masquerade as respectable or reasonable speech, we have a collective responsibility to name this neo-racism, condemn it, fight it, and build a society grounded in dignity, a society bound by mutual respect and fellowship.

Beyond our differences, together we are one, and only one, human race. In the face of hate, silence is no longer an option.

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[*English*]

CANADIAN VALUES

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when I was growing up, I learned a core Canadian value: Canada succeeds when people are free to make choices for themselves. In Davos, the Prime Minister signalled different values. He believes markets should not follow people's choices but be set by regulators, banks and global institutions. He believes that individual choice should be replaced by imposed outcomes decided by a small group of elites. However, that philosophy rejects a core Canadian value: freedom.

Freedom is like the family in my riding who took a failing plastics factory, bought by their grandfather in the 1960s, and turned it into a world-class producer of anti-doping kits for the Olympics. Freedom is like the Ugly Potato Day at the Heppell's farm in Surrey, where thousands of kilos of wonky potatoes that grocery stores do not want are given away for free to families who absolutely do want them.

Those ideas do not come from Davos. They come from free Canadians solving real problems in the real world.

Now, that is a real Canadian value we can take straight to the bank.

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TAMIL HERITAGE MONTH

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in January we celebrate Tamil Heritage Month. Earlier this month in India, I saw first-hand the global strength of the Tamil spirit when I spoke at the World Tamil Diaspora Day in Chennai.

Tamil is the oldest spoken classical language in existence and is spoken by over 75 million people globally. Canada is now home to the largest Tamil diaspora outside of Asia. It is a community that has flourished here for decades. Tamil Canadians live in every province and territory, strengthening our national fabric each day.

I invite all members to join me in celebrating this vibrant heritage with Tamils in their communities.

Yaadhum Oore Yaavarum Kelir. Every town is my hometown and everyone is my kin.

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COST OF LIVING

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I heard over and over again the new attempt at a temporary solution on inflation. How can this government justify being responsible for driving up inflation and then give a benefit because people cannot afford to buy groceries and essentials on their own? Think about what this message actually is. It says, here, let the Liberal government help people pay for groceries and basic necessities because of the Liberal policies making it more expensive.

When will the Liberals learn to stop trying to buy their way out of problems? Learn the lesson. Get rid of the taxes and the splash-the-cash spending driving inflation. Cut the fuel standards tax, the industrial carbon tax and the food packaging tax, and stop the billions of dollars in misspent money.

Fiscal responsibility keeps inflation in check. When will the Liberals take our advice and implement real solutions to the affordability problem in Canada?

Statements by Members

• (1410)

[Translation]

ROBERT GRENIER

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec has lost a great explorer. Robert Grenier, a figurehead in the world of underwater archaeology, has passed away.

Robert Grenier was a world-renowned expert who had worked for Parks Canada since the 1960s. He was even featured on the cover of National Geographic. His greatest achievement was the discovery of the *San Juan*, a 16th-century whaling ship, off the coast of Labrador, proving that the Basques were present in the Americas even before the founding of New France. Mr. Grenier also initiated the searches that led to the discovery of the ships from John Franklin's ill-fated Arctic expedition.

A minister once compared Robert Grenier to Indiana Jones, and while he definitely had the same charisma and love for life, the difference is that he worked for UNESCO, fighting to protect sunken treasures from looters.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to extend my sincere condolences to his wife, Caroline, and his children, Pierre and Mathilde, who courageously supported him through illness until his soul set sail one last time.

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[English]

STEPHEN BISS

Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honour Stephen Biss, a friend and a respected member of our Mississauga—Erin Mills community, who passed away suddenly and peacefully.

Stephen was a dedicated community builder who believed in public service. I loved our conversations about public health, the environment and so much more. He gave more than four decades of his life to the practice of criminal law. Even in retirement, he continued to mentor, advise and advocate, always standing up for others. I was fortunate to know Stephen as a friend, and I will always value his warmth, his insight and his genuine love for his community.

On behalf of Mississauga—Erin Mills, I extend my deepest condolences to his daughters Michèle and Renée, his wife Karen and the entire family. His legacy will live on forever.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Skeena—Bulkley Valley is ready to build. Conservatives worked with the government to pass Bill C-5 so that the Prime Minister could approve projects quickly while cutting red tape. However, after a year of speeches, no single project has been approved and no barriers have been removed.

Statements by Members

Skeena—Bulkley Valley is already contributing and is asking for a chance to invest, build and work. The Stewart World Port expansion, the Telkwa coal project, the Endako mine and Terrace industrial lands are real projects that mean real jobs, stronger businesses and stable futures for families in our regions.

When we build and export, incomes rise and life becomes more affordable. That is why, today, we introduced a motion to pass a Canadian sovereignty act that would repeal federal measures that block and punish project development, would reward hard-working Canadians who build and invest, and would protect Canadian innovation and our economic sovereignty.

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[*Translation*]

FOOD SECURITY

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the cost of food is a heavy strain on the budgets of Canadian families, including families in my riding. Our government has put forward concrete measures to ease that strain. This year, the new Canada groceries and essentials benefit will put up to \$1,890 back in the pockets of families of four.

I also want to acknowledge the outstanding work of organizations in my riding that support food security, with assistance from the local food infrastructure fund, for one, which supports food banks, community kitchens, community gardens and more, and provides families back home with practical help.

I want to highlight the work of Moisson Haut-Saint-François, the Cuisines collectives du Haut-Saint-François, Terre libre, the Maison des jeunes de Coaticook and the Maison des jeunes de Stanstead, as well as the Sunnyside elementary school, which operate projects under this program that received \$20 million in renewed investments.

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[*English*]

FOOD INFLATION

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every Canadian knows the feeling of standing in the grocery aisle, looking at the total and wondering how it got this expensive. Canada is number one in the G7 for food inflation and our food inflation is double what it is in the U.S. This is in large part due to the industrial carbon tax and the Liberal fuel standards tax, which both drive up taxes for farmers, truckers and everyone who brings food to the table. Families see the impact at the grocery store. Beef is up nearly 17%, apples up 10%, coffee up 41% and baby formula up 6%.

Groceries are projected to cost families an extra \$1,000 compared to last year, and Canadian families just cannot keep up. Conservatives are ready to fast-track real solutions and lower food prices by eliminating the industrial carbon tax, scrapping the fuel standards tax, boosting competition in grocery chains and cutting red tape for farmers.

Will the Liberal government act now, or will it keep asking Canadian families to absorb these costs?

• (1415)

CANADIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATO

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Davenport, I have veterans who served in Afghanistan. When I ask them about their service, the answer is simple. They are proud to have served. They are proud Canadians. Let the record be clear. Canada is a founding member of NATO. We have participated in nearly every mission since 1949. More than 40,000 Canadians served in Afghanistan, and 158 made the ultimate sacrifice.

Our soldiers did not stand back. They led allied combat operations in Kandahar, one of the most dangerous provinces in the country. Today, Canada leads NATO's largest forward presence in Latvia, with 2,200 troops standing firm against Russian aggression. Our sailors, soldiers and aviators are second to none. Canada shows up. Canada leads. Canada keeps its word.

As the Prime Minister reminded the world last week, Canada thrives because we are Canadian. Our veterans' sacrifice will never be forgotten.

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THE ECONOMY

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives worked with the government to pass Bill C-5, giving the Prime Minister extraordinary power to approve major projects quickly.

The same spirit of co-operation should bring the House together to support a Canadian sovereignty act, which would cut delays for everyone and put Canadians back in control of our destiny. The Major Projects Office is supposed to be a workaround for government delay and a fast pass for anointed projects, but the Prime Minister's words are moving faster than the work, turning the MPO into another bottleneck to prosperity. This is where our proposed sovereignty act comes in. Productivity is inseparable from affordability. When we build more and export more, productivity rises. Higher productivity drives higher incomes, making life more affordable. Canadians should not be forced to choose between moving major projects forward and getting government out of the way.

This is why we are putting forward a sovereignty act. We call on all parties to support it.

HON. KIRSTY DUNCAN

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's news of the passing of Kirsty Duncan, the former member for Etobicoke North, reverberated throughout the offices and corridors of the Canadian Parliament. We are all grieving the loss of a thoughtful, vibrant, intelligent, strong and kind person who served Canadians with grace and kindness.

Kirsty Duncan stood out in our small class of new Liberal MPs in 2008. While she was kind, we learned to never mistake her kindness for her strength, her feistiness and her principled nature. She brought academic rigour, curiosity and science to everything she did. She was a fierce defender of multiculturalism and a voice for those who face economic challenges. She called for respect, dignity and accountability for athletes and artists so they could work and play without fear or exploitation. She loved highland dancing and roared with laughter when she saw me trying to do it. She was, as always, encouraging, despite my limitations.

To Sven, her husband and partner in life, our hearts are broken along with his, but our resolve to live each day a little more the way Kirsty lived her own is even stronger now.

To young women who saw in her a model for sports, dance, academics, politics and public service, let us all commit to being just a little more noble and a little kinder.

Godspeed to my friend Kirsty.

ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister held a photo op yesterday at a grocery store, but something was missing. There were no price tags. He ordered his PMO staff to remove the price tags so he could hide from Canadians how much it costs to buy groceries after a year, since he has doubled food inflation, which is the highest in the G7. His inflationary taxes and deficits are a hidden cost in food prices.

Instead of hiding prices, why not lower them?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is obviously the new spirit of collaboration here in the House.

The meeting I had yesterday with the Premier of Ontario was an example of collaboration. We worked together for the auto sector and to build affordable homes.

I can introduce the Premier of Ontario to the member opposite.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a clear example of this Prime Minister's delusion. He holds meetings instead of delivering results. Results are what we need. He promised that food would be more affordable, but a year later, food inflation has doubled. It is twice as high as in the United States. It is the worst food inflation in the G7. Yesterday, he tried to hide that by taking away the price tags.

Oral Questions

If prices are so outrageous that he wanted to hide them from Canadians, does that mean his record is terrible too?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past few months, our government has accomplished a great deal. We are working on making the school food program permanent. We need the opposition's votes to do that.

We cut taxes for 22 million Canadians. Yesterday, we proposed a new measure that will increase benefits for a family of four to \$1,800 a year.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister held a photo op at a grocery store in front of food, but there was just one thing missing: the price tags. He ordered his PMO staff to literally show up early at the grocery store and remove the price tags. They are back up today. We went and checked, and they are really high. In fact, grocery prices are rising faster in Canada than in any other G7 country, twice as fast as in the States and twice as fast as when he took office. The hidden costs the Prime Minister imposes on inflation will not go away just because he tries to take down the price tags.

Why will he not take down the price?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, before I had lunch with the Premier of Ontario, I had a long meeting with the Premier of Ontario. I would like to introduce the Leader of the Opposition to the Premier of Ontario so he can learn something about co-operation on housing, co-operation on building the best auto sector in the world, co-operation on good jobs for Ontarians and Canadians, and co-operation on rising wages, which have risen faster than inflation every single month of this—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Canadians could eat the Prime Minister's photo op, there would not be an empty stomach in the country. He has had lots of meetings. He has had signing ceremonies. He has had grand announcements and new bureaucracies, but what he has not delivered are real results. His biggest promise was that he was going to make food prices affordable. Since that time, food inflation has doubled. It is the worst in the G7. It is the result of his hidden taxes, the inflation tax from his deficits, and the fuel taxes on farmers, fertilizers and farm equipment.

Instead of trying to hide the price tag, why will he not get rid of the cost?

Oral Questions

• (1425)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is something we do not hide, and here is something we are proud of: over 140,000 new jobs net created since the summer. That is more than in the United States.

Here is something else: wages rising every single month of this government, faster than the rate of inflation.

Here is something else: We cut taxes for 22 million Canadians. We put in place a national food program for 400,000 kids, and we are making it permanent. Yesterday, we announced a benefit for 12 million Canadians of \$1,800—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have never had it so good that 2.2 million of them are lined up at food banks.

One of the reasons is that we cannot get our resources to market. We worked in collaboration to give the Prime Minister exceptional powers to get things done. Instead, he spent the time on photo ops, signing ceremonies and reannouncing projects that were long ago approved. The Prime Minister's new bureaucracy, the projects office, has not approved a single new project.

Why will the Prime Minister not get out of the way and accept our plan by passing a Canadian sovereignty act today?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, part of how we move this country forward is by collaborating with provinces and territories, like the great territory of Nunavut. I would like to welcome the Premier of Nunavut, who is here.

One thing we have done in six months is agree on the Grays Bay port, which is going to open up Arctic sovereignty, open up the future of this country and make Canada strong.

The Speaker: I assume the Prime Minister meant that the Premier of Nunavut is in the area, not in the House.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course we love the Premier of Nunavut, but all the Prime Minister has are meetings, announcements and signing ceremonies, never shovels in the ground and never results that matter to people. Not a single pipeline has been approved. His projects office has not approved a single new project. In fact, he has not removed a single pre-existing Liberal bureaucracy or a single pre-existing antidevelopment law.

All he has to do is get out of the way and adopt a Canadian sovereignty act so we can get building and become self-reliant and strong.

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the last time we were in the House, the member opposite stood up and gave us a semblance or a reduction of the MOU with Alberta. The Alberta MOU is not consistent with a sovereignty act. The Alberta MOU will build a pipeline to tidewater. The Alberta MOU will build carbon capture and storage, will build nuclear and will build data centres. It will build our future. A sovereignty act would destroy it.

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, please allow me to extend my best wishes for 2026 to you and all my colleagues.

I would also like to share some of the very real concerns I have for Quebec and Canadian businesses and for jobs in Quebec and Canada. A speech, in and of itself, does not generate money. It does not create jobs, nor does it protect jobs. I gather that there are no negotiations happening with the Americans on trade or on the tariffs, even though President Trump is the cause of our worst concerns.

Can the Prime Minister guarantee that normal, cordial negotiations are happening with Washington?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the world has changed. Washington has changed. Almost nothing is normal in the United States at the moment. That is the truth.

Nevertheless, we are continuing discussions with the Americans. I spent approximately 30 minutes speaking with the President of the United States last night, and that included a discussion on trade.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I understand that the United States has changed, and I am just as concerned as the Prime Minister. We support market diversification. We have been suggesting that for the past year.

However, we do not want to turn our backs on Quebec values, which, I hope, are similar to Canadian values in some respects. The United States will still account for more than three-quarters of our trade for the foreseeable future. Jobs and businesses are at stake.

Can the Prime Minister assure us that a new trade agreement will be in place by July 2026?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is the intention of the United States, Mexico and Canada. The formal negotiations will begin in a few weeks.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, from what I understand, and this is meant to be reassuring, beyond certain controversies that may be relevant in many respects, most Quebec and Canadian export jobs depend on American businesses at least as much as on the U.S. President, and something serious is happening. That is what we are asking for.

Oral Questions

If the Prime Minister is more familiar with economics than he is with Quebec history—because he is not very good at history—then why did he not remove the tariffs on Quebec pork while he was negotiating diversification with China?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, the Chinese government has committed to reducing the tariffs on pork, beef and other Canadian foods.

Second, the agreement with China reduces tariffs on canola, which is an over \$7-billion market for our farmers and agricultural producers.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister now has sweeping powers to approve major projects, powers made possible with the help of Conservatives on this side of the House, and yet with all that authority and all those promises, there is nothing done. There is no progress on resources, no pipelines and no action on internal trade barriers.

The formula is not complicated; when Canada builds more and exports more, Canadians earn more and life gets more affordable. When does the action start? When do the shovels hit the ground? When do paycheques start growing for Canadians?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleague knows very well that the government was elected to build a Canadian economy that is more resilient, and the government was elected to get major projects done. That is exactly what the Prime Minister and my colleagues have done.

Maybe the member missed the announcement with the Premier of Ontario on important investments, for example, in nuclear energy in Darlington. Perhaps she does not understand that we are investing in port infrastructure as important as Contrecoeur or Prince Rupert.

There is good news coming in the next number of weeks, and I know the member will celebrate with us.

* * *

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member is right; we do see the announcements. We just do not see the action.

The minister is very good at running up the word count but terrible at filling in the details. The Prime Minister says he wants to build, and that is good. We agree, so we have done the heavy lifting for him. We put a plan right here in the House of Commons: Repeal the laws that block development, reward businesses and workers that invest in Canada, and protect Canadian innovation.

The choice is simple: The Liberals can actually vote to build today, or yet again they can vote for all talk and no action, just like he did.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we had a very important debate last year about the purported Canada sovereignty act. It is called a general election. The Conservatives put that to the people. We put the Prime Minister's plan to build Canada strong, to build it up with our aluminum, with our lumber, with our steel, and with our unionized men and women across this country. Guess which plan Canadians selected.

We expect a little more intellectual energy from the other side of the House. In the meantime, we are going to continue building this country very strong.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that thousands of manufacturing jobs have been lost in the last eight months. Those are the cold, hard facts for thousands of Canadian families under the Prime Minister's leadership.

Our party supported Bill C-5 because the Liberals promised growth and development, but despite the sweeping powers the Prime Minister has, no new projects have been approved, and not a single barrier has been taken down. Meanwhile Canada is losing investment, innovation and jobs to the U.S., driving down incomes and making life less affordable for Canadian families.

Conservatives have made a real proposal with a Canadian sovereignty act to remove federal barriers to development, reward Canadians who build and invest here, and protect and raise our incomes here at home. Will the Liberals support it?

● (1435)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will always be there to defend our people working in advanced manufacturing. Again yesterday, I was with Premier Ford. We announced what we would be doing to protect our auto workers.

I would like to remind my colleague, with whom I have a good relationship, to make sure that she understands how many jobs we have created since the beginning of September. Actually, it was 54,000 jobs in September, 67,000 in October, 60,000 in November and 8,000 in December, and we will continue to grow the economy and create jobs across the country.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, innovators and investors do not make decisions based on government rhetoric; they make them based on predictability, incentives and whether a country is serious about supporting growth in this country.

Oral Questions

Right now the government's lack of innovation strategy is pushing capital south, taking jobs, research and opportunities with it. This weakens Canada's economic sovereignty and makes life more expensive for Canadians.

Since the government has no innovation plan of its own, will it support a Canada sovereignty act to stop the bleeding of innovation and jobs to the U.S. and support real growth for Canadian workers?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that my colleague was very busy during Christmas, but she may have missed that Canada is going to be the second fastest-growing economy in the G7. That is a fact. We are building this country.

Yesterday I had good news, and I have more good news. In addition to helping 12 million Canadians with real help with food, with groceries, there is more than what we announced yesterday. We are going to make structural changes to make Canada food-resilient. We are going to invest in food security. We are going to invest in our country. We are going to make Canada strong together.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, The International Monetary Fund reported today that Canada can grow GDP by 7%, \$200 billion, by removing internal trade barriers that act like a 9% tariff. Photo-op MOU speeches and pizza parlour visits with premiers have not reduced interprovincial trade barriers. The Prime Minister's rhetoric does not match reality, and life is becoming less affordable for everyday Canadians.

Will the government support a Canadian sovereignty act, which would incentivize and give bonuses to provinces that build across Canada and repeal federal measures that block and penalize the development of natural resources?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad our colleague referenced the important report from the International Monetary Fund, which confirms exactly what the Prime Minister and the government have been saying for many months: Working with provinces to remove interprovincial trade barriers is one of the most significant things we can do to grow the Canadian economy, so I want to thank the Conservatives for having supported in June legislation that removed every federal barrier to internal trade in Canada.

I have good news: We are meeting the premiers in Ottawa on Thursday to discuss more of what we can do to grow the economy.

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we voted for Bill C-5 so the Prime Minister could approve projects quickly, but nothing has changed. I was in Yellowknife last week. Diamond mines used to be 20% of NWT's GDP. Only two mines are left, and one will close in March. In the last 10 years, 1,600 resource-related jobs have been lost, but our Canadian sovereignty act would repeal federal blocks and penalties to development and reward the territories, provinces, businesses and workers who build and invest right here in Canada.

When we export and build more, incomes go up and life becomes more affordable. Will the Prime Minister support it?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has one of the most vibrant, important and imposing mining sectors in the world. Toronto is one of the most important mining finance centres in the world. The Building Canada Act will permit us to accelerate work on mines like Crawford, on LNG projects, on critical minerals, on the Sisson mine in New Brunswick, on mines right across this country, on the minerals of the future and on nickel and the minerals that keep Canadians working. Minerals are going to be a core part of our economic plan going ahead.

* * *

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

David Bexte (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada used to be a nation of builders. We used to stand on our own two feet. Instead, Liberals are standing in our way when Canada should be strong, united and ready to build. Conservatives worked with the government to pass Bill C-5, handing it powers to approve major projects faster, but the PM's rhetoric has not matched reality. Not a single new project was approved, and not a single barrier was removed.

That is why today the Conservatives introduced a Canadian sovereignty act to repeal federal measures that block and punish development; reward provinces, workers and businesses that build and invest in Canada; and protect Canadian innovation—

● (1440)

The Speaker: The hon. Secretary of State for Labour.

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are proud to support our builders. We are proud to support the skilled trades. We are proud to support LIUNA, to support the carpenters, to support IBEW, and to support the ironworkers. We are building infrastructure. We are building major projects in the national interest. We are building homes. We are using Canadian steel and Canadian lumber in consultation with indigenous peoples.

Oral Questions

We are expanding our trade, we are investing in innovation and we are building the strongest economy in the G7. When will the Conservatives get on board? When will they stop getting in the way?

* * *

[Translation]

SENIORS

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, here we have yet another government IT fiasco. This time, the victims are seniors who have been struggling to receive their old age security pension since the new Cûram software was rolled out.

Some pensioners have been waiting for months—since May, in fact. They have not received any benefits for nine months. Other seniors have received overpayments, and even if they are not cashed, they will still have an impact on their future benefits.

What is the minister doing to finally fix this fiasco?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every person in this country deserves to receive their benefits on time and error-free. Our department works very closely with individuals all across this country to make sure that if there are challenges in receiving their benefits that we fix those challenges and we get the benefits out the door as quickly as possible. We will continue this work to make sure those benefits are delivered quickly and properly.

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is the Phoenix fiasco for seniors. The worst part is that the federal government was warned about this in a public service union report back in June. The federal government has known since June that it is unable to make OAS payments properly. Even today, absolutely nothing has been fixed.

How much longer will pensioners have to wait before the Liberals take this problem seriously?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to be a bit skeptical about the member's outrage. Software bugs happen. In this case, we have very successful software that was able to update ancient software dating back to the 1970s. Seniors can now access self-service options online and over the phone, making payments even faster. If there are any problems, we will fix them, but—

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

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been in office for almost a year now, and despite his lofty rhetoric, fewer and fewer Quebecers have enough money to pay rent. As a matter of fact, 20% of Quebecers admitted having managed to pay their monthly rent on time

at least once. In central Quebec, my region, it is nearly 30%. In Montreal, it is one in four renters. The Prime Minister promised to get things done at a pace not seen since World War II.

Can he tell us why the only things moving quickly are rising rents and rising grocery prices?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that today is Tuesday, but we have more good news, because I think my colleague was not listening carefully yesterday. We have made a historic announcement with the Prime Minister of Canada: the Canada groceries and essentials benefit.

Twelve million Canadians, including people I know in my colleague's riding, are going to have more money in their pockets to help meet the cost of living. On this side of the House, we believe that building strong communities is the way we will build Canada strong, together.

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, allow me a little chuckle. This Minister of Finance was quoted in an article in 2023.

[English]

It states, “Champagne says these 5 new measures will stabilize food prices ‘soon’.”

• (1445)

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member knows that members are not to be referred to by name.

The hon. member may continue.

[English]

Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the price of champagne.

[Translation]

This minister said that prices would stabilize. Why did he fail to mention that, for him, stabilizing prices meant that they would become increasingly more expensive until they were double what they are in the United States? This is the most expensive food inflation in the G7.

Why do these people never put their money where their mouth is?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, instead of trying to find quotes, my colleague should watch television. Yesterday, he would have seen the Prime Minister join us in announcing the Canada groceries and essentials benefit precisely to address that. I realize that it may seem insignificant to my colleague, but \$1,890 helps many families across the country. It is a serious measure for a serious moment in our country's history.

Oral Questions

I know my colleagues are talking over the question, but I believe that people watching us at home know that people on our side of the House will always be there to help them when times are tough.

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the latest data show that one in five Quebec renters has a hard time paying rent. This is a particularly harsh reality for couples in their working and child-rearing years. In the regions, municipalities are trying to do their part. Baie-Saint-Paul cut certain municipal taxes to help keep rent increases low. La Malbaie cut municipal spending to protect people's ability to pay.

Will the Liberal government finally acknowledge that its policies over the past 10 years have hurt purchasing power and fuelled inflation?

Will the government choose wisely and work with the Conservatives to implement a real plan to make life more affordable?

Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we cannot control every price and every detail, and we realize Canadians are facing major challenges. As the mayor of Quebec City said, when times are tough, it is important to give choices back to people.

What we are doing right now is giving purchasing power back to Canadians so they can make choices. This will affect 12 million Canadians. Couples will get \$1,890 back this year and \$1,400 for the next four years. Individuals will get \$950 back this year and \$700 for the next few years. That is what it means to give that choice back to people. We are giving power back to Canadians—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix.

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2026, a family of four will have to pay up to \$17,500 for food for the year, which is \$1,000 more than last year. That affects everyone.

After causing this inflation through their own policies, now the Liberals are feeling bad, so yesterday they announced apology cheques for some families to put a little money back in their pockets to help pay for their overpriced groceries.

When will the Liberal government acknowledge that its inflationary policies have failed and finally work with the Conservatives to lower the cost of living? It is high time we gave Quebecers and Canadians some breathing room.

Hon. Mandy Gull-Masty (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has proposed new measures to make life more affordable. Families in my riding will see the impacts first-hand.

I am thinking of the dad who will be able to pay for his son's lunch when he participates in a tournament, or the skates that a family will need to buy. These are things that affect the lives and the daily reality of Quebecers. In my own family, I am thinking of my uncle and cousin who go hunting to obtain traditional food. This support will put more money in their pockets, which will give them a better quality of life.

SENIORS

Eric Lefebvre (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our seniors built this country and they paid taxes their entire lives, and yet some of them are having to wait up to eight months to get their OAS cheque. That is unacceptable.

There is missing or inconsistent data on the 7.4 million seniors whose files were migrated to new software. Since 2015, the government has hired 100,000 new public servants, but it is not working. Public servants are saying that they have not had proper training since the software was implemented.

Politics requires courage. Who in the Liberal government will have the courage to stand up and solve the problem facing our seniors?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we obviously find it unfortunate if a senior citizen has experienced an issue with their cheque. The member should speak to the government, and we will try to resolve the issue.

That said, enough is enough. We changed computer systems, which is a huge undertaking. We have replaced outdated software from the 1970s with new software that allows citizens to manage their own accounts and register for OAS. That is enough of the opposition's fearmongering.

* * *

● (1450)

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while I now sit on a different side of the House, my priorities remain the same: standing up for my constituents and making sure their concerns are acted on. Last fall, I held a crime prevention town hall in Markham—Unionville. What I heard clearly and repeatedly were concerns about auto thefts and home invasions and the impact these crimes have on families' sense of safety.

Can the minister outline how Canada's new government is strengthening public safety and ensuring—

The Speaker: The hon. Secretary of State for Combatting Crime.

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome my colleague to the government benches, where he is already making a real impact.

In 2024, we had an auto theft summit and created a plan, and thanks to the dedication of law enforcement across this country, and focused federal action, we are seeing a downward trend in auto thefts across the country. On top of that, we presented bail and sentencing reform, which is going to make people who commit auto theft or home invasions face serious jail time. This is serious leadership for a serious matter.

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TAXATION

Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just last week, the Prime Minister stood at a podium in Davos in a room full of billionaires and global elites and lectured the world about—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: From the top, please, the hon. member for New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury.

Scot Davidson: Picking up from where I left off, Mr. Speaker, he lectured the world about honesty and naming reality. Well, here is a reality check for him. Canada now leads the G7 in food inflation. Families here at home are paying more for groceries because of Liberal policies that tax fuel, fertilizer and food production.

If the Prime Minister thinks honesty matters, will he admit today his policies are driving up food prices?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): The first thing, Mr. Speaker, is I know we want to acknowledge the member's acknowledgement of our Prime Minister's fantastic speech at the World Economic Forum.

I know Canadians were very relieved when the Leader of the Opposition said that never, ever, shall he or any of his ministers ever go to Davos to that World Economic Forum. They would not want to run across the President of the United States or the President of Ukraine or any of the investors in Canada, so the—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. member for New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury.

Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians would not need any rebates if the Liberals had not driven up grocery prices in the first place. So long as they keep imposing the industrial carbon tax and the 17¢-a-litre fuel tax on Canadian food production, prices will keep increasing.

Conservatives are ready to fast-track bills that would reverse the highest food inflation in the G7. Will the government stand with us and introduce measures to make food affordable again, or will it just keep driving up food prices?

• (1455)

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, despite that bluster, we are focused on affordability for Canadians. We cut taxes for 22 million of them. We cut the consumer carbon tax. We cut the GST for first-time homebuyers. Just yesterday, our Prime

Oral Questions

Minister announced the groceries and essentials benefit, putting up to \$1,900 in the pockets of working families.

It is time to stop the obstruction. Let us build Canada.

Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, food security is national security. Statistics Canada confirms food inflation has hit 6.2%, the highest in the G7. It now costs \$17,600 to feed a family of four, \$1,000 more than last year, with food prices rising twice as fast as in the U.S. Canadians know why. The industrial carbon fuel and packaging taxes drive up the cost of farm equipment, fertilizer and trucking.

Will the government move now to eliminate these taxes, boost grocery competition and cut the red tape on farmers, yes or no?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that member's riding wants to know why he voted against every affordability measure we have put forward. Just yesterday, our Prime Minister announced a groceries and essentials benefit that will put up to \$1,900 in the pockets of working families. It is time for that member and his party to stop the obstruction, get behind us and build Canada.

Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, people in my riding and across this country are tired of the Liberals taking far more money out of their back pockets than they are putting in their front pockets.

Food banks now see 2.2 million visits every month. Food prices are rising twice as fast as when the Prime Minister first took office. The Liberals' own reports admit that fuel standard taxes add 7¢ a litre today and are rising to 17¢, hitting rural Canadians the hardest.

Again, will the government finally act to remove these taxes, increase grocery competition and support farmers, or will it keep forcing Canadians to pay the highest food inflation in the G7?

Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of food banks, Food Banks Canada welcomes the introduction of the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, calling it "an important step to help people facing rising affordability pressures."

Oral Questions

While the members opposite obstruct real progress, we understand the affordability that is top of mind for Canadians. This is going to help 12 million Canadians. That is incredible. It is nearly \$1,900 that will help as additional support for families of four. It will help mothers with groceries, helping them with essentials at home and with their kids at school. This is real progress and real change.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Stats Canada confirmed what Canadians feel every single day: Life is more expensive. Fact: Canada is now leading the G7 in food inflation. Fact: Food prices in Canada are rising twice as fast as they are in the U.S. Fact: Nearly 2.2 million people visit food banks in Canada in a single month.

Rising food prices are hitting Canadians hard. Conservatives will support legislation that cuts red tape on farmers so they and Canada can grow. The question is, will the government table it?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for a party that talked about costs of living and helping families for months and months to stand up and fight against things that will help families is kind of hard to believe.

Canadians are watching. They are watching from the riding of that member, who is fighting against the very things that will help. Let me tell members, the Roots Community Food Centre in my riding said that as a community organization, they look forward to providing predictability at a time when community members are struggling to meet their day to day needs.

That is how we are partnering with organizations and Canadians to make sure that they have the safety net they deserve, and that her riding does too.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our goal is to help stop the struggle. Taxes such as the industrial carbon tax and the fuel standards tax are directly contributing to the rising cost of food. They are directly and negatively impacting our farmers' ability to affordably grow, produce and transport the food we need to survive. Removing these taxes will help Canadian families afford groceries and farmers produce them.

Will the government introduce legislation to eliminate the industrial carbon tax, eliminate the fuel standards tax and cut red tape for farmers?

• (1500)

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there was a study about the impact of the industrial carbon price on food prices, and the result was that it was about zero.

If we are going to talk about real things, let us talk about how we are going to help farmers. Let us talk about how the canola farmers support the clean fuel regulations. Are they standing against the canola farmers?

We are there to support our farmers. We are there to support Canadians. I hope that the Conservatives will be there to support

our groceries and essentials benefit because that will be helping 12 million Canadians in all of our communities.

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are determined to keep their industrial carbon tax even though they know it is making food more expensive. Another new carbon tax hikes the price of gas by 7¢ a litre with another 10¢ a litre to come. This directly jacks up the price of food.

Will the government axe the hidden carbon taxes so people can afford to eat?

Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, low-income seniors in Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke have been asking their government to take action to help fight the rising cost of groceries, and we listened.

We are helping with up to \$950 of food and goods for low-income single seniors with the groceries and essentials benefit. We are also tackling the root causes by developing a national food security strategy to improve seniors' access to affordable, nutritious food. Meanwhile, the Conservatives are blocking everything we do, and they have no good reason for it, just fake news.

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, everyone likes a cheque in the mail, but those cheques are written on borrowed money and they are going to have to pay it back with interest.

Last week, we learned what these Liberals have been denying all along: Food inflation is real and it is the worst in the G7. While Canadians are struggling to put food on the table, a nice little cheque in the mail may help with a week's groceries, but it is borrowed money and they will have to pay it back with interest.

Will the government finally do the right thing and axe the hidden carbon taxes so Canadians can have some real relief?

Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are controlling what we can, and we are helping Canadians where they are. We have increased OAS for seniors who are over 75 years old. We have protected OAS, ensuring that it is indexed to inflation, and we just guaranteed that low-income seniors will get the help they need to fight rising food costs with the new groceries and essentials benefit. It would buy up to 950 dollars' worth of food for a single low-income senior.

We are also tackling the root causes by developing a national food insecurity strategy to improve seniors' access to affordable and nutritious food.

What are the Conservatives doing? They are trying to block the real action that Canadians are asking for.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are shocked by their grocery bills. That is because Canada is seeing the worst food inflation in the G7. Paycheques cannot keep up with the prices, yet the Liberals are burdening our farms with fuel taxes and red tape. We need affordability from farm to table. Conservatives are ready to fast-track any bill that would reverse the highest inflation in the G7.

Will the Liberals immediately introduce legislation that would cut red tape and taxes for farmers?

Hon. Adam van Koevorden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there was actually a study on the impact the industrial carbon pricing has on the cost of food, and the result of that study was that it has a 0% impact on the cost of groceries. The number one cause of food inflation is actually climate change, and we only have to talk to one farmer to realize that.

I fully recognize that food costs too much these days, so our government is here with the groceries and essentials benefit, which is a rebate that lower-income Canadians would receive four times a year to assist with these additional grocery prices.

The Conservatives have a choice to make: Are they going to support affordability for Canadians, or are they going to keep standing up for the wealthiest Canadians?

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSING

Tatiana Auguste (Terrebonne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, housing and infrastructure needs are particularly pressing in Quebec. Our government has taken action by implementing targeted investments to increase the supply of affordable housing and support municipalities in carrying out local essential infrastructure projects.

Can the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure tell the House what practical measures have been put in place in Quebec and how they make housing more affordable and improve the quality of infrastructure for Quebec communities?

• (1505)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Terrebonne for her question.

Our government and the Government of Quebec have signed a Build Canada Homes agreement to accelerate housing construction and ensure that Quebec's priorities are met. What is more, under the agreement on the Canada housing infrastructure fund, nearly \$1 billion will be used to modernize the infrastructure needed to develop new housing in Quebec.

It is time to live. It is time to build together.

Oral Questions

[English]

JUSTICE

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are living in fear in their own neighbourhoods as extortion runs rampant right across the country. In British Columbia alone, extortion has increased by nearly 500%, yet the Liberals continue to ignore this crisis, so much so that just yesterday Surrey city council desperately passed a unanimous motion to ask the government to take some action. Canadians do not need more empty announcements or more meetings and town halls. Canadians need action.

Why is the government ignoring the safety of Canadians? When will the Liberals finally work with us to bring in mandatory minimum sentences for extortion to help 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, extortion is a real and pressing problem in this country, and that member has an opportunity to do something about it.

There are laws being debated in Parliament right now that would make it harder for people charged with extortion-related offences to be released on bail, that would result in deeper and longer sentences for people who are convicted of extortion and would give new tools to law enforcement, who are asking the House to pass the strong borders act on lawful access so they can investigate, charge and prosecute criminals.

The thing that these different measures have in common is that the Conservative Party of Canada has been obstructing them for months. I ask them to get with the program, support these important bills and bring extortion to an end in Canada.

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a former police officer, I know a crisis when I see one. Extortion is out of control. Businesses and families are being threatened, shot at and shaken down daily, yet the Liberals deny there is a crisis. They are dragging their feet. Some municipalities are even asking for a state of emergency to be declared.

When will the government stop its hug-a-thug policy, work with Conservatives, restore mandatory minimums and repeal the catch-and-release laws, Bill C-5 and C-75? For crying out loud, do something about this crisis.

The Speaker: I will remind the member to direct his comments through the Chair.

Oral Questions

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in this country, we have life in prison for extortion and mandatory minimum sentences when extortion is committed by organized criminals or with a firearm. We are taking this issue very seriously. That is why I have criss-crossed the country, finding out what is needed and where the gaps are.

Everywhere I have gone, police and law enforcement agencies have asked for lawful access. That was the second measure that we brought to Parliament, but the Conservatives have been obstructing it every step of the way. What do they have against catching extortionists?

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, extortion is exploding and terrorizing communities across Canada, such as Brampton and Surrey. Homes and businesses are being threatened and shot at. Families are living in fear. Some residents have recently fled the country. Their families are in fear for their lives. This crime surge cannot become the new normal. Canadians are paying the price, but Canadians deserve safety, not excuses.

When will the Liberal government take real action to stop extortion, crack down on organized crime and keep Canadians safe?

Hon. Jill McKnight (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the rise in extortion-related threats, shootings and intimidation across Ontario and the Lower Mainland is a grave concern. I know how much fear it is causing for families, businesses and our communities.

Our government is advancing expanded legislative powers so that law enforcement has the tools it needs to effectively combat extortion and organized criminal networks. Political opponents in Surrey put aside their differences to act with quick urgency. I am asking their Conservative counterparts to stop obstructing necessary legislation and work with us to provide practical solutions. Our communities need to feel safe at home.

* * *

• (1510)

THE ECONOMY

Kristina Tesser Derksen (Milton East—Halton Hills South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, our Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance made a historic announcement outlining concrete steps the government is taking to help life be more affordable for Canadians.

Residents in my riding of Milton East—Halton Hills South support our government's ambitious plan to strengthen and diversify the economy, but they know that doing so requires both long-term investments and meaningful immediate supports. They want to know what actions our government is taking to make life more affordable and if they can count on all members of the House to put politics aside to support affordability for Canadians.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a historic moment. We supported Canadians. I can hear the Conservatives. They are so happy, they are going to put that in their householders. They are going to say to Canadians that a family of four will now receive \$1,890 more to meet the moment.

I know that the Conservatives know in their hearts that this is good. They are going to put it in their householders. We are going to help them. Let us build Canada strong together.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to start the year off right, I would like to settle up my accounts for the Conservative Christmas party, but the member for Markham—Unionville still owes me \$100.

The Speaker: The hon. member knows that in order for a question to be considered relevant, it must concern government business and cannot refer to another member. He will be given a second chance because he is a new member.

The hon. member for Beauce.

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of chaotic, inflationary Liberal management, housing costs have more than doubled in Canada. It is clear that the cost of housing has doubled. In Beauce, one in five families can no longer afford to pay their rent.

When will the Liberals stop fuelling inflation, work with us and finally present a budget and a real affordability plan?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is more good news. I feel that my Conservative friends could use some. I have good news for my colleague and for the farmers of Beauce.

He can say that structural measures were announced in yesterday's statement. He will be happy to know that I spoke with the president of the Union des producteurs agricoles and asked him how we could strengthen food security in Canada.

We will work with farmers, producers and distributors. We will ensure food security across this country, and that will give him some good news for the people of Beauce.

* * *

[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Democrats just returned from Rankin Inlet, where we witnessed the challenges facing Canadians in the north. We heard stories of 12, 15 or 17 people living in a two-bedroom home, of folks on housing waitlists for decades and of extreme food prices, from \$15 onions to \$28 orange juice. There is no hospital, not enough jobs and unreliable Internet.

People are experiencing similar issues in communities across Canada. When is the government going to take real action to address them?

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians living across the country are going to be benefiting from our new Canada groceries and essentials benefit. This includes people in northern and Arctic Canada. This means a family of four will receive \$1,890 this year. This is significant in the north.

This is in addition to increases in the child tax benefit, the national school food program and \$10-a-day day care. We are taking steps to reduce the cost of living in the north and will continue to work with northerners to do so.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, Nunavummiut are seeking reassurance from the government. Nunavummiut deserve to know how they will be engaged in keeping the Arctic secure. They deserve to be protected and to participate in their own safety. Inuit have the expertise, knowledge and skills to do so. The federal government creates too many barriers, such as not investing in housing and not feeding families, which is keeping them in poverty.

Will the Liberals invest in the people of the Arctic so that Inuit too can keep the Arctic secure?

• (1515)

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working together with our colleagues in the Arctic. We are working together.

I had the chance to meet with the Premier of Nunavut just this morning. We were discussing a holistic approach to how we will invest in defence and our capacities. Obviously, operational needs will be important, but so will dual-use and multi-use investments as we go forward. These are the kinds of details we are working out.

I would appreciate the member's thoughtful, practical suggestions to get it right.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Bloyce Thompson, Premier of Prince Edward Island.

I would also draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. John Main, Premier of Nunavut. He is accompanied by several cabinet ministers for Nunavut: the Hon. George Hickes, the Hon. Craig Simailak, the Hon. Annie Tattuinee, the Hon. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, the Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall, the Hon. David Akeegok, the Hon. Brian Koonoo and the Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Business of Supply

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CANADIAN ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know a lot of members are sticking around because they are excited for the speeches after question period. I look forward to engaging in today's opposition day motion, presented by the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

I would like to recognize that I will be splitting my time this afternoon with my hon. colleague from LaSalle—Emard—Verdun. He is an exceptional member, and I look forward to his remarks after mine.

This is an opposition day motion that the Conservatives have put forward calling for legislation to be called the Canada sovereignty act, and then laying out a series of considerations they would like to see in that said act. It is important for Canadians to understand at home, though, that the Conservatives have not done their homework. They have not come to Parliament prepared. They have not shown up in the House of Commons to actually introduce a piece of legislation. They have, on a piece of paper, put together a few thoughts, and I would argue a number of those thoughts are actually not comprehensive to the work that is expected not only of parliamentarians but of major political parties here in Canada.

I want to start by recognizing that this is not legislation. We heard questions in the House today from opposition members who were talking about legislation they had put before the House. There is nothing of the like, so it is important that we start with that premise. The Conservatives do have a little bit of work to do to sharpen their pencils and show up in this place with actual legislation in place and not just half-baked ideas.

Second, let us take a look at what they have put on paper. There are areas where I will give them some credit and some areas where they are just blatantly missing very important elements. First of all, I think many Canadians would agree that in this environment, economic sovereignty is absolutely connected to defence and defence sovereignty.

I have behind me the former minister of defence, the current Minister of Global Affairs. She would tell the House, having been experienced in that role, that we absolutely have to invest in the Canadian Armed Forces. She was a great champion in her time on that portfolio. She continues to support the Minister of National Defence and is continuing to do that work globally today.

Business of Supply

This is exactly why we are spending \$81 billion over the next five years to rebuild our Canadian Armed Forces. My hon. colleague from Oakville East grew up in Kentville, but she also spent time at 14 Wing Greenwood. I know she would agree with me that when we think about the men and women who serve in our Canadian Armed Forces, in the Royal Canadian Air Force, those investments that matter for our men and women in uniform are absolutely crucial. There is not one mention in the Conservative opposition day motion about the importance of defence as part of our economic sovereignty.

• (1520)

That is a blatant error that the Conservatives have not really thought through. It is something that we have moved on. We are increasing long-overdue pay increases for the Canadian Armed Forces. This matters at Aldershot; it matters at 14 Wing Greenwood. The hon. member for Acadie—Annapolis and I are working with the Minister of National Defence on identifying additional housing in the Annapolis Valley. We think this is important not only for our Canadian Armed Forces members but also the broader community in the Annapolis Valley. It is something we will have more to say on.

How about trade diversification? Again, the Minister of International Trade, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the entire government have had a deep focus on building international trade. There is not one single mention of this in the Conservative opposition day motion.

We recognize fully that the partnership we have established with the United States, with the economic co-operation we have had for many decades, has been beneficial to both countries. We will continue in earnest to make that case to the U.S. administration, in order to make sure we can secure a continental economic free trade agreement.

Make no mistake that Canadians elected this government to build trade relationships around the world, and that is what the Prime Minister and his ministry have been doing. Our Liberal team has been building trade relationships around the world. I can point to the United Arab Emirates and 70 billion dollars' worth of a sovereign wealth fund that is going to be focused on investing here in Canada.

I keep referencing my hon. colleague behind me, but she has ties to Nova Scotia. She is heading to India in a few weeks, which is one of the largest consumer markets in the world. It is a democracy. Notwithstanding it is a country that we have not always had agreement with fully, the government believes we have to focus on the pragmatic and co-operative elements of enhancing our trade relationships.

We were also in China in the new year to establish a trade arrangement. This is not a free trade agreement, of course not, but it is to resolve existing tariffs to make sure Canadian farmers and seafood harvesters in Atlantic Canada have access to that market. There has not been a single word from the Conservatives about that this week. They do not really want to talk about how important that is to the five billion dollars' worth of export markets for Canadian farmers, particularly for canola in the prairie provinces, for the re-establishment of beef market access and for Canadian farmers to

export their peas, which is almost \$600 million a year to the Chinese market.

In fact, I asked Conservative members earlier today whether they even support the government's work to remove those tariffs. There was no response. They are not making clear what their position is. Our position is very clear. Part of our economic sovereignty in this country has to be to diversify our trading relationships. That is what we are doing. There is not a single word about this in the Conservative opposition day motion. Again, it is not a bill before the House but a few lines on a piece of paper. The member for Battle River—Crowfoot has not done his work.

However, let us talk about farmers. We heard a lot of questions in the House about farmers, but I am going to remind my hon. colleagues from the opposition that they had their moment in April to talk about farmers. In fact, the hon. member from Kelowna mentioned farmers three times in a question. That is three times more than what the Conservatives had in their own platform in April. They had an opportunity to concretely put forward what their vision was for farmers in this country, and there has not been a single word.

I will remind farmers in Kings—Hants and farmers across this country that the Liberal platform was comprehensive. We included measures around increasing business risk management tools such as AgriMarketing, for example. I would like to highlight the \$224,000 that the government is supporting the Nova Scotia fruit growers with to help establish markets around the world. This is but some examples of what we are doing to work concretely.

In addition to what I just talked about around the trade arrangement with China, it is absolutely fundamental to Canadian farmers. Conservatives love to beat their chests on this, but there is not a whole lot of actual pen to paper about what their policies would be. Rather, they continue to talk about any type of environmental policy as just being problematic in the country instead of highlighting, for example, what the Minister of the Environment did in question period around the biofuel policy in this country actually being good for Canadian canola farmers.

The members of Parliament who represent these areas in western provinces and who are actively arguing against policies that support their own communities have to ask themselves why they are doing this. Why are they acting against the interests of their farmers and their own communities when this is an environmental policy that actually benefits rural Canada? This is what I find perplexing.

However, I do have some good news for my Conservative colleagues. On the elements they are talking about around reducing red tape, fast-tracking national projects and focusing on building a resilient Canadian economy focused on tools to drive additional investment in this country, we have a plan for that. In fact, it is before the House. It is called the budget, Bill C-15, which is the budget implementation act.

Business of Supply

There are a lot of very important measures there, including what is called the superdeduction. This is around businesses being able to expense capital expenditures in a year as opposed to multiple years, which is an important tax measure to drive productivity. We are focused on putting the lowest marginal effective tax rate in the G7 into place. This is all residing in legislation that is before the House.

• (1525)

The Conservatives and, frankly, all members on the opposition side have to ask themselves why they are slowing down this progress when the government has measures to drive the economy forward and do some of the things the Conservatives, among the few elements they have, would agree with the government on. Let us get to it. Let us move forward and focus on that.

I will finish with this. We have an MOU with Alberta to focus on driving natural resource development and working on reducing red tape. This would also make sure that these are done in conjunction with indigenous people, that we have commitments around industrial carbon pricing to reduce emissions and that we have a competitive lens in terms of what we are doing.

There is no mention of artificial intelligence. Again, we want to talk about what is going to be revolutionary in the global economy. The expectation is that, by 2035, artificial intelligence will contribute \$15.7 trillion to the global economy. There is not a single mention in the Conservatives' economic plan about how the government harnesses that opportunity.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Madam Speaker, near the end of his speech, the hon. member spoke about the MOU with Alberta. We know Alberta has identified some of the very pieces of legislation listed as ones we want to affect through a sovereignty act. These are ones that are impediments to moving projects forward.

My question for the hon. member is this: Why can we not have both? Why do we have to choose between what he calls a Liberal vision and a Conservative vision? Why can we not have both the major projects and repeal the things that are getting in the way of building Canada for our next generation?

Hon. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, the member represents a riding on Vancouver Island. My question to her and her constituents is whether they would like to see a thoughtful approach to resource development. I can probably assure her that if I went to her riding, her constituents would expect that, yes, we are moving forward on important resource development in this country, but we are being smart about what it means for B.C. coastal communities. We are being smart in terms of engaging with indigenous first nations. There is not a single word about that in the Conservative proposal before the House today.

We are willing to take smart ideas from the Conservatives when they have them, but we have legislation before us that would drive projects of national significance and balance the natural resource development this government believes needs to happen. I am sure the member's own constituents would, in a very sensitive environmental area on Vancouver Island, come to her expecting a balance regarding how we drive this forward. Why does she not see the

benefit in that? She represents those stakeholder whose interests I expect she would see in this government proposal.

• (1530)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the words of the parliamentary secretary, and it was pretty impressive to hear because I believe we can be very thoughtful in this place.

It is interesting because the leader of the official opposition sent the Prime Minister a letter to say that we could co-operate, but it seems the Conservatives' approach remains exactly the way it has always been. It is the way they want it done, and it is not really to be constructive and productive. I have received several emails from constituents in the riding of Waterloo echoing the words of James Moore, who told the Conservatives that anger cannot be the solution and only approach, that there has to be thoughtful debate and dialogue, and that Canadians expect action.

I would like to hear from the member regarding what he is hearing from constituents on how we can better serve them, on some of the things the government is doing and on whether anything has changed with the Conservative Party, because we know this is not the party of our parents and grandparents. That is for sure.

Hon. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, the good people of Kings—Hants, for about 72 of 78 years, voted for Progressive Conservatives. It was a consistently blue riding, but it was a riding that was a moderate Progressive Conservative riding, and that tradition still continues. I identify as a blue Liberal. I identify as a business Liberal, and my constituents increasingly say that they do not recognize the type of party and the politics we are seeing from the federal Conservatives.

We will take ideas from all sides of the House. There are hon. members on the other side who I think contribute to the debate in this place in a responsible and reasonable manner. However, this will be an interesting week for the leader of the official opposition in terms of the membership voting in Calgary about what type of mandate they may give him moving forward.

People in Kings—Hants increasingly want to see a party and the type of politics that are about bringing people together, about finding solutions and about being reasonable and nuanced in our public policy, but increasingly what I see from the leadership of the Conservative Party, if not the backbench of the Conservative Party, is not a really nuanced and thoughtful approach. If they are serious about winning back ridings like Kings—Hants, they should actually try to find a way to be that way. If they want to continue down this path, it would be very beneficial for me and the Liberal Party to continue to hold the seats like Kings—Hants, because people expect moderation, not extremes, in their politics.

Business of Supply

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the motion today is in essence the Conservative platform from the last election. We know how Canadians voted in the last election. Could the member give his thoughts on a comparison of the Liberal platform versus the Conservative platform?

Hon. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I would go back to where I started in my remarks in the speech. It is not an actual piece of legislation. We have heard Conservative members reference the Canada sovereignty act. As far as I know, and I would have to check with the table officers, there has not actually been a piece of legislation tabled before this place. The Conservatives have simply put principles on a piece of paper and suggested that the government should introduce that.

I have hopefully reminded Canadians at home and my own fellow parliamentarians that we have the measures the Conservatives are talking about around reducing red tape, advancing major national projects and focusing on economic resiliency. That is in the budget implementation act.

However, I have highlighted a number of areas in which the Conservatives have not been thoughtful with respect to their policies today. There is nothing on trade diversification, nothing on the future of artificial intelligence and what it means, nothing on hard defence in terms of investments in the Canadian Armed Forces and where they stand on that policy, and nothing as it relates to some of the actual concrete investments in farmers.

Again, the Conservatives like to mention farmers, but there has not been really concrete policy about what they would do for Canada's farmers. We have a plan for that. That matters for folks in Kings—Hants. The last thing I will say is what we have introduced: a national food security strategy, which I look forward to talking about later—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The member is way out of time. I am sorry. I was distracted.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources.

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

Claude Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, during the last election, we made a clear promise to Canadians to make Canada an energy superpower. From day one, we have been working hard to achieve that goal, building major projects for clean and conventional energy across the country. We made that promise because Canada is a nation of builders, innovators and explorers.

Whether it is the development of hydroelectric power in Quebec, nuclear power in Ontario or conventional energy in Alberta, not to mention all the other energy projects across the country, Canada has the natural resources the world needs. Making Canada an energy superpower means creating jobs, increasing wages and providing opportunities for communities across the country. It means strengthening our economy to deal with the uncertainty that exists both worldwide and in the United States.

To start, we passed the Building Canada Act and created the Major Projects Office. The goal was clear: to accelerate the construction of major projects. Since then, 11 major projects have been submitted to the Major Projects Office, including the port of Montreal expansion project, which is expected to begin construction this year, and critical minerals projects that will strengthen our national security, such as the Nouveau Monde Graphite mine in Quebec, the Sisson mine in New Brunswick and the Foran copper mine in Saskatchewan.

I am also talking about projects such as phase 2 of LNG Canada and Ksi Lisims LNG, which are among the largest private investments in Canadian history, and clean energy projects that will provide reliable and affordable energy, such as the Iqaluit hydroelectric project in Nunavut and the north coast transmission line in British Columbia.

Together, these projects represent \$116 billion in investments in our economy and they will support more than 68,000 jobs in Canada. This work is essential in making Canada an energy superpower, but it is only the beginning.

Our government intends to speed up the approval and construction of all infrastructure, energy and natural resource projects. That is why we are implementing the “one project, one review” approach. We will eliminate duplication between federal and provincial assessments. We have already signed co-operation agreements on environmental assessments with three provinces, and we will soon be signing two more. Our goal is to sign agreements with all the provinces to speed up project construction, unlock major investments and create jobs across Canada.

We are not stopping there. In the coming months, our government will introduce our electricity strategy, a strategy that will generate billions of dollars in investments in clean Canadian electricity and our power grid. We will also be introducing our nuclear energy strategy, which will involve developing major nuclear projects to provide even more clean and reliable energy in Canada. This work will create jobs in communities across the country, lead to higher wages for Canadian workers and build a stronger, more resilient economy.

In order to deal with the U.S. tariffs, we need better cards to play. Our energy and natural resources are winning cards for building a prosperous country in an uncertain world. Making Canada an energy superpower does not stop at our borders. The idea is not only to accelerate energy projects here at home, but to diversify our exports as well.

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In a world where our closest trading partner has imposed tariffs on us, diversification is a necessity. Diversifying our exports improves our resilience, strengthens our industries and protects our jobs. Diversification allows us to build a strong economy that provides good jobs and good wages for Canadians. Our government has signed 12 trade and security deals on four continents in six months. The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources is in India as we speak, working to expand our trade network and attract even more investment to Canada.

Here is our plan to make Canada an energy superpower: first, speed up the construction of infrastructure and natural resource projects; second, unlock major investments in clean and conventional energy; and third, diversify our exports to strengthen our economy.

This work must be done in partnership with indigenous peoples. Our government will always act in accordance with the constitutional rights of first nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. That is why one of our government's first actions was to double the indigenous loan guarantee program. Reconciliation must be at the heart of our efforts to build major projects because the best projects are those that benefit everyone.

By working together with the provinces, territories and indigenous peoples, we can make Canada an energy superpower. Canada can become a reliable energy supplier in a world in crisis because we have the resources the world needs, the talent to build a prosperous economy and values that unite us.

• (1540)

In the months ahead, we will go further and be more ambitious, because that is what Canadians deserve. We are building Canada strong, with good, well-paying jobs for our workers. We can achieve all this while continuing to fight climate change, a topic our friends in the opposition never seem to mention.

Now I want to talk about our net-zero-by-2050 targets. Today's motion, proposed by the Conservatives, would weaken Canada's position. Their proposal to eliminate all environmental assessments would take us back to the days of Prime Minister Harper, when projects were stalled in court and nothing was getting built, even though there were no official regulations. The Conservative proposal would increase uncertainty and undermine investment at the worst possible time, when we need to build a strong and resilient economy.

Our government's collaborative approach is already accelerating the construction of major projects, and our agreements to achieve the "one project, one review" goal will speed things up even more. Our electricity and nuclear strategies will unlock major investments in our energy sector and ensure a clean future for our children. However, there is no mention of that in their proposal. Our work on the international stage is diversifying our markets to strengthen our economy. That is how we make Canada an energy superpower. That is how we build a country.

[English]

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member opposite, the parliamentary secretary, said that the Conservatives do not talk about climate change. A govern-

ment scientist said that the disaster that happened in my riding in December was related to climate change.

I have been in the House for many years, beating my head against the table, asking the government for a response in order to protect the breadbasket of British Columbia, the critical supply chains that run through my riding, the second-largest airport, and a border crossing. All I have received from the government is crickets with respect to an area that is completed related to Canada's ability to export to foreign markets.

When will the government take seriously the issues affecting the Sumas Prairie, Abbotsford and the flood infrastructure needed to protect Canadian exports and Canadian agriculture, and provide some semblance of security for the farmers and the people who call this place home?

Claude Guay: Madam Speaker, what happened in the member's riding is sad, but I am very confused by his position. He is the first Conservative member I have heard mention the words "climate change".

We know that the long-term strategy to fight climate change is carbon neutrality, to get to net zero, which the government is staying steadfast to meet by 2050. The proposal by the Conservatives today would be an unbridled race. There is nothing mentioned about net zero in their proposal. It would actually remove a whole bunch of legislation that could actually help us attain net zero.

I feel for the member and the situation in his riding. From a long-term perspective, we have to fight climate change and get to net zero. I am happy to discuss with the member what else we can do to help the farmers at the present time.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague with whom I serve on the Standing Committee on Natural Resources. I want to benefit from his insights.

I find it quite surprising that the Conservatives are trying to reaffirm Canada's sovereignty by proposing more oil and gas infrastructure. Why do I find this surprising? It is because the major players in Alberta's oil sector are mostly owned by American companies.

At some point, someone will have to explain to me how we can strengthen our sovereignty and wean ourselves off our dependency on the Americans by supporting American companies. Perhaps my colleague can enlighten me on this.

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• (1545)

Claude Guay: Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague on one point: Like him, I am a bit puzzled by the proposal before us today. However, here is where we differ a little: In my speech, I talked about clean energy and conventional energy. The government wants to do both, and we think we can do both. Naturally, however, doing both while meeting our climate change commitments will take a certain framework.

My colleague did not say so, but I believe we are thinking the same thing. This proposal is similar to one we have seen before from a certain party south of the border, where all the regulations were thrown out, as if that was the way to build an economy of the future. We, as Canadians, do not believe that. We believe that we can build a strong country while remaining responsible and holding the course on our net-zero targets.

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for his outstanding collaboration on issues that we are working on together. He is a tremendous partner.

As members know, I come from a region of Quebec. In the regions, we rely a lot on natural resources. We also rely a lot on energy. I would like my colleague to tell us more about ways that the regions are key partners in our government's new energy policy.

Claude Guay: Madam Speaker, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, I spend a lot of my time focusing on critical minerals. I therefore have the great privilege of doing most of my work with stakeholders in regions across Canada. We know that energy production and mining—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member's time is up. Resuming debate.

The hon. member for Thornhill.

[*English*]

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is good to be back in this place after some time away, at home in the community, time made longer by the government that took an extended break from doing what Canadians expected, which is what we are here to talk about.

I do wish you a happy new year, Madam Speaker, but I cannot say the same for all Canadians, who over the past number of weeks have watched what is becoming known as a reckless world tour unfold, one without a clear world view, at a moment when our relationship with the U.S. is uncertain and fragile, if I am being polite. At a time when Canadians are looking for reassurance about their jobs, their future and the country's resilience, they are instead given confusion, mixed signals, growing insecurity and, most of all, a growing distance between words and outcomes.

We come here to the House to hold the government accountable, to advocate for better policies and to serve Canadians in a fight for a country that we all love. It comes as no news flash to anybody that this country is under threat. Our sovereignty is being menaced, not just by somebody south of the border but also by a range of hostile actions and nations from all across the world.

We would like to think that our government would stand up to these threats and make our nation safe and secure. In fact, that is the first job of any government. However, what if the record of the Liberals over the last decade stands in direct contradiction to doing just that? Ten years of choices have steadily eroded Canada's strength and independence, leaving our country less self-reliant and more exposed over a full spectrum of national capacities: military, political, economic and diplomatic.

In moments of global uncertainty, leadership is not measured by the words spoken abroad. It is about the resilience we build here at home. I can stand here and exhaust my time, and far more than that, cataloguing the Liberal government's failures, from allowing foreign interference to take root in Canada to leaving our citizens exposed to intimidation by terrorist-led organizations or keeping critical minerals in the ground beneath our feet, minerals the world urgently needs to get to other markets.

However, Canadians do not need another inventory of failure. We have been there. They live with those consequences every single day, and they are seeing them right now more than ever. It is the same Liberal members who created these things, the very people who insisted they were good for Canada, who have doubled down time and again, calling others names for merely raising concerns over the last decade of what Canada did not do.

The Liberals are now insisting that they are the ones to fix it. Here is their big idea on an action plan to fix these problems: another speech, another press conference, another committee study, a report back, long after it got more out of control, another band-aid or perhaps another project office. Whatever it is, it tends to be just words.

Today I see members patting themselves on the back about a speech the Prime Minister gave in Davos last week. As somebody who has written many speeches, I give credit where credit is due, but here is where we diverge on opinion. This was before the public and private climb-downs that we are now hearing about. They view the speech as an announcement or a proclamation, and they view that as the solution. These things are not actually solutions; they are stepping stones. They are meant to communicate an idea, but they are not the actual actions.

One grand speech from the Prime Minister cannot erase a 10-year legacy that has left our country's voice diminished and nearly meaningless in the face of the global threats we are facing today. The platitudes from the pundits and the chattering classes will not put food on people's tables, build pipelines or create jobs. They will not leave us an ounce more independent than we were previously. Saying the right words means nothing when the right things are not done to match them. At least, that was the talk then.

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I agree with the Prime Minister when he says that Canada should rely more on itself, reduce its vulnerabilities and work with its partners who share our interests. These are things I think everybody in this House agrees on, and they are things that Conservatives have been saying for over a decade. In fact, they are the things we have been talking about doing for nearly a year now since he became Prime Minister. He wants to “build, baby, build”; to “invest more” and “spend less”; to make our country an “energy superpower”, or whatever the latest tag line is.

• (1550)

We agree with those things in theory. Since those words were first spoken, nothing of substance has followed. They remain carefully crafted slogans designed for a speech rather than a plan. There is no clear path forward. There is no timetable. There are no meaningful details outlining what the Prime Minister intends to do or when he intends to do it.

I know that I will hear more as I split my time with the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

What is worse is that our deficit has gone up, not down. We have not built a single mile of new pipeline or even cleared the path for it. The biggest achievement right now is an office that has added more bureaucrats. In fact, 96% of what that office has spent has been \$1 million on hiring bureaucrats. Not a single new project is even close to an approvals process.

Here is what we are challenging the Prime Minister to do. We want him to put his money where his mouth is. We said we would help him do that. We want him to make this country better. Let us stop talking about it and start doing it. There is a piece of legislation, a plan, right here in front of us in the House of Commons to consider.

It is the Conservatives' Canadian sovereignty act. It is a blueprint for an action plan that the Prime Minister seems to be missing. There are three main points in it.

First, it would restore Canada's standing as a competitive resource-producing nation by dismantling the laws that actively impede development, the same laws that we helped him give himself the power to override when we helped him pass Bill C-5. He has extraordinary powers now, and there are still things in the way. We are offering him that same goodwill in the House to speed this up.

Measures like Bill C-69 have layered excessive paperwork and duplication onto the approvals process. He knows that. He is slowing projects without delivering a public benefit. That is exactly what that bill does. Repealing the industrial carbon tax, the emissions cap, the EV mandate and the plastics ban would remove the unnecessary burdens that our industry has to compete with on the global market but cannot. The Prime Minister knows that as well.

That is why he gave himself excessive powers to clear the path for resource projects. I invite him to give himself excessive powers so that we could repeal all of this. We would help him do it today.

Second, a truly competitive economy has to reward those who commit their labour and their capital in this country, in Canada's success. The Canadian sovereignty act would do exactly that by introducing a reinvestment tax credit, which would eliminate the cap-

ital gains on profits invested in the Canadian economy. This would encourage domestic investment, strengthen productivity and keep capital working here at home.

Third, the act would finally remove long-standing internal trade barriers, which he stood at a microphone and said were gone. The barriers cost our country \$200 million a year, and they are still very much there. Just because someone says at a microphone that they are not there does not mean they are not there.

Finally, the act would safeguard Canadian innovation and intellectual property from being appropriated by foreign competitors, particularly those with economic and security interests that do not align with ours. We saw plenty of that in the last week.

We can do all of this right now and support sovereignty. Everything in the bill would translate to more jobs, more prosperity and, by virtue of this, a better economy and more money in the pocket of every single Canadian.

What is more is that these are things that the Prime Minister, in the past, said he wanted to do. It is our job to help him do exactly that. If he would adopt this plan, I think we would get to moving a lot quicker. We would have shovels in the ground. We would have more money in the pockets of Canadians. It is not that complicated. When someone says they are going to do something, from a podium or in a speech, they should work to act on that.

• (1555)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, obviously, I would disagree wholeheartedly on most of the points the member has expressed. What she just finished talking about was a Conservative election platform that Canadians rejected outright in the last election. Contrary to the misinformation, we have a Prime Minister who has been aggressively looking at expanding trade opportunities and exports for Canadian businesses, small, medium and large. At the same time, he is literally bringing in hundreds of millions of dollars, going into billions of dollars, of investment.

He has been the Prime Minister since April 28, when we had the last election, along with 70 new members of Parliament. This government is committed to building Canada strong. Our actions, whether in legislation or budgetary measures, are fulfilling our campaign platform. Why would we want to put it in reverse?

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind all those watching at home that it is this member who sat in that seat for 10 years and completely reversed himself after the election, instilling the policies that, yes, we ran on in the last campaign.

We are asking him to go a little further and, instead of talking about them at a podium, to actually get them done for Canadians. Canadians are waiting, and they do not have much longer.

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[Translation]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, as this is my first speech of the year, I would like to welcome my colleagues to the House and wish them an excellent parliamentary session.

We are studying a motion to restore Canada's sovereignty vis-à-vis the United States. Pathways Alliance members account for 80% of oil sands production and are 73% foreign owned, 60% of which is American. These companies made \$131.6 billion in profits, \$79 billion of which was distributed to shareholders, 62% of whom are American.

Even so, people want to talk to us about sovereignty.

• (1600)

[English]

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I want to remind the member that this country has what everybody wants. Beneath the ground, we have critical minerals and oil and gas. We also have the smartest people in the world to get that out, but we have a government standing in the way of all of that.

Yes, I would like Canada to be more resilient and sovereign. The best way to do that is to give the world what God gave us.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I also want to send some friendly new year's wishes, and I hope the 2026 season treats the member and her loved ones, and all constituents and Canadians, well.

I listened intently to the member's comments, and I think today's debate has been an interesting one. I know that we use references to the government under the leadership of former prime minister Stephen Harper when it is convenient, and I know that when members on this side use that example, Conservatives say that it was decades ago. I think we need to recognize that sometimes actions take time before we can reap some of the benefits or the challenges that come with them.

When the member refers to Canada's reputation on the international stage, I would like to hear the member's comments as to why Canada does not have a seat on the Security Council, because the first time we lost that seat in a decade was during the decade of darkness.

I think that this member is one who wants to see her constituents and Canadians succeed when she talks about co-operation. I want to see the same for the riding of Waterloo. I would like to hear her comments on that and whether she agrees with former cabinet minister James Moore's comments that the Conservatives need to have a real plan and that anger cannot be their platform.

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I will extend wishes to my friend across the aisle for a happy new year and wish a happy new year to her constituents.

When it comes to Canada's voice on the world stage, there is no question that over the last decade, we have lost the moral authority. We have let terror cells create a home, laundering money in our own country and intimidating our own citizens. We have lost our principles.

Foreign policy comes with moral clarity, and we have lost all of it under successive Liberal prime ministers. I would love to have the days of Stephen Harper back when it comes to foreign policy. They were when this country was respected.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Madam Speaker, last week in Davos, the Prime Minister outlined his vision to restore Canada's position as a leading middle power in the world. In the prequel to that speech last October, he reminded a room full of young Canadians that it will take time and sacrifice to realize that vision. In both speeches, the Prime Minister framed the hardship we will face in Canada to realize that vision as unavoidable, temporary and noble. He promised to always be straight about the challenges we have to face and the choices we must make as a country.

The promise of the Prime Minister's Canada appears to be this: Things are going to be hard now, but worth it in the long run. If we just hold on, the future will be better. We will be an energy superpower, diversified abroad and strong at home. This message has gone over well with Canadians who have the assets to weather the coming storm, those seeking stability and soothing reassurance in turbulent times. However, for those Canadians who do not already own a home and those who do not already have those sustaining investments, those people, and especially our youth, are faced with a future that keeps moving further away.

For them, the struggle is not about great power rivalry or global supply chains. It is about rent that eats up more than half their paycheques, groceries that cost more every month and having two or three jobs that still do not provide enough to live on. For them, Canada has become a country where doing everything right no longer guarantees stability, let alone prosperity. It is a place where they are being told their sacrifice is the price of global leadership, the price of a new world order.

The question they are asking is, order for whom? For these folks, it feels like Canada is asking them to continually give things up, while asking very little of those who already have the most. They are asked to delay home ownership so asset values of current homeowners can be protected. They are asked to shoulder debt, taxes and rising costs in the name of an abstract national good that never quite shows up in their own lives. They are being told that what they are experiencing is inevitable, the fault of global forces beyond our control. They work, they pay, they comply and the promise of Canada feels increasingly hollow to them.

Across the board, our youth are the first generation who will be worse off than their parents. Their parents are the first generation that believe their children will not be better off than them. The most dangerous divide in Canada today may be between those who are willing to accept that and those of us who are fighting tooth and nail to change it. When a system only works if the next generation accepts less than the last, that system is not stable. It is living on borrowed time.

The Prime Minister speaks beautifully about honesty in foreign policy, about taking signs out of windows and about refusing to pretend that old systems still function as advertised. That same honesty is needed at home because we cannot talk about building strength domestically while an entire generation feels weaker every year. We cannot speak of resilience while young Canadians are one missed paycheque away from crisis. We cannot claim to be investing in the future while systematically pricing that future out of reach.

We are told that Canada must be outward-looking, engaged everywhere and invested in everything: trade deals, partnerships, defence commitments and global leadership. However, a country that is everywhere abroad and absent at home is not strong. It is distracted. Being principled does not only mean standing up on the world stage. It means standing up for the people who live here now, not just those who bought in decades ago. That is why the Conservatives have proposed a Canadian sovereignty act.

The rhetoric in the summer and fall sessions of the House seemed to pit Liberal ideas against Conservative ones: We could have the Major Projects Office to fast-track anointed projects, or we could repeal the long list of legislation that gets in the way of those same projects. Conservatives let the Prime Minister have Bill C-5, giving him the chance to show Canadians through his Major Projects Office that his big ideas about big government would do the trick for Canadians. However, the Prime Minister's words are moving faster than his work, turning the Major Projects Office into another bottleneck to prosperity.

• (1605)

After announcements in September, October and November referring two tranches of projects to the MPO, we have heard nothing. Referring a project to the MPO does not mean that it has been approved, and none of the potential projects of national interest have actually emerged from the black box of the MPO to be formally recognized by cabinet as such, which means that they are not yet, in fact, exempt from the federal laws holding them back.

This is where our Canadian sovereignty act comes in by getting government out of the way by repealing the federal laws that block development, incentivizing the provinces to fully open their markets to fellow Canadians, rewarding those who reinvest in the Canadian economy to stop the flight of capital from our country and ensuring continued Canadian ownership of Canadian innovations. We do not have to choose and we should not have to choose. We should be able to have the Major Projects Office and get government out of the way for the rest of us.

Younger Canadians are not asking for special treatment. They are asking for a fair deal, for a country that does not require them to sacrifice indefinitely so existing wealth can be preserved untouched, for policies that recognize housing is a place to live before it is an investment, and for a government that recognizes that security starts with food security at the grocery store and that economic strength is measured in whether people can build a life, not just on whether capital can move freely in global markets.

With the Canadian sovereignty act, Conservatives have taken the sign out of our domestic window on behalf of those without homes and on behalf of those without investments to protect from the

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changing world order, because those generations no longer believe the government's story about future prosperity. If Canada is serious about building strength at home, that strength must include our next generation. That strength must include those who are struggling, not as an afterthought, not as a talking point, but as a priority. We do not need nostalgia from the past. On that, I agree with the Prime Minister. However, we do need fairness and opportunity in the present.

Young Canadians are not turning away from this country. They are waiting for this country to turn back to them. If we want them to believe again, if we want them to invest their lives here, then Canada must stop asking them to carry the cost of stability in a disproportionate way. That is what living in truth looks like at home, and that is the path forward that actually lasts.

I say again: Canadians should not be forced to choose between major projects and getting government out of the way. They should be able to have both. That is why we have put forward a Canadian sovereignty act, and we call on all parties in the House to support it.

• (1610)

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have been thinking a lot about this line from the Prime Minister when he was in China, when he said we should take the world as it is, not how we wish it would be. I think the problem with that line and aspects of his discourse is that it ignores the capacity that we have to create the world we want, the power that our government should have to imagine a world that is not one in which, for instance, strategic industries are dominated by powers that are hostile to their interests.

The CCP has a long-term strategy to dominate strategic interests. That is a strategy that will go beyond, for instance, the term of any president or prime minister, most likely. In that context, we need to use the power we have to develop our own resources and to establish democratically controlled supply chains for critical commodities, including development here in Canada that will benefit our country.

I wonder if the member could share whether she agrees that the overly cynical or even pessimistic approach by the Prime Minister is not warranted when we have the resources and the capacity ourselves to help establish democratic domination of these critical resources.

Tamara Kronis: Madam Speaker, I have been thinking a lot about topics like this over the past weeks, and what I think this really reflects on is the concept of agency. Agency is one of the real things that divide us on this side of the House from our colleagues in government on the other side of the House.

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We firmly believe in agency, and we can see it in this concept of the sovereignty act. We firmly believe that if we get government out of the way, the good people of this country have the ability to build their own lives, make their own decisions and move our economy and the Canadian dream forward. That is where we see hope.

On the other hand, the hon. members across the aisle tend to believe in larger institutions. They tend to believe in bureaucracy and in centralized control of things. I think this is one of the big debates that we are having in this House, and it is going to continue.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I find it quite surprising that the Conservatives are asking the government to get out of the way in order to ensure Canada's sovereignty. I would remind my colleague that the last oil and gas infrastructure project to be built was the Trans Mountain expansion. It collectively cost us \$34 billion. No oil and gas company is willing to invest in oil and gas infrastructure because they know that it is not profitable in the long term.

This is even more shocking when you consider that 60% of the major oil companies are American owned. What my colleague is saying, ultimately, is that we should invest Canadian money to make profits for large American oil companies. Is that her view of Canadian sovereignty?

• (1615)

[*English*]

Tamara Kronis: Madam Speaker, the whole thesis that the Conservatives are putting forward through this sovereignty act is the idea that we should stop the flight of capital outside of this country. We should remove the barriers to investment here, the things that cause Canadians to want to invest in other countries, and help bring that capital and investment back to Canada by removing the barriers to that.

That is exactly what we are trying to do.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I know the member does not necessarily want to talk about the past, but sometimes the past is a reflection of the current leader of the Conservative Party and what his mentality is. The Conservative Party, back in the day, did not progress the Canadian economy to the degree of recognizing that government involvement can make a positive difference and a positive outcome.

Can the member identify to me one provincial government that has adopted the principle that the Conservative leader has, which is for the government to just get out of the way? Does she not believe in national programs?

Tamara Kronis: Madam Speaker, I think it is incredibly rich for the member opposite, who keeps referring to this as a new government, to look into the past to try to assume that Conservatives cannot change and that we cannot put forward new ideas. From a government with which we have offered to co-operate, it is especially distressing that he continues with the insults and the rhetoric and that he is not willing to work with us on this act.

[*Translation*]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just want to say that I will be sharing my time with the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

Our country's sovereignty is not a slogan. It is not a political catchphrase. It is not just a word. It is certainly not a potentially partisan marketing tool. Sovereignty is having the actual capacity to produce, decide, invest, protect the national interest and secure our shared future. It is a strategic construct complete with a strategic plan and a road map, none of which are anywhere to be found in this motion. It requires institutional architecture, architecture based, as I clearly stated earlier, on a very clear and precise road map and strategic plan to keep us on the specified path. It takes a leader's vision and long-term leadership.

The Conservative motion is purportedly about sovereignty, but it offers nothing in the way of vision, strategy or national undertaking. It is about dismantling things and bringing things to a sudden halt. It is about taking things away and asserting sovereignty by scrapping predetermined frameworks.

A nation does not become strong by destroying its structures. An economy does not become competitive by removing its foundations. A modern power cannot be built on the Conservative Party's regulatory improvisation. International and domestic investors do not invest in uncertainty. Domestic and international businesses do not thrive in chaos. Projects do not go ahead when a nation or a country is unstable. People, investors and businesses invest in clarity, stability, predictability and institutional confidence.

True sovereignty is not the absence of rules. It is the ability to build capacity, including industrial, energy, technological and digital capacities, along with digital sovereignty, especially given what we know now. I am referring to the rapid emergence and ubiquity of AI. Sovereignty also depends on food security, strategic capability and innovation based on research and development. Above all, what we want for our country is resilience.

We live in an unstable and fragmented world, marked by geopolitical shocks, trade wars, energy tensions, technological rivalries and climate change. I would, of course, like to return to the subject of artificial intelligence, particularly artificial superintelligence. Sovereignty is not just about the present. We preserve our history, we shape the present, but above all, we shape the future. We cannot prepare for the future by forgetting or neglecting our young people. What we want to leave to our young people and our children is, of course, a very stable climate.

The world is also undergoing industrial upheaval. We have seen this recently. In this world, sovereignty is not built through isolation. It is built through resilience, as I just said. This resilience affects industry, energy, the economy, technology, digital technology, strategy, and the food sector. Modern sovereignty is not about isolation. What the Conservatives are proposing today is isolation.

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Modern sovereignty is the ability to be autonomous, but within a framework of interdependence. It is the ability to co-operate without depending on another country. It is the ability to trade without submitting. Our government rejects the false dichotomy between the economy and the environment. Obviously, we are building both together, because there is no future without awareness of our environment. We are accelerating projects. We are simplifying processes, reducing duplication, securing investments and modernizing our government. That is very important. In a nutshell, it is about optimization and efficiency.

We are building a national industrial strategy. We are protecting Canadian innovation. We are developing our energy capabilities. We are diversifying our trade. We are strengthening our economic sovereignty. Most importantly, and I cannot stress this enough, we are strengthening our digital and energy sovereignty. Modern sovereignty is not about returning to past models. It is not about clinging to 20th-century formulas. It is not about denying the changes that are happening around us. It is about looking to the future with clarity. It means thinking about geopolitics, the global economy, the energy transition, food security, digital security and urban security. It means thinking about innovation, our universities, and above all, digital sovereignty and resilience.

• (1620)

Modern sovereignty is the ability of a state to remain in control of its own choices in a constrained world. This requires what is clearly missing from this motion, and that is strategy, consistency, rigour, continuity, stability, governance, planning and, most of all, vision. Canadian sovereignty cannot be established with a motion. It cannot be improvised with a slogan. It cannot be built by tearing down existing frameworks. It must be crafted; it must be crafted day after day, investment after investment, reform after reform, institution after institution and partnership after partnership, something our Prime Minister accomplishes day after day.

It must be built with patience, rigour, vision and political courage. These four qualities aptly describe our Prime Minister. True sovereignty is the ability to withstand crises without collapsing. It is the ability to absorb shocks, protect our citizens, maintain social cohesion, preserve democracy and decide for ourselves.

What this motion proposes is not sovereignty, but political illusion, a mere promise in response to highly complex problems, an ideological answer to structural issues. Canada does not need slogans; it needs strategies. It does not need ideological simplification; it needs a firm grasp of the complexities. It does not need to go backward; it needs ambition. It does not need division; it needs national unity instead. Canadian sovereignty is not about turning back the clock; it is about looking forward to the future, a future based on resilience and, I repeat, competitiveness, innovation, sustainability, social justice, national cohesion, democratic stability and social responsibility.

I will close with this: Canadian sovereignty cannot be decreed; it has to be built, and that is exactly what our government is doing.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his extremely moralizing speech, although this House sometimes needs it.

Let us apply the same arguments used in support of the rigour shown by the Prime Minister recently. As a member for Quebec, does my colleague agree with the Prime Minister's historical accuracy when he rewrote the facts of the battle of the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City and its impact? Everyone unanimously spoke out against this and agreed that history cannot be rewritten. This is the same Prime Minister that my colleague just glorified today for his rigour on issues of national sovereignty. I think he needs to redo his homework.

Will my colleague help his leader get a better understanding of Quebec's history?

• (1625)

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for asking me to learn about Quebec's history. It is something that all of us really need to know. I am sorry, but I do not think I need to take any lessons from him.

That being said, I would simply like to say that we are not undermining any province in particular. No national project will be implemented without public approval, without the approval of Quebecers, who put their trust in the 44 members on this side to represent them. We can represent them by knowing their language, knowing their culture and, above all, knowing their history.

[*English*]

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a new riding name, but I have been through four elections to reach this place four different times now, and I thank the voters in Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies for sending me here again.

I have a really simple question for the member opposite: What is it that he and his government have against releasing Canadian resources, and releasing Canadian people to develop those resources, to make Canada the country that we can be? Every piece of legislation that I have seen from the government over the past 10 years restricts Canadians from getting our resources to market, including Bill C-48, the tanker ban, and Bill C-69. All of these pieces of government legislation have restricted the opportunity, the wealth and the prosperity that Canadians could be enjoying, rather than having to rely on the food banks and school food programs that the government spouts as being the solution for everything, when people would rather be able to afford their own groceries.

[*Translation*]

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I believe that my colleagues on the other side of the House all have one thing in common. Their interpretation of our government's strategy is completely wrong. In their minds, we are stifling development.

On the contrary, each of our projects, each of our programs, is an exercise in making an informed decision. That does not weaken our economy. Quite the opposite. We are moving forward while thinking about how each element works within a system.

That is what is missing from this motion. This motion is meaningless. It lacks a clear vision and a strategic road map. That is what I am asking the opposition party to review.

Business of Supply

If I could briefly return to the issue of carbon pricing, it attracts investment, creates jobs and makes industry far more competitive.

Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in addition to being an exceptional colleague, the hon. member for Bourassa is an expert in AI.

I would like him to explain a little more about how developing AI here in Canada will enable us to have a more sovereign country and what impact it will have on our national defence.

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I can answer with one simple statement. It is no longer a choice. These days, AI is part of a comprehensive, global infrastructure, similar to electricity and other such things. We need digital sovereignty that is based on the integration of AI. Rather than letting it integrate us, we need to decide how to integrate it and control it.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, The Economy; the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona, Justice.

• (1630)

Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a real honour to rise today for the first time in the calendar year 2026 to speak on behalf of the constituents of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

I wish all members of the House a very happy new year. I am looking forward to working in a spirit of collaboration as we get this year under way.

I very much hope things will be different this year. Certainly things started off the right way. I heard the shift in tone from the Leader of the Opposition in response to the seminal speech from our Prime Minister at Davos. I heard the very gracious words that he shared and the commitments to pass some very important pieces of legislation for Canadians.

When I heard that the Conservatives wanted to speak on a sovereignty act today, I was very excited to see if we could have a real debate about some of the major issues we have to grapple with to deal with the rupture in the global order and, frankly, the threat we have coming from south of the border, including among other things how that changes how we deal with our national security when we may not be able to rely on the United States.

How can we unite our nation? How can we work with provinces? How can we work better with first nations in a spirit of partnership? How can we build our ports to access new markets? How can we buy more Canadian products? How can we have a clear-eyed plan to drive prosperity not only today but also deep into the future?

However, much to my disappointment, when I actually read what was in the so-called sovereignty act, I saw that rather than dealing with these very important issues, we are getting a rehash of the same tired Conservative policy playbook that encompasses no more than a wish list of the oil and gas industry to gut Canada's environmental protections. Rather than making Canada more sovereign and

looking into the future, what the Conservatives are proposing would actually further shackle us to the United States and a world that no longer exists. Rather than working to unite the nation, what has been proposed is to bully and steamroll all who disagree with them. We know that this plan has failed before and would fail again, but now is not the time to be going down that same road and playing these fruitless games.

I think it would be helpful to go through a number of points within the proposed sovereignty act to really point out what it means.

Among other things, the act proposes repealing the Impact Assessment Act, which, for those who do not know, is a piece of environmental assessment legislation that rationalizes the work that Canada needs to do to ensure that projects are going to mitigate the environmental impacts they have. It allows for better first nations consultation and in fact imposes strict timelines on government reviews of those projects. Frankly, since this legislation was brought in, the reviews of those projects have improved not only in quantity but also in efficiency. This is because what it replaced was the CEAA 2012 legislation, which was so poorly written that projects, after getting approved, would just find their way into the courts and be hung up for years and years.

When the Conservatives call the bill the “no more pipelines act”, I think it is really telling. They do not want to talk about what would replace it. If we do not have any environmental assessment legislation, how would we even look at any different projects? Would everything just get approved no matter what? Notably they do not talk about any of the other major projects we have that could really grow our prosperity. There is no talk of things like a national electricity grid and what that could do to open up prosperity in many parts of the country, reduce electricity costs and open up new sectors.

The next act the Conservatives propose repealing is the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act. This piece of legislation, which was enacted in 2018, just formalizes what has been a half-century-long agreement of Canadian government after Canadian government. It is in place to do something very important; it is about making sure we are protecting some of the most dangerous waters in our entire country. When the Conservatives talk about why it needs to be repealed, they always bring up the northern gateway project, as if the act were the piece of legislation that caused that project not to proceed. In fact that project was so poorly put together, and the consultation with first nations was so deficient, that nine first nations challenged it in court and had it overturned.

• (1635)

When Conservatives say that just removing these pieces of legislation would open up our economy and drive it forward, what they are really hoping is that if we do not consider the environment at all and completely put aside very real concerns that indigenous rights holders have, we can move ahead with these projects.

Business of Supply

The next thing the Conservatives propose taking out is the federal industrial carbon tax. This has been in place in many different forms throughout our country. The first to bring it in was the Province of Alberta. It has led to tens of billions of dollars in investments in projects that have decarbonized our economy in really important growing sectors, as well as to finding ways to make our products less carbon-intensive, in many cases at the lowest possible cost.

To think that taking the tax away would make our economy more sovereign could not be farther from the truth. By getting rid of this type of mechanism, the country would face limited market access to the European Union as it brings in a carbon border adjustment because it wants its industries to be able to compete around the world. It has this new mechanism it is bringing in starting this year, and it is not the only country. The U.K. is proposing to bring one in. Australia, Taiwan and other countries are looking to do the same. What this would tie us to are countries that do not want to take action on climate.

The Conservatives also propose getting rid of the oil and gas emissions cap, but this is not even currently in place. Next they propose getting rid of the federal electric vehicle sales mandate. This is a mechanism that was put in place to ensure that Canadians can access electric vehicles. We see around the world that the adoption rate of electric vehicles is going through the roof. In Nepal it is 76%. In China it was 50% last year. The big barrier we have in Canada is that people cannot access the types of electric vehicles they want to buy.

This mechanism is about ensuring that those cars are available, which also leads companies to invest in the charging infrastructure that makes it better for everybody who has adopted the technology. It is also about ensuring not only that we can buy those cars here but also that more and more of those cars are manufactured here. It is a key part. We know that a key ask of several of the United States automakers is to scrap this program, but that would be a big mistake and would reduce the choice that a lot of Canadians are looking for right now.

Next I want to talk about how the act would remove the federal plastics manufacturing prohibitions. It is important to call this what it is: It is about getting rid of the ban on certain single-use plastic items that were found to be harmful to the environment and to humans. These are things like plastic bags that are finding their way into our waterways, oceans and environment. How does it make our country more sovereign to have more and more waste in our environment?

Next the proposed act talks about removing the federal regulatory restrictions that impede communication and advocacy by Canadian energy companies. Again, it is important to call this what it is: It is about removing the so-called greenwashing provisions, measures that every member of the House voted in favour of just two years ago. These are measures to ensure that when a company makes a claim about itself, it has to be able to back it up with evidence. Essentially this is to deal with false and misleading advertising. Again, I do not see how our country would be more sovereign if we give the ability to companies to lie about the products and services they are putting out there. All it would do is make our country

less competitive and give an unfair advantage to companies not taking the action they say they are taking.

There are many things I would like to talk about, such as how we can make our country more sovereign, how we can improve our national defence, how we can make sure we buy more Canadian and how we can improve our infrastructure. I look forward to questions from my colleagues to that effect.

• (1640)

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I just want to pick up on one thing the member said about the most sensitive waters in the world in his defence of Liberal Bill C-48, which blocked energy pipelines to the west coast.

Does the member acknowledge that foreign oil tankers are in the same ocean and in the same areas? Does he acknowledge that preventing exports from Canada does not prevent the presence of exactly the same ships, carrying the same products, in the same waters?

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, that gives me the opportunity to correct the record on a myth that has been put out there by many, including the Conservative Party.

For over 50 years, there has been a moratorium in place on the travel of tankers through the Hecate Strait. It has been in place since 1972. There are no American tankers going through that area. They go around Vancouver Island. Getting rid of the oil tanker moratorium would not mean that we would have more American—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, these are the facts we are dealing with. I would encourage my colleagues from across the way to have a look at that in more detail.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, as the day draws to an end, I must say I am a little disappointed. I have repeatedly asked some of my Conservative and Liberal colleagues to explain the logic behind wanting to build more oil and gas infrastructure, especially since we know full well that 60% of oil-producing companies are owned by American investors. They have made record profits in recent years, and 60% of those record profits are going into the coffers of American companies.

How can investing in these companies be seen as a way to reduce our dependence on Americans and respond to the tariff crisis?

Perhaps my colleague can enlighten me on this.

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned some facts that are accurate. Most shareholders in many of the biggest oil companies are based in the United States. If we want greater sovereignty, we need to think about the interests being served by the companies we work with.

Business of Supply

However, I now know that we have a lot of opportunities to improve and diversify our economy. Our government has a plan to make this country a leader in clean energy. That is something we are going to do.

[*English*]

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, the history of environmental assessments in this country is one in which we had a predictable, comprehensive environmental review of projects in federal jurisdictions from about the mid-seventies until 2012, when Stephen Harper repealed the Environmental Assessment Act that had been put in place under Brian Mulroney. Since then, we have had a very discretionary projects-based review.

I voted against Bill C-69 because, although the Alberta premier at the time called it the anti-pipeline act, I said it could just as easily be called the pro-pipeline act as it uses such heavy reliance on ministerial discretion as opposed to what we used to have, which was criteria-based and predictable. If federal monies, federal lands or federal permits were to be used, we would do an assessment. I think we still have problems in this area.

I see the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country is prepared to respond.

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I do not disagree with the premise of my colleague's question. I think there are actually a lot of ways we can improve how the Impact Assessment Act operates and how it can be more predictable. Frankly, there were a lot of recommendations that came from the task force that looked into it, and I think we should be looking at those right now.

The act has been in place for about five years. We are looking at reviewing the Fisheries Act. I think it might be time to do the same with the Impact Assessment Act.

• (1645)

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member spoke about bringing electric vehicles into Canada in his speech. I spoke with a car dealer last week who told me that his manufacturers have told him that they are not going to pay the surcharge that will be put on non-EVs. They will just not send them to Canada once the quotas—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the hon. member the opportunity to answer.

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, the number of EVs that have come have met the quota that we have for this year, so this is not a pressing issue right now, but we want to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): We are going to resume debate.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk has the floor.

[*Translation*]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Portage—Lisgar.

I am very pleased to take part in this debate, which is based on good will. Through this debate, we seek consensus in the House so

we can move Canada forward to meet the challenges we face in 2026.

Now more than ever, Canada is at a crossroads. We need to make the right decisions, secure our autonomy and demonstrate our sovereignty. We have seen this government take some steps in the right direction. We have some suggestions for additional steps it can take, and we hope the government will take them to heart. That is why I am making the following remarks.

[*English*]

In my mind, this motion and debate are goodwill propositions to address the challenges that Canada has to face in 2026.

[*Translation*]

Canada has everything we need. Other countries would go to war to get the natural resources we have. We need to unlock the potential of our natural resources in a smart and respectful way. It must also be done autonomously, to ensure that Canada has autonomy when it comes to natural resources and energy. This will ensure that we are able to sell these resources abroad and get revenues that will help develop Canada and its natural resources to their full potential.

That is why our motion recommends certain courses of action to the government, such as repealing the legislation arising from Bill C-69 concerning assessments and other things. I would like to remind the House that I introduced Bill C-375 two years ago as a private member. My bill essentially called for one assessment per project. I was advocating for one project, one review, as opposed to two contradictory, competing reviews that overlap with one another. I wanted one project, one review. Even the Bloc Québécois agreed with our bill in principle. Unfortunately, the Liberals voted against it two years ago. We were amazed to hear the King repeat our argument word for word in the Speech from the Throne: “one project, one review”. As I was saying earlier, the government has taken some steps in the right direction, and this is one example. However, we believe that the legislation arising from Bill C-69 should be repealed.

The same goes for the oil tanker moratorium and the industrial carbon tax. I mention them because those paragons of virtue over there never stop lecturing everyone about the industrial tax. For nine years, these people called us Conservatives all sorts of names because we wanted to abolish the consumer carbon tax, but what did they do? A year ago, they changed their tune. They reversed course on the carbon tax issue and got elected because of it. It is wild, because they insulted us for nine years, and then they reversed course. Today, they say it is important to maintain the federal industrial tax because it is important for other countries. That is exactly what they said about the carbon tax for nine years, and then they scrapped it. They started down this road. Now they have to see it through.

There is also the emissions cap and the federal electric vehicle sales mandate. I will not go into details about my personal life except to say that I have been driving a fully electric car for about two and a half years now. Yes, a Conservative can drive an electric car. Guess what? I bought it used, so it was half the price. Even better is that I did not get a rebate, and there was no mandate in place. That is the responsible way to sell cars and to offer consumers electric cars. They are not for everyone, but if they meet certain needs and people want to get one, then there is no need for a mandate, as is currently the case. This is an effective demonstration.

We also have other proposals, such as rewarding provinces, businesses and workers who invest in Canada first. Our leader made a very positive case when he proposed eliminating the capital gains tax for reinvestments in Canadian businesses. That is a sound solution that deserves full consideration.

We also need to create a tax credit for reinvestment in Canada to spur domestic industrial activity. We should provide bonuses for interprovincial free trade as well. Canada is a world champion of free trade, and yet sadly, its 10 provinces have a lot of barriers. The federal government has removed some of these barriers at the federal level, but the provinces must be encouraged to do the same, which is why we are proposing free trade bonuses and measures to protect Canadian innovation. We have options and avenues that are worth considering. We have already offered our collaboration and support.

● (1650)

Some members will recall that, a few months ago, this government passed Bill C-5, which sought to break down our siloed approach as a country in order to unlock our natural resource potential. Although it did not go far enough and should have gone further, we knew we were on the right path. That is why the official opposition offered its full support. Bill C-5 includes the substance of Bill C-375, which I introduced. The Liberals voted against my bill, while the Bloc agreed with the principle, which we now find in Bill C-5.

Yes, some good things have been done, but the issue is that, if we want to face the challenges, we need to live up to our responsibilities. The Liberals got elected a year ago by saying “elbows up” to take on the White House. However, instead of “elbows up”, we have been seeing “thumbs up”. On two occasions, when the Prime Minister went to the White House, he ended up doing a “thumbs up” with the President. A few days ago, in Switzerland, he lectured everyone about standing up. Funnily enough, he did not talk about “thumbs up”. No, he did not talk about those things.

That is why consistency is important, especially since, unfortunately, we are not seeing results. According to the government, Bill C-5 would enable our country to realize its full potential as an energy superpower by creating new trade and energy corridors that would diversify our economy. That is all well and good, but those are words, not actions.

Now more than ever, we must find ways to assert our sovereignty, because Canada is facing major challenges, particularly with our neighbour, the United States, which brings to mind the very interesting and intelligent remarks made by President John F. Kennedy right here in the House of Commons on May 17, 1961.

Business of Supply

[English]

He said, “Geography has made us neighbours. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners. And necessity has made us allies.”

More than ever, we need to get back to this spirit, especially today. Why is this? It is because there are two anniversaries we can celebrate today. First of all, Mr. Jeremy Hansen is 50 years old today.

[Translation]

Mr. Hansen is the Canadian astronaut who will be going to the moon aboard the Artemis II mission, which, as we know, is American. Yes, Canada can work constructively with the Americans. I want to recount one of the great events in our diplomatic history. Exactly 46 years ago today, six American hostages were released in Tehran. We were the best of friends at the time. While the United States was facing the worst diplomatic crisis in its history because a country had allowed terrorists to occupy the American embassy and hold victims hostage for 444 days, Canada sheltered six American diplomats for 84 days in the residences of our diplomats, including, of course, Ken Taylor, the ambassador.

Canada has had some great diplomatic moments with the Americans. We all wish we could return to that, but it will not happen overnight. That is why, now more than ever, we must develop our autonomy in terms of our natural resources, our economy, our knowledge and our energy. The proposals we have made to the government today would do just that. We all want the House to continue on this path to ensure Canadian autonomy by adopting this motion.

● (1655)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech and for speaking English. I congratulate him on that. I have a fairly simple question.

If this motion is so important to the Conservatives, and if they believe it is important to Canada, why not introduce a bill? If the Conservatives want to promote certain priorities, they can introduce a bill, not just a motion on an opposition day.

Furthermore, why is there no mention of the importance of our farmers or of defence in general? Sovereignty is closely tied to the importance of investing in the Canadian Armed Forces. There is no mention of the importance of artificial intelligence, either. Many elements of economic sovereignty are missing from this motion.

Business of Supply

Why do the Conservatives not introduce a bill?

[English]

Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, I want to pay my respects to my colleague for the quality of his French. It is very good and it is a great inspiration for all members of this Parliament to learn the other language, because there is not just one official language, and all the official languages are at the same level. I appreciate his speaking in French, and I hope he will appreciate my answer in French too.

[Translation]

Last August, our leader unveiled the Canadian sovereignty act. As my colleague is well aware, an opposition party can introduce legislation, but it cannot have any economic impact. However, since the focus of our action is economic, the fine professionals who work in the House will tell us that, although we may be very nice people, our efforts will not work.

I see that my colleague is open-minded and is smiling. I hope he will convince all his colleagues to vote in favour of these positive measures to advance Canadian sovereignty and independence.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, naturally, I will not congratulate my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk on his French, but I will nevertheless address the issue of sovereignty, a theme I like to hear him talk about. I will not talk to him about the Prime Minister's speech in Quebec City, because I know he cares a lot about historical accuracy, but I want to talk to him about electric vehicles, which he touched on in his speech.

In particular, I want to talk to him about the Prime Minister's commitment to rekindling ties with China by allowing imports of Chinese electric vehicles, which are clearly built by children, with no respect for human rights, and with parts of unknown origin, which will be able to control the data and perhaps even control the vehicle. Are we protecting our sovereignty by trusting Beijing's regime, as he likes to call it, or are we shooting ourselves in the foot when it comes to Canada's sovereignty?

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

Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question, but also for his passion. He is very passionate whenever he tackles an issue head-on. I really enjoy working with him on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The issue of electric vehicles from Beijing's regime does indeed raise many questions for us, both in terms of security and potential cyber-attacks. As I said earlier, I have absolutely nothing against EVs. I am living proof that Conservatives can support EVs, even without subsidies or mandates.

However, before looking at what is being done in China, why not also look at what is being done in Europe? Centuries-old companies, such as Renault, are currently offering electric cars that are extremely promising and that could be of interest to Canadians. The Prime Minister said in Davos that he was keen to increase trade with Europe. Why did he say that in Davos when, a week earlier, he was cozying up to the Beijing regime?

I think there is something inconsistent in the current Prime Minister's actions, and I thank my colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue for pointing it out.

● (1700)

[English]

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this place on behalf of the fine folks of Portage—Lisgar. After weeks in our own constituencies, all of us got the chance to come back with the country's pulse. The reality of what I heard from so many folks is that they are hurting. Their demand was that the time to act is now.

Families are anxious about tomorrow. Seniors are feeling incredibly squeezed by rising costs. Young Canadians feel exiled from the very future this country once promised. They are shut out of the housing market and left to wonder whether starting a family is just a dream for the few these days. Too many people are wondering if their jobs will still be there next month. Too many folks on work-sharing programs are wondering if that will end and they will be laid off in the very near future. Unfortunately, every headline brings fresh dread for so many folks, with economic storms brewing and troubles that seem to creep closer to our shores each and every day.

However, here is the truth that gives me hope: There is nothing so wrong with Canada that we cannot fix. Anyone who has listened to Conservative MPs, in particular our Conservative leader, knows exactly what I mean. We warned about these threats early and often. We raised the alarm on the housing crisis, which priced out an entire generation. We highlighted families being forced to choose between groceries and heating their homes. We pointed to the bureaucracy and red tape that have resulted in not being able to build anything on time or on budget in this country. Frankly, we were the canary in the coal mine. Today's big problems are not a surprise to us. We saw them coming, and unfortunately so many people are feeling it now.

Forces beyond our borders are real, and they are unpredictable, but that does not excuse the lost opportunity or the lost years of inaction here at home. I am not here to point fingers, but I am here to join a chorus of MPs who say we should all be focused on doing one thing, which is fixing the mess our country finds itself in. I stand ready to work with any member of any political party across this Parliament who is committed to the overriding goal of making life more affordable and making Canada a place where we can finally, once again, get big things built in this country. We must make Canada more self-reliant so we can withstand shocks, protect workers and thrive, no matter what comes our way.

Business of Supply

Now, this is not about delivering lofty speeches or getting applause from elite circles in foreign countries like Switzerland. It is about the kitchen table conversations where families look at their bills and feel their stomach drop, wondering if they are going to be able to afford next week's groceries. It is about being in that grocery aisle, where basics like beef, coffee and fresh vegetables, things we once took for granted, now feel like luxuries for far too many Canadians. Food, fuel, heat and a roof over one's head have become things we have to fight for, month after month. It should not be this way.

Canada is rich in resources, rich in talent and blessed with a geography that should make us the envy of the entire world. Let us be honest: We are not reaching our full potential. It is the direct result of decisions and priorities that have drifted away from the people who uphold this country and who have built this country. We acknowledged the Prime Minister's speech last week. Portions of it mirrored proposals Conservatives have championed for years. We want to unleash our energy and streamline approvals for projects.

However, rhetoric, no matter how eloquent, does not lower a grocery price. Let us look at the hard numbers. Food inflation in Canada stands at 6.2%, year over year, as of December 2025, which is the highest in the entire G7. We have now been labelled the "food inflation capital", an embarrassing moniker. That rate is roughly double what American families face, despite their own economic headwinds.

"Canada's Food Price Report 2026", released just a few weeks ago, projects that the average family of four will spend \$17,570 on food this year. That is nearly \$1,000 more for the same groceries: in fact, with shrinkflation, often less groceries, on top of the food prices having risen and being 27% higher than they were just five years ago. Food banks tell an even more grim story. In March 2025 alone, nearly 2.2 million Canadians were recorded visiting a food bank. This is the highest monthly total ever tracked by Food Banks Canada. That figure has doubled since just 2019.

• (1705)

Employment is softening in precisely the sectors that keep Canada moving. Recent figures show that over 566,000 Canadians were receiving regular EI benefits, with trends pointing upward. The workers hardest hit are those in trades, transport and resource industries such as truck drivers, carpenters, welders, pipefitters and equipment operators. Thousands more EI claimants in these fields reflect layoffs and project delays. These are the people who build homes, move our goods and extract our resources.

At the root of much of this pain lies our inability to build. Major energy projects are talked about and just languish. The broken assessment process remains intact, with construction permit timelines ranking Canada near the bottom of most OECD nations. Projects that should advance in years stretch into decades, inflating costs, deterring investors and exporting both jobs and capital. Over the past decade, Canada has experienced substantial net outflows in foreign direct investment, and while the precise figures may vary, we are looking at hundreds of billions of dollars of lost or foregone capital as money flows to jurisdictions with clearer rules and faster execution. Half a trillion dollars, a made-up number, is real money that could have created well-paying jobs here in Canada and, in

turn, good government tax revenue with a growing economy. However, it has been squandered. It has been wasted.

This is why we are moving this motion to advance a Canada sovereignty act. It is designed to reverse the exodus and to transform Canada into a destination for investment rather than a point of departure. Under this plan, individuals and businesses could reinvest capital gains into Canadian businesses without immediate tax triggers, ensuring that breakthroughs in technology, energy and manufacturing stay here instead of migrating south or anywhere else around the world.

Right now, when an entrepreneur sells a business they have built from nothing, a family parts with a property held onto for years or an investor finally realizes a gain from shares that they have been growing, the government steps in and takes a big slice. Capital gains tax hits hardest at the very moment when that new money could be turned into something new, something better, something Canadian.

The tax does not just take dollars; it stops people from selling and reinvesting here at home. It locks capital away in old assets instead of letting it flow into tomorrow's breakthroughs. Instead of turning those proceeds into expansion or new businesses, it just sits there or, worse, the seller moves the capital to places where the taxes on reinvestment are lower and regulations lighter. We end up losing new investments and the jobs that go with them, all of which could have stayed in Canadian hands for the next generation to inherit and build upon. This is not just about investors or balance sheets. This is about unleashing billions of dollars in capital that has simply been waiting for green lights from government. It is about turning Canada into the best place in the world, not just to live but to start something and to scale something.

We could also dismantle the bureaucracies that repeatedly kill major energy projects. This includes fast-tracking approval for a new Pacific pipeline capable of transporting one million barrels per day, diversifying away from our over-reliance on a single buyer. Permit processes would be improved, moving from decades to years through streamlined reviews.

Business of Supply

Provinces that actually remove internal trade barriers that fragment our national market would receive direct financial incentives, finally creating the one functioning Canadian economy that we have always claimed we have. Critically, we would reduce taxes on the engines of growth. That includes taxes on labour, on new home construction and on energy development.

Beneath our feet lie abundant resources. We have timber. We have minerals. We have oil. We have gas, and we have soil that feeds the world. We should be darn proud of it and we should utilize it.

It has been said before, but I firmly believe it: We as Canadians have a history of rising to the challenges when the moment demands it. I will not settle for less, nor will my constituents. I want to prioritize the people who sent me to this place to represent them. Therefore, I invite every member of this chamber, every single one of them, regardless of their party, to join in our efforts and support this plan. This is not ideology. It is the audacity to admit that we can and we must do better, that we refuse to accept managed decline.

When we look back, let it be said that we did not shrink from the task and we did not settle for the status quo. We met the moment head-on because that is what Canadians do when the stakes are real. We owe them a country that lifts, that builds and that believes in itself again. If we have the courage to get out of the way and unleash Canadians, they will do the rest.

• (1710)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talked a lot about initiatives that the government has put forward in the budget through the budget implementation act, Bill C-15, which is before members at the moment. One thing the member knows the importance of is international trade, so I was surprised that when I looked through the opposition day motion today there was not a single mention of diversifying trade markets and Canada's place in doing exactly what he talked about, fuelling and feeding the world.

The member represents Portage—Lisgar, and I had the opportunity to have a quick look. Over 5,000 of his constituents, according to the 2021 census, are involved in the agricultural industry. Peas, oil seeds and beef are major elements of the regional economy that he represents.

We were just in China. We established a trade arrangement. Does the member support the work the government has done to open up markets for farmers in his part of western Canada?

Branden Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's reviewing the important staples of production in my riding. I am an extremely strong supporter of international trade and of diversifying markets, and that is why I am so surprised it took the Liberal government this long to realize the importance of this. I look back to the Harper government and all of the trade deals. We signed trade deals with nearly two-thirds of the world's economy under the Harper government, but they have been allowed to languish under the Liberal government. They came in and signed the odd trade deal. Conservatives have consistently, for decades, forever, stood up for the importance of rural communities, agriculture and international trade, and I will say one thing: We always will, too.

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am always somewhat astounded to hear my Conservative colleagues defend people who are struggling to make ends meet and talk about their unfortunate reality while continuing to lobby for an oil industry that is making huge profits, but whose profits are going into the pockets of Americans.

We are studying a motion that aims to restore Canada's sovereignty over the United States. However, Pathways Alliance, which accounts for 80% of oil sands production, is 73% foreign-owned, with 60% of that ownership held by Americans. Those folks made \$131.6 billion in profits. They paid out nearly \$80 billion in dividends, three-quarters of which went to foreign shareholders, including 62% to American shareholders. Then the Conservatives come here and talk about Canada's sovereignty.

[*English*]

Branden Leslie: Mr. Speaker, this is a great opportunity. I want this country to have an economic boom again. The last time that happened was when our oil and gas and our resource sectors were booming, because all of those little people are the ones who reinvest in those companies. They reinvest in their pensions. We should be investing in ourselves. We should be darn proud of the people who are unfortunately now struggling because they were laid off from a sawmill or an oil field because of the policies of the Liberal government. I will stand up for them every single day, and that is how we are going to build this country back up again.

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian sovereignty act is meant to get our economy going, but I listen to the Liberals, and we have listened to them for the last 10 years. They basically destroyed our economy. One would think they would support this particular act and our bill. I was surprised to hear their opposition to it, as I am sure the member is.

Our motion is supposed to repeal federal blocks and penalties to development and reward territories, provinces, businesses and workers who invest in Canada. For clarity, is Canadian sovereignty meant to help our economy or hurt it?

Branden Leslie: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government has a recent track record of taking our good ideas, and we are giving them a whole pile of good ideas that, if implemented, would get this country back on track and have our economy thriving. We have heard a whole lot of empty promises, empty words and, unfortunately, a continuation of terrible results. That is why I am sure, when all of us went back to our ridings across this country, we heard the same thing: "I cannot afford to live anymore" and "I just want a good, stable, high-paying job. Why can I not find it?" The answer is 10 years of Liberal failure.

• (1715)

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

A particular piece of legislation was referenced. I just want to ask if there is a piece of legislation called the Canadian sovereignty act.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): That is not a point of order, obviously.

It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is as follows. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of motion to House]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, January 28, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I suspect if you were to canvass the house, you would find at this time unanimous consent to call it 5:30 p.m., so we could begin private members' hour.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD PRICE TRANSPARENCY ACT

Gurbux Saini (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.) moved that Bill C-226, An Act to establish a national framework to improve food price transparency, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today for the second reading of my private member's bill, Bill C-226, an act to establish a national framework to improve food price transparency. The bill responds directly to what Canadians in every region of the country have been telling us, that grocery prices are too expensive and the pricing is too confusing.

Canadians are doing everything they can to stretch their budgets. Families deserve clearer and more consistent information when making everyday purchasing decisions. Our government should ensure that the prices people see on the shelves are fair and transparent. Bill C-226 would call upon the collective efforts of federal, provincial and territorial governments. In response to this crisis, the

Private Members' Business

Minister of Industry would consult with provincial and territorial counterparts responsible for consumers' affairs.

The bill recognizes that improving food price transparency is not the responsibility of a single entity. It requires partnership. This is the exact kind of collaboration that Canadians deserve on issues that affect their daily lives. This is what Canadians voted for.

As set out in subclause 3(2) of the bill, the framework must include measures to establish a national standard for unit pricing, ensuring accuracy, usability and accessibility across the country. It would also mandate greater transparency around price increases, adjustments and fluctuations. This would help consumers to better understand changes to the cost of essential foods over time. Furthermore, it would promote public education, so that Canadians are informed on unit pricing and how they can better compare products to determine value.

The foundation of Bill C-226 is the promotion of fairness. The bill would strengthen transparency and build consumers' confidence during a crisis that unreasonably impacts families, students, newcomers and seniors on fixed incomes.

The practice of unit pricing remains voluntary, and it is applied inconsistently from one province or territory to the next, affecting all Canadians. When meeting with my constituents, I regularly hear from families, seniors, newcomers and young people who face this reality. Rising grocery costs require more deliberate planning and careful budgeting for each trip to the grocery store. When unit pricing is applied inconsistently, consumers face increased pressure to compare products quickly and ineffectively. As Canadians struggle to make ends meet, this uncertainty places increased pressure on limited household budgets.

Quebec is currently the only province where unit pricing is mandated by law, and Quebecers benefit from clear, universal unit price transparency everywhere in that province.

Meanwhile, in other jurisdictions, Canadians face the inconsistencies of a system reliant on retailers' discretion. This is a system that works for some but leaves many without the benefit of a blanket approach that looks after all Canadians.

The inconvenience of this disparity is fundamentally unfair. Canadians, regardless of where they live, deserve the same level of clarity when purchasing essential goods. The House can make this a reality by taking this crucial first step.

Private Members' Business

• (1720)

I have spoken with many stakeholders, including my constituents, post-secondary institutions and organizations that support individuals and communities struggling with unaffordable grocery pricing.

Members of the Consumers Council of Canada have emphasized that a national unit pricing framework would provide consumers with accurate, uniform and accessible labelling for every product. Clear, standardized unit pricing would ensure that Canadians are not left to calculate costs based on inconsistent store practices to determine the true value of their groceries.

I have also heard directly from post-secondary students of all backgrounds who are facing significant hardship. The student rights and responsibilities office at Kwantlen Polytechnic University shared that many students are making dramatic sacrifices to their living standards to afford basic groceries. This includes sharing one- or two-bedroom suites with many roommates and cutting necessary expenses, such as heating or medication, to ensure that they can eat. Young Canadians deserve the opportunity to buy affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate meals in the face of food insecurity. Basic needs should never be compromised.

While Bill C-226 is not a complete solution, it is a meaningful and practical step toward ensuring that Canadians have the tools they need to navigate an increasingly unaffordable grocery landscape. By ensuring universal unit price transparency, we empower consumers, promote fairness and ease the burden of the overarching issue of overpriced groceries.

Passing this bill would be a concrete step toward addressing food insecurity and unaffordability. Unit price transparency would provide Canadians with the clarity to shop based on products that provide the best value. It would help families maximize their grocery dollars, support those on fixed income, and ensure newcomers and low-income Canadians are not disadvantaged by inconsistent or complex price displays.

The bill's transparency requirement would address price increases and fluctuation by fostering greater accountability and giving Canadians the opportunity to make informed decisions. Unit price transparency will not solve food insecurity on its own, but it is a practical first step that would ease a key component of affordability for all Canadians. As Canadians struggle to make ends meet, the bill offers fairness and transparency to all Canadians so they can make more informed decisions.

Our country deserves a grocery system that is fair, transparent and works for all its people. Bill C-226 would deliver on this by providing Canadians with the tools they need to make informed choices.

I urge all members of the House to vote for this bill and help Canadians take back control of the grocery stores.

• (1725)

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his desire to seek transparency in food prices in Canada, although I would offer up that Canadians are already aware of how bad food prices are. Canadians are

aware of what the food price report in Canada is saying, which is that they are going to spend \$1,000 more this year on food. The average family of four will spend \$17,500.

I wonder if my colleague would, in the interest of transparency, be open to acknowledging exactly how much of the price of food is directly tied to government policies, such as the industrial carbon tax and the plastic and packaging taxes, and whether, beyond transparency, he would support measures to reduce those prices on food.

Gurbux Saini: Mr. Speaker, the taxes the member is talking about do not exist. There is zero effect from carbon taxes, and there are many studies that have justified that.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his initiative to promote transparency and bring prices down in the agri-food sector. I have a question for him.

Just today, at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Canadian Pork Council and Les Éleveurs de porcs du Québec demanded more transparency in pork-related transactions, particularly for processors. We know that consumers are paying more and more and producers are getting less and less money. There is a broken link somewhere along the chain.

Can my colleague tell me if there is any openness to being more transparent about what is being done in Canada? The United States has a law that requires all aspects of these transactions to be public. Should Canada pass a similar law?

I think that would help people who pay a lot for pork and would like to be able to buy more of it.

• (1730)

[*English*]

Gurbux Saini: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member as a Quebec member because Quebec is currently the only province that has this transparency. I am trying to tell Canadians that, if it can be done in Quebec, it should be done for all Canadians.

I am absolutely open to help fellow Canadians wherever we can so they can live a reasonable life by paying reasonable prices for food products.

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am always really happy to hear about food and food prices, including talking about farmers. There are many farmers in my riding. We think it is really important to have transparency.

Private Members' Business

Just briefly, what is the need for food transparency? The member was alluding to the fact that Quebec already has some regulations. Could he also elaborate on the regulations we have in Quebec?

Gurbux Saini: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-226 would make it so that every time someone goes to a grocery store, beside the pricing, the label would show what quantity someone is paying for, like grams or kilos. The consumer could then compare different products and stores to make sure they are getting the best price available. Right now, that is not happening anywhere besides Quebec.

During the crisis two or three years ago, one of the worst things that happened was that food prices stayed the same but the packages shrunk. Consumers were paying a lot more money for less product. This bill would force retailers to show what the price is per gram or per kilo, and then Canadians could compare prices online with different retailers and with different manufacturers.

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are being crushed by the cost of food, and the solution from the Liberal government is more red tape, more bureaucracy and more empty promises.

Just months ago, the Prime Minister told Canadians that he should be judged by the cost of groceries. Well, the verdict is in. According to Statistics Canada, food inflation rose 6.2% year over year, with groceries up 5% and restaurant meals up 8.5%. Canada now has the highest food inflation in the G7, and it has increased more than double than that of the United States.

It is not a global problem. This is a made-in-Ottawa Liberal failure. Let me be even clearer: Bill C-226 would do nothing to lower food prices. Instead, it would add red tape and federal overreach at the worst possible time.

Bill C-226 would require the Minister of Industry to create a national framework on grocery price transparency and unit pricing. Canadians do not want their tax dollars going to a federal report to tell them that food costs too much. They already know that every time they swipe their credit card.

What Canadians need is relief from the taxes, deficits and regulatory costs that are driving up prices. The bill before us would not increase food supply or lower input costs, but in the same Liberal fashion, it would add another layer of bureaucracy.

In an email, a member of my community said that she finds herself disgusted and angry. Let us be clear: Food prices are out of control.

I want to speak directly about Windsor because this debate is not theoretical. One member of my community emailed my office stating, "I'm deeply concerned about the rising cost of groceries in our community. Even with careful budgeting and deal-hunting, families are struggling to keep essentials on the table."

Another said, "During a recent shopping trip to pick up a few items for dinner, my wife and I were shocked by the total at the checkout. One example that stood out was a bag of just five potatoes, which cost us \$8. With the added expenses of caring for a newborn, we've found ourselves relying more on lower-cost frozen meals just to make ends meet, often at the expense of healthier choices. Eating well should not be a luxury."

Could members across the aisle please take a moment to think about those words and truly ask themselves if the government is doing enough? Eating should not be a luxury.

My community is a working-class, manufacturing-driven region. It is home to thousands of auto workers, parts suppliers, truck drivers and food processing workers, whose livelihoods depend on affordable energy, transportation and stable supply chains.

According to Stats Canada labour and income data, Windsor-Essex consistently has lower median household incomes than the Ontario average, which means food inflation hits families harder and faster. When Ottawa raises fuel costs, carbon taxes on industry, packaging compliance costs and transportation costs, those increases are magnified in regions such as Windsor, where families already spend a higher share of their incomes on necessities.

Let me be clear: The bill before us would only create a finger-pointing report, which is something the Liberals are good at doing. When grocery chains face higher compliance costs, they do not absorb them; they pass them on to Canadian families, Canadian seniors and Canadian students, all of us. Instead of taking responsibility for the cost of living crisis they created, the Liberals spend their time pointing fingers, blaming grocers, blaming global forces and blaming everyone except themselves. Canadians know better. Government policy drives prices up, and the government keeps driving them up.

Food insecurity is rising, and the bill would do nothing to solve this crisis. This is no longer just about prices. Canadians are struggling under the government. Canadians are having to choose if they should eat or heat their homes. Students are skipping meals and stretching canned food across multiple days, while parents are buying cheaper, unhealthy options because that is all they can afford.

According to Food Banks Canada, nearly 2.2 million Canadians visited a food bank in a single month last year, the highest number ever recorded. The Dalhousie University Agri-Food Analytics Lab estimates that it will now cost \$17,600 to feed a family of four, and that is an increase of \$1,000 in just one year. Nearly 30% of students report skipping meals because they cannot afford to eat. A quarter of Canadian households are now considered food insecure.

Private Members' Business

● (1735)

This is the result of the Liberal government's lost decade. Its empty promises, failed regulation and being so out of touch with Canadians have resulted in one of the costliest times to live in Canada.

In the face of this crisis, the Liberal government's response is a rebranded rebate, a one-time cheque. It is a blatant attempt at vote buying that the government is now calling the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. Let us be honest with Canadians: This is the same GST credit renamed and temporarily inflated ahead of an election. One thing the government will not tell Canadians is that the scheme will cost taxpayers \$11.7 billion over six years.

Liberals love to point fingers when groceries get more expensive, but they refuse to look in the mirror. They cannot tax, regulate and spend their way into affordability. The government is forcing Canadians to pay the price for that denial. A family cannot budget around a one-time rebate, a senior cannot plan groceries around a temporary cheque and a student cannot rely on a rebranded, failed rebate instead of real affordability.

Bill C-226 argues that unit pricing frameworks would help consumers compare prices, but even the Competition Bureau, in its grocery sector studies, has made it clear that price transparency does not lower prices when competition is weak and costs are high. In fact mandatory labelling frameworks increase costs, especially for small grocers, independent retailers and rural and regional stores. These costs include shelf relabelling, signage redesign, staff training and compliance monitoring.

As we have already seen in Quebec, where detailed price display rules were introduced, governments were forced to delay implementation after retailers warned of confusion, cost and complexity. The lesson is obvious: Out-of-touch legislation does not cancel out bad economics.

Conservatives are not opposing transparency; we are opposing symbolic politics that raise costs while pretending to help. When confronted with this growing crisis, the Liberal government's answer has been to point to a temporary GST rebate increase and claim that help is on the way. However, as The Canadian SHIELD Institute has made clear, this approach is nothing more than a band-aid on a wound that the government keeps reopening.

A one-time rebate does nothing to stop grocery prices from rising in the first place. It does not lower the cost of food production, transportation or retail; reduce fuel costs; or fix broken supply chains. It certainly does not make food more affordable next week, next month or next year. In fact temporary rebates often have the opposite effect. When governments recklessly put cash into an economy without addressing supply issues, prices continue to rise. Families receive a short-term cheque, but they are left paying the higher grocery bills. The rebate fades, but the inflation does not. It gives the appearance of action without delivering real affordability.

I ask the members across the floor to be honest with Canadians. A rebate that lasts a few months cannot keep pace with the grocery prices that rise every single day. It cannot help a family planning a food budget over an entire year, and it certainly cannot help seniors, students or working parents who are already stretched to their

breaking point. Every dollar the government spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians, and they are feeling this more and more every time they enter a grocery store.

Conservatives will provide for permanent affordability so hard work once again means a good life, a home Canadians can afford and healthy food on the table, not a fake process of clarifying grocery store prices.

● (1740)

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to this bill as the new Bloc Québécois critic for agriculture, agri-food and supply management. What is better than talking about food transparency? I applaud the member for Fleetwood—Port Kells for his initiative. As he said earlier in response to my question, Quebec is already way ahead of the rest of Canada on this issue.

In fact, just last year, the Government of Quebec changed its rules around pricing. While the unit price was already mandatory in Quebec, the Government of Quebec decided to go even further. This new legislation ensures that the regular retail price is displayed for discounted food. The price for members of a loyalty program versus non-members is also clearly shown. In Quebec, we are done wondering whether a combined discount, such as two jars of yogurt for \$6, is worth the cost, or whether a single jar of yogurt costs \$3 or \$3.50. It is also mandatory to specify whether or not a product is taxable. Quebec is going even further by asking that label information be more visible, including unit prices. On top of that, the Office de la protection du consommateur is updating the compensation provided under its price accuracy policy from \$10 to \$15.

Private Members' Business

Once again, Quebec is at the forefront of consumer protection. Once again, Quebec is leading the charge. What did Ottawa do? With this bill, it is once again interfering in provincial jurisdictions. Perhaps the government needs to read the Constitution. Domestic marketing, including retail trade and consumer protection, is the responsibility of Quebec and the provinces. Once again, Ottawa is interfering in an area of exclusive jurisdiction. The federal government justifies its intrusion on the grounds of interprovincial trade, claiming that harmonizing labelling practices would encourage the mobility of goods and healthier competition. That is not true. Unit price labelling does not hinder trade in any way, since it does not restrict the movement of goods or commercial activity. It is merely a tool to provide information to consumers in Quebec and Canada.

There is some risk in this. By imposing a Canada-wide standard from coast to coast to coast, Ottawa would be setting a precedent that could open the door to other interventions in areas of provincial jurisdiction in Quebec and the provinces. It is not the first time that the federal government has tried to expand a measure that was already in place in Quebec to all of Canada. The federal government's stance is the result of a recurring centralizing impulse that often puts Quebec at a disadvantage, since it has often already implemented policies that are more advanced or better adapted to its reality.

In its 2023 report, Canada's Competition Bureau proposed aligning unit price labelling practices through co-operation between Quebec and the provinces. The federal government would simply be a participant in this dialogue. This point is key. It supports the idea that we can improve transparency and competition through interprovincial co-operation, not through top-down interference from the federal government.

Why not do what we did with the grocery code of conduct, which was adopted in 2024 after several years of negotiation between the provinces and major retailers? It is considered a success story. The process was based on collaboration, respect for jurisdictions and voluntary stakeholder participation. It has been in effect since January 1 of this year and still has to prove itself in terms of results, but the intention is certainly honourable. It proves that parties can agree on things. To achieve that, the government has to talk to the stakeholders. However, instead of sitting down with provincial ministers to come to an agreement between the Canadian provinces, the Government of Quebec and Canada, it is choosing to encroach on provincial powers.

I also sit on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. Recently, we analyzed spending on the child care services program. Ottawa transfers funds to Quebec without conditions, but it does so with conditions in other provinces. In the end, Canada will spend \$15 million to study reports, send funds and organize meetings between the various provincial ministers. We are talking about a significant amount of money coming out of taxpayers' pockets. That is \$15 million to manage a program that is not under federal jurisdiction, when all Ottawa has to do is send the money and let the provinces handle their own affairs. Quebec has chosen to protect consumers. So, if the member for Fleetwood—Port Kells wants a unit price for food, I invite him to contact his provincial representative in British Columbia.

At the Bloc Québécois, we believe that the Quebec government and the Canadian provinces have their own specific powers. In the United States, price display in grocery stores varies from state to state. Alabama has no price display policy. California, on the other hand, is at the other end of the spectrum.

● (1745)

Even the Competition Bureau stated very clearly in its report who was responsible for this. It was written in black and white. The agency states, "To achieve these goals, provincial and territorial governments should consider working together to develop and implement accessible and harmonized unit pricing requirements."

Once again, the federal government is proposing to add public servants to implement a framework that will require monitoring and investigations. That constitutes spending to develop a new program for everyone. Meanwhile, Quebec is picking up part of the bill for something it is already doing. How much will this new policy cost in terms of travel expenses, staff and various meetings? Every time a program is duplicated, the number of public servants and reports doubles; everything is duplicated. The Parliamentary Budget Officer might say that it is a question of efficiency.

The Bloc Québécois will be voting against this bill. It is time for the government to recognize that Quebec and the Canadian provinces are capable of making their own decisions in their own areas of jurisdiction.

● (1750)

[English]

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to speak to this bill put forward by my colleague the member for Fleetwood—Port Kells. I can definitely understand the inspiration behind this bill. In his speech, he referred to the COVID-era activities that were happening in his community and in communities coast to coast, where by people were experiencing the different impacts of food shortages in certain areas, and some of the responses that grocers were devising.

I think this bill is really about two of the strongest emotional connections we have, the connections with our food and with our wallet. It is where those two things intersect that this bill speaks to. There is a special emotional reaction that we have at the cash register at the grocery store when we see the price of what we have actually put in the trolley.

Private Members' Business

My colleague from Fleetwood—Port Kells referred to the COVID-era effects that were experienced in groceries. At that time, I was a professor at Toronto Metropolitan University. I see my friend here from Victoria, who was also teaching at the time. I remember understanding the student perspective on these issues, as students were often cooped up, and they would eventually be able to go out of their classrooms, out into the community to get the food they needed for the week. A lot of students these days are doing part-time work. In my particular case at Toronto Metropolitan University, a lot of my students were actually the ones working in these grocery chains, and they started to notice something. They started to notice they were being asked to move things on different shelves. They started to notice that different products were even different shapes or different sizes.

I remember very well a student who worked in the butcher department of one major grocer. He told me very directly that he was being effectively asked to implement shrinkflation policies within that grocer's retail operation. The students actually brought that forward to me as a professor, and it was significant enough, with enough of a voice. We happened to be doing a pre-budget consultation with the former minister of finance. Actually, it was such a demonstration of what young people were experiencing; not only were they being affected by some of the food security issues, but they were actually being forced to implement some of the policies within grocery stores that were having a deleterious effect. I was able to bring those issues to the deputy prime minister and minister of finance at the time.

We also know that since the COVID era, and during the COVID era, the former government did make a number of responses that really helped reduce food inflation and deal with some of the more problematic policies that were being implemented by grocers. There was, for instance, an injunction on covenants that prevented other grocers from opening near grocers. There is a grocery code of conduct that has had an important impact on controlling and patrolling some of the behaviour of some of the large grocers that would otherwise, maybe, have more space to be increasing prices. In the specific case of a labelling standard, we know that federal, provincial and territorial ministers did not quite get there. That is, I think, one of the inspirations of this bill.

I am the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry. The minister and her department, which administers the code of conduct, have also put up a number of information resources that are very important, to help Canadians understand a bit more of their experience at the grocery store: in particular, the grocery affordability web page and the food price data hub.

I listen to my colleagues across the aisle, and I am still hearing a few of the old hits around grocery affordability. I want to remind them of some of the reality of what is happening in groceries today and what is not happening. I have brought my receipt from Maple Produce on Roncesvalles Avenue, a very—

An hon. member: That is a prop.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. If the member is going to be quoting from the document, it is not considered a prop. I do not think he was using it necessarily as a prop. I

will allow the member to carry on, to quote from it, as long as it is not being used as a prop.

The hon. member.

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, I will just read out the prices. At Maple Produce on Roncesvalles Avenue, people can get two tins of blackberries for the very affordable price of \$5, and that is quoted here. Then there are raspberries, two tins for \$6. I have some other things here. I do not know exactly what I bought here in each case. I see the member for Peterborough, whose riding may well have produced some of the products, although I understand that she is more in the area of carnivorous offerings at her facilities. However, I will note that at Maple Produce, people can get a lot of good, fresh food, fruit and vegetables, and I do not see tax. There is no mention of any tax on any of these items.

Each of us in our communities is trying to promote the local food retailers and the people who are producing within their community, so I had cause recently to visit Marvelous by Fred in High Park, introduced to me by Angela Robertson of the Bloor West Village Business Improvement Area, the oldest business improvement area in the world. At that bakery, I got six plain croissants and a bag of meringues. The croissants, of course, are not taxed, and the meringues, as a certain kind of processed food, are.

We know that the policies that we have and the policies that governments of different stripes have passed for years have made sure that almost all groceries, and the vast majority of groceries that are of interest to people in the House when we talk about food affordability, are not taxed. That continues to be the case. In fact, this government, with, we understand, some co-operation from the other side, is now endorsing the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. I know constituents in Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park will be very pleased to hear that the benefit will bring, for a family of four, up to \$1,890, and for a single person, up to \$950, with the first increase in that benefit taking place in July. It is a really important measure to address food affordability issues.

We are also directing \$500 million from the strategic response fund to support food processors. I know in my riding there are a number of food processors. In urban ridings and in urban communities, there is sometimes a bit more distance from our food and more of a sense that maybe we are not connected, and we all go to farmers markets in different places where we can feel a bit more connected. In urban communities across Canada, there are food processors, including a couple of major ones in my community. I know that they are going to be looking forward to hearing about the food processing fund that is going to be available to food manufacturers across Canada. These measures are really doing a number of things to raise the importance of fresh, local food. Some provinces have a real focus on that. I know our buy Canadian policies will help promote that as well.

Private Members' Business

This bill is very important, because some of those issues that I spoke about at the beginning of this address around shrinkflation, those experiences that my students addressed, have not completely gone away. Each of us has had an experience, especially in certain large grocery stores, of going to pull down a package of granola bars if we are sending kids off to school with some granola bars or some yogourt, and the print is just a bit too fine and the unit price is even finer. There might be a litre of yogourt, but maybe that litre of yogourt is now 800 millilitres, or maybe that 650 millilitres is now 600 millilitres. It is very hard to tell the difference between the costs of certain things, especially in this dynamic, changing environment where consumer tastes are often changing and where packaging is changing.

Therefore, this is an important intervention in this space. We know there is an ISO standard around food labelling and groceries, but we know these kinds of things can be improved. I heard from my friend from the Bloc that this is the thin end of the wedge of creeping federalism. I am not so sure. This is a very useful intervention to help bring some further discipline into the marketplace, and I look forward to hearing more in the debate.

• (1755)

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in the House today to speak to the bill before us.

Canadians are not confused at the grocery store; they are frustrated and angry, yes, as they are being crushed by prices that keep rising while the Liberals here in Ottawa just keep talking.

The Conservative approach is straightforward and is grounded in reality: If the government wants lower grocery prices, it must stop doing the things that make groceries more expensive. That means ending inflationary deficits that devalue paycheques. It means removing the hidden taxes on farmers, truckers, processors and retailers that get passed directly on to consumers. It means cutting red tape that raises operating costs and limits supply. It means strengthening competition so Canadians have real choice and real downward pressure on prices.

Canadians are reaching out for the first time in their life, many of them, because some are being forced to choose between food, heat, rent and medication. Food banks across Canada are reporting record demand, with nearly two million visits in a single month last year, and food bank usage has almost doubled in just four years. Many of the people turning to food banks are working Canadians who have never before needed help.

At the same time, families are paying hundreds of dollars more per year for groceries, while rent, mortgage payments and interest costs have surged. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, federal taxes and inflationary policies are driving up costs throughout the food supply chain, meaning that Canadians are paying more not because they are confused but because government policy has made essentials more expensive.

None of my constituents have asked for federal framework or an explanation of price labels. They do not ask Ottawa to explain inflation to them; they ask when the government will stop driving up costs and start delivering the relief they can see at the checkout counter.

Here is what Bill C-226 is actually proposing to do, in simple terms. It would instruct the Minister of Industry to consult with provinces and create a national framework about how grocery prices are displayed. That framework would set out standards for unit pricing, outline price increases and promote consumer education about how to read unit prices.

The bill would not change prices. It would not regulate supply costs or competition. It would not cap prices or reduce taxes. It would create a process. First there would be consultations, then a written framework and then a report to Parliament within 18 months. Then, five years later, there would be another review and another report on how that framework worked. In other words, Bill C-226 is about explaining the problem, not fixing it.

Families need relief now. Bill C-226 would offer a report in 18 months and a review in five years. The timeline may suit a bureaucracy, but it would do nothing for Canadians facing higher food prices this week.

Bill C-226 would require more new federal spending to design, manage and oversee a national framework, followed by ongoing reporting and reviews. None of that is free; it is funded by the taxpayer and financed in an environment where deficits are already massive. Every dollar spent by the government adds to inflationary pressure, and inflation is the tax that Canadians pay every time they buy food.

When the government creates new rules, standards and compliance requirements, businesses absorb those costs only on paper. In reality, they are passed on to consumers through higher prices. Canadians are already paying too much for food. They do not want policies that make groceries more expensive in exchange for better explanations for why groceries are expensive; they want cheaper food.

There is also a credibility problem that Canadians recognize almost immediately. The government has already failed to control inflation, failed to keep deficits in check and failed to make life more affordable. Now it is asking Canadians to trust that the same government can fix grocery prices by supervising how they are going to be displayed in the grocery store.

The bill treats public frustration as a communication failure rather than as a policy failure. It assumes that if prices are explained better, families will feel relief, but families do not feel explanations. They feel higher bills. They feel paycheques that buy less. They feel interest rates and grocery prices that are rising. If the government were serious about affordability, it would start by fixing what it can control: inflationary spending, punitive taxes, and policies that raise costs across the economy.

Private Members' Business

Some members will say this is harmless. They will say that we can have transparency and affordability at the same time, but government capacity is not infinite, and neither is the patience of Canadians facing record food prices. Every dollar spent, every regulation imposed and every hour of legislation time devoted to this framework is a dollar, a regulation and an hour not used to reduce costs, cut taxes or bring inflation under control.

In an affordability crisis, priorities matter. When the government chooses a process over price relief, it hurts Canadians. I do not doubt that some members supporting the bill believe it is helpful, but belief does not lower grocery prices. Intent does not reduce inflation. Only policy that cuts costs delivers relief to Canadians.

● (1800)

When Canadians look at this bill in context, a pattern becomes clear. Instead of tackling the hard issues of grocery prices, the government reaches for measures that look like action without producing results. Frameworks, consultation, education campaigns and reports create the appearance of concern, but they do not tackle the real issue and change what families actually have to pay.

This is why Conservatives call this bill a distraction. It treats frustration with prices as a communication problem rather than an affordability problem. It assumes Canadians need an explanation, when what they actually need is action from their government and results that are measured at the checkout counter, not in federal reports. A government that caused the affordability crisis cannot fix it with better messaging; only policy change produces results.

This bill fits a familiar Liberal pattern: When prices rise, they spend more, regulate more and explain more, while Canadians pay more. Conservatives would end inflationary deficits. When the government spends beyond its means, year after year, the cost is paid through higher prices and weaker purchasing power. Affordability begins with fiscal discipline. The government cannot restore buying power while continuing to flood the economy with borrowed money.

Conservatives would also remove the hidden Liberal taxes that drive up the cost of food, like taxes on fuel, fertilizer, energy and packaging costs, which raise costs for farmers, processors, truckers and retailers. These costs do not stay in Ottawa. They are built into grocery prices. Cutting these taxes would deliver immediate and permanent relief at the checkout counter.

More, Conservatives would cut red tape, which raises operating costs and restricts supply. Excessive regulation slows production, raises compliance costs and limits competition. Reducing these burdens would allow businesses to operate more efficiently and pass savings on to consumers.

A Conservative government would encourage real competition in the grocery. Competition, not bureaucracy, is what lowers prices and protects consumers over the long term.

This approach does not require new frameworks, new reports or new explanations; it requires a political will. Conservatives have put these solutions on the table, and the government has voted them down. That is the difference: While Liberals focus on managing frustration with prices, Conservatives focus on lowering prices.

Bill C-226 would not lower prices, reduce inflation or cut costs in the food supply chain. It would add federal process, spending, compliance costs and duplication, while families continue to struggle. Canadians do not need Ottawa to explain their grocery bill to them. They need Ottawa to stop making it bigger.

Conservatives will always support transparency, but transparency without affordability is not relief. Canadians cannot eat a framework. They cannot feed their families with an 18-month report or a five-year review. What they need is a responsible government that will lower taxes, reduce red tape and promote competition. That is what will deliver lower prices.

That is why Conservatives oppose Bill C-226. Canadians deserve results at the checkout counter, not more Liberal political theatre.

● (1805)

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is a somewhat unexpected turn of events, but since some members did not use all of their speaking time, I will take the liberty of adding a few remarks.

Let me begin with a story. I grew up just north of the riding of Abitibi—Témiscamingue in a village called Lebel-sur-Quévillon. The population of the village was about 4,000 at the time. An older gentleman named Mr. Tremblay lived there. He was a legend. Everyone knew Mr. Tremblay. Everyone who lived in Lebel-sur-Quévillon had met Mr. Tremblay at one point or another. What was special about this man was that he lived to be 116 years old. Obviously, that is impressive. I was still a kid when he died, and I asked my father to explain why Mr. Tremblay lived to be 116 years old. My father told me that it was simple: Mr. Tremblay minded his own business. That way, no one would ever want to give him a slap. Mr. Tremblay understood that.

After nearly two centuries of history, the federal government still does not understand that if it wants to avoid getting slapped in the face, it needs to mind its own business.

Private Members' Business

Price regulation is consumer law. According to the Claude Masse Foundation and the book *Le droit de la consommation*, “Consumer law is entirely based on the legal institution of the contract, whether verbal or written. This does not mean that the only legal protections for consumers are contractual in nature, but rather that there would be no consumer law without contracts.” It is civil law.

For some time now, the federal government has been blaming the provinces for all of society's problems. Everything is always the provinces' fault. If food prices have risen, it is certainly not because of a lack of competition. It is certainly not because in 1984 there were 13 major grocery chains and today there are only four or five, including Costco and Walmart. No, that is not why. It is because the provinces are still getting it wrong.

The federal government tells us the same thing about health care. If hospitals are underperforming, it is not because of inadequate funding from Ottawa; it is because 10 provinces and three territories are useless. If the government interferes in university affairs, the provinces are told it is because they cannot manage their universities or because the universities cannot manage themselves. They can never do enough equity, diversity and inclusion to suit the federal government, so it has to stick its nose into their business.

The same goes for dental care, which Quebec does better than Ottawa. We use an automatic system to issue payments, but nothing we do is ever good enough for the federal government. The same goes for infrastructure and housing. When Ottawa comes up with its national housing strategy, it takes three or four years to get it off the ground. Finally, the thing gets done, and the program that the Bloc Québécois called for, the rapid housing initiative, is a reality. It comes with no conditions, and it is the only program that gets social housing built quickly, because Quebec is the only province that has permanent social and community housing construction programs.

It is the same thing for the child care centres. The federal government goes and tells the provinces what to do, even Quebec, which developed the system in the first place. Nothing we do is ever good enough for the federal government.

On the issue of food labelling, what did we do wrong? My colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue said it earlier: Quebec launched a reform to improve transparency. It is not perfect, but it ensures that prices are clearly displayed and that consumers know what they are buying in terms of quantity. When we know how much we are paying per 100 grams, we can pay less. It reduces opportunities for what is known as shrinkflation, the practice of putting fewer grams in every box while raising the price. Quebec has done that.

Can someone explain to me how a national framework, which is simply an encroachment on the powers of Quebec and the provinces, is going to improve anything? The government is talking about price transparency, yet there is no budgetary transparency. We had to fight with the Minister of Finance and National Revenue to find out when he would table a budget, but price transparency, that is important.

At the Prime Minister's Office, there is a whole floor dedicated to managing the Prime Minister's conflicts of interest, yet price trans-

parency is of the utmost importance to the federal government. At some point, a recalibration will need to be done and the federal government will have to start looking after its own affairs.

The Conservatives were talking earlier. They like to say that, if we want to ensure that people can buy groceries, the important thing is to put money back in their pockets. The Conservatives, of course, like to talk about inflationary deficits and all sorts of things that, from a purely macroeconomic perspective, are more or less true most of the time.

• (1810)

However, at the end of the day, we must face reality. When a Quebec taxpayer receive their paycheque, after taxes and after their contributions, ultimately, even though there is a federal government, a provincial government and a municipal government, there is only one taxpayer.

In Quebec, we are currently experiencing multiple crises at the same time, in the education sector, the health sector and the infrastructure sector. We know that our population is aging. We know that, given the pressures of this aging population, the years 2025 to 2035 may be the most challenging that we have seen in decades in terms of Quebec's public finances. If the government wants to give Quebecers a break, it needs to help the Quebec government fulfill its fundamental responsibilities under the Constitution by increasing unconditional health transfers, social transfers and so on.

When the Bloc Québécois asks for these things, what is the response? First, the federal government tells the Bloc Québécois that it has no money. Then, a week later, the federal government comes out with a plan to spend that same amount of money, but with conditions that encroach on provincial jurisdiction. That is all relevant. If the government wants people to be able to afford groceries, if it wants to boost spending power, there are two ways to do that: either increase income or reduce the cost of the goods people spend their income on, as well as the tax burden. Everyone knows the provinces need some breathing room.

In short, I am not saying that this is not a good bill or that its goal is not worthy. I do not think its purpose is bad. I just think the priorities are wrong, this is the wrong time for it, it encroaches on provincial jurisdiction and there is nothing in it that Quebec is not already doing very well.

I will conclude by saying that interprovincial trade is the most far-fetched argument for this bill. Someone will have to explain to me how adding a layer of federal bureaucracy to price labelling, whether at convenience stores, grocery stores or gas stations, will help interprovincial trade. I have never gotten the impression that goods are labelled at the factory before they cross the border.

For all these reasons, I will be voting against this bill. The Bloc Québécois will be voting against the bill. Of course, we will always be open-minded when it comes to considering bills that do not encroach on provincial jurisdictions.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1815)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak to my colleague's legislation.

This type of legislation is very difficult at times, as we all know. It is done through a draw, and my colleague has been provided the opportunity to bring forward an important piece of legislation, which he has identified as something that not only is important to his constituents but also deals with the national perspective.

I respect that the issue of affordability in groceries, the cost of groceries and what is inside our large grocery stores has been an issue that is top of mind for many Canadians. In fact, yesterday, as members will know, the Prime Minister had a wonderful announcement in regard to the groceries and essentials benefit, which is going to take effect on July 1. It is the Government of Canada's approach at making life more affordable for Canadians and will make a positive difference for over 10 million Canadians. Every region of the country will be affected by this one policy.

When we take a look at the bigger picture of food security and how important it is to all Canadians, at the very least, we should be open-minded in terms of what the member is hoping to get across. I appreciate the Bloc's positioning to support the legislation, because in a minority situation we obviously have to have that support. I take it that the Conservatives are not going to be supporting it, even private members. They will decide, and I will be able to conclude my remarks when it comes back up for debate.

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.

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege, as always, to rise on behalf of the people of Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, although I am not rising at this moment with any pleasure. We know that people across the country, and certainly people in my community, are struggling with the price of food right now. I spoke to a woman last week. She shared something that I know is not unique to her and that was not easy to hear, which is that she has to periodically skip meals.

She said this in a whisper, because her husband was nearby and she did not want him to know that she was making this sacrifice for their family, that this was the only way they could balance the many costs that their family was shouldering.

Inflation affects everything across the board, but there are few things as essential as food and few things where we can see so demonstrably the rise in costs. "Canada's Food Price Report" has been abundantly clear on this. We know that this year alone, in 2026, the average Canadian family will expect to spend \$1,000 more on food than it did last year. The average family is not guaranteed a \$1,000 increase in its income. The average family is also shouldering increases in other costs, such as interest rates on mortgages and credit card bills, which are increasingly necessary for people to even maintain necessities in their homes.

We are also seeing fuel costs go up. The fuel standard responsible for about 17¢ a litre is, again, a hidden tax on productivity and on a necessity, especially in a riding as rural as mine. All of these are, though, I think, subordinate to the real crisis people feel at the grocery store when they see the increases.

This is not a global problem. This is a uniquely Canadian problem in the sense that Canada has the highest food inflation of anywhere in the G7, outpacing other countries. We know that 30% of students in the country are skipping meals.

I will share that this is very much a local problem in my communities, which I have the great privilege and honour of representing. One thing I can share about the St. Thomas Elgin Food Bank, which just released its numbers for 2025, is that the St. Thomas Elgin Food Bank had to feed 26,278 mouths in 2025. That is triple the number that it had to feed six years ago. The St. Thomas Elgin Food Bank had to feed three times as many people as it did just six short years ago.

I have some data today from the Corner Cupboard Food Bank in Aylmer. They have also seen record increases. Aylmer is a small community. In 2025, the Corner Cupboard had 1,919 household visits. That was an 8% increase over the prior year. More importantly, 40% of their clients were under the age of 18. There were 110 new families, people who have never before had to rely on a food bank and who, in 2025, could not take it anymore and needed that extra help.

We have seen a massive problem. A quarter of Canadian households are considered food insecure, and the government has not used every lever it has available to it. That is my question today. This is a complex problem. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, but there are levers the government can deploy.

Why is the government not eliminating the hidden carbon taxes and taxes on food, the industrial carbon tax and the food and plastic packaging taxes, and reining in its reckless inflation to stop further increases?

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1820)

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has been relentlessly focused on bringing down costs for Canadians. Broadly speaking, we are doing this in two ways. Through budget 2025 we laid the groundwork to unlock generational investments in Canadian businesses, workers and resources to build a stronger and more resilient Canadian economy. While we implement those long-term and strategic initiatives, we are also putting more money in the pockets of Canadians through targeted and common-sense initiatives.

By ensuring that Canadian workers and families keep more of their hard-earned money, we are empowering Canadians to better support their families, invest in their communities and build the future they want. Just yesterday, for example, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance announced new measures to make groceries and other essentials more affordable.

In order to bring down these costs for Canadians, Canada's new government is introducing the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. Formerly known as the GST credit, we are increasing its amount by 25% over the next five years, beginning in July 2026. On top of that we are providing a one-time payment equivalent to a 50% increase this year. Combined, this means that a family of four will receive up to \$1,890 this year and about \$1,400 a year in the next four years. A single person will receive up to \$950 this year and about \$700 a year for the next four years. I am proud to say that the new Canada groceries and essentials benefit will provide additional significant support for more than 12 million Canadians.

What is more, the government is also setting aside \$500 million from the strategic response fund to help businesses address the cost of supply chain disruptions without passing those costs on to Canadians at the checkout line. For the same reason, we will create a \$150-million food security fund under the existing regional tariff response initiative for small and medium-sized enterprises and the organizations that support them.

Thanks to budget 2025, we are doing so much more to make life more affordable for Canadians. Budget 2025 builds on the many actions we have already taken to support Canadian families at a time of significant economic uncertainty and affordability challenges. Here are some key examples of how we have been delivering for Canadians.

Let me begin with the high cost of housing, which has been a focal point of our government's work to restore affordability. Canada is facing a steep housing supply gap, one that threatens affordability, opportunity and the ability for Canadians to build a life and a future here. Put simply, our country needs to build many more homes. We are eliminating the GST for first-time homebuyers on homes at or under \$1 million and reducing the GST for first-time homebuyers on new homes between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.

We will build faster and smarter thanks to the launch of Build Canada Homes, a new federal agency that will drive investment and public-private co-operation. Federal dollars invested in Build Canada Homes will be leveraged to attract private capital, investors and builders to expand the housing supply. These measures will

make housing attainable, cities more vibrant and communities stronger.

We are doing so much more. Let us also look at other major cuts. Since July 1, 2025, Canadians have been paying less tax after the government announced lowering the first marginal personal income tax rate from 15% to 14%. The rate reduction, which is currently before Parliament as part of Bill C-4, would apply to taxable income up to—

• (1825)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will give the member an opportunity to respond in a moment.

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

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, I understand that my hon. colleague had more to say. I hope that in what is remaining is a plan to reduce the prices.

We will support the government in giving Canadians a bit of relief, but this relief does not deal with the underlying problem that is causing the crisis, which is that food costs have gone up and continue to rise. A family that is skipping meals because it cannot afford food is not a family that is buying a \$1.5-million house right now.

This is the crucial step that I have to ask the government to take: Every lever imaginable must be pulled. Why is the government not committing to remove the hidden taxes on the cost of food, such as on farm equipment, fertilizer, shipping and fuel standards, which are all things we have laid out and have given to the government in a neat package with a bow as a course of action?

Canadians are struggling. Where is the solution?

Patricia Lattanzio: Mr. Speaker, budget 2025 will spend less on government operations and cut waste so we can invest more in growing our economy and protecting essential programs that make life more affordable for Canadians. For example, once again, the Prime Minister announced the creation of the new Canada groceries and essentials benefit, which will provide additional significant support for more than 12 million Canadians.

Our government has been focused on bringing down Canadian costs, and this will remain our top priority.

JUSTICE

Colin Reynolds (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in the House and speak on behalf of the people of Elmwood—Transcona.

Adjournment Proceedings

The Liberal government's soft-on-crime ideology has failed. Since the Liberals took office, violent crime is up 54%, sexual assaults are up 75%, and extortion has skyrocketed an astounding 330%. In major Canadian cities like Brampton, Surrey, Vancouver and Calgary, crimes like extortion are out of control. Canadians want action, not more speeches and not more press releases.

The Liberal government must immediately repeal its catch-and-release laws, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, and put an end to the revolving-door justice system. It must also restore and strengthen mandatory jail time, so extortionists face real consequences for their crimes rather than a slap on the wrist.

Conservatives have put forward a comprehensive plan to protect our communities. Last year, the member for Oxford introduced the jail not bail act, to reverse the disastrous Liberal bail policies created through Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, while the member for Edmonton Gateway introduced Bill C-381, the protection against extortion act, which the Liberals voted down, choosing to put criminals over communities.

The Liberal bail reform bill, Bill C-14, does not remove the principle of restraint, which has caused the revolving-door criminal justice system. This falls short of the comprehensive bail reform that was promised to Canadians in the last election. Even so, we have offered to fast-track the bill so Canadians can get some much-needed relief.

While all this is happening on our streets, the Liberals have chosen to spend \$750 million to target law-abiding gun owners. They are continually choosing ideology over facts and political influence over public safety.

Will the Liberal government actually take the concerns of our communities seriously and ensure that career criminals and repeat violent offenders get jail, not bail?

• (1830)

Patricia Lattanzio (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always a privilege to rise in the House on behalf of the people of Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, the riding I represent. I would like to wish everyone a happy new year, and I hope for a productive year ahead.

Speaking of productivity, I rise today to respond to a question raised last fall regarding former Bill C-75. At that time, the Conservatives chose partisanship over collaboration and advanced a misleading claim that the bill required the release of violent offenders. Today, at the start of the new year, I welcome their stated desire to work in good faith and collaboratively, and I hope that the spirit of co-operation extends beyond this week's Conservative convention in Alberta. I am sure the Conservative leader is greatly anticipating it.

Let me be absolutely clear. Former Bill C-75 does not require courts to release violent offenders at the earliest opportunity. That claim is simply false and is now acknowledged by police associations across the country. Bill C-75 codified the long-standing principle of restraint affirmed by the Supreme Court, which does not mean automatic release. When an accused is violent, poses a risk to public safety or has a serious criminal history, detention is entirely

appropriate. By claiming otherwise, Conservatives are misleading Canadians and undermining the confidence in our justice system for political gain.

Let us turn to what is actually before the House today. The Liberal government currently has six major crime bills before Parliament, legislation that police associations across the country have been explicitly asking for.

Let us take Bill C-2, for example. It would modernize lawful access and give police the tools they need to catch predators before crimes are committed. Conservatives say they care about public safety, yet they are blocking the very tools police say they need.

Let us take Bill C-14, introduced last fall, which directly addresses bail and sentencing. This bill would make it harder for serious and repeat violent offenders to obtain bail. It would strengthen sentences, add new aggravating factors for repeat violent offending and prioritize denunciation and deterrence where communities are being harmed. Importantly, Bill C-14 also clarifies the principle of restraint, making it explicit that restraint does not mean automatic release. Bill C-14 is exactly the kind of targeted, evidence-based reform Canadians are asking for. However, last fall, the Conservatives refused to pass this bill before Christmas.

Then we have Bill C-16, which puts victims first. It would strengthen protections for victims of gender-based violence by creating a stand-alone offence for coercive and controlling conduct, and by clearly identifying circumstances in the Criminal Code where a murder constitutes femicide. This legislation reflects our commitment to centring victims and addressing the realities of gender-based violence. This bill would also restore mandatory jail time for Criminal Code offences, including those previously struck down by the Supreme Court.

To ensure these mandatory minimums are charter-compliant, the bill includes a narrowly tailored safety valve. It would allow a judge, in rare and exceptional cases, to impose a sentence below the mandatory minimum only when applying the mandatory minimum would amount to cruel and unusual punishment. Mandatory jail time remains the rule, and we are glad to have the endorsement of the Conservative member for Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola on the safety valve for MMPs.

The government is acting. We are strengthening bail where it needs to be strengthened. We are targeting repeat violent offenders. We are giving police real tools and we are centring—

• (1835)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

Colin Reynolds: Mr. Speaker, I am a trained, vetted, tested and licensed gun owner. I am not a criminal. I have the great privilege, as many Canadians do, to purchase and use firearms safely and responsibly.

To the community of hunters, sports shooters and indigenous communities, firearms are not just equipment or tools. They are a way of life. The Liberals have chosen to attack groups of law-abiding Canadians for no reason beyond ideology. The Liberals have completely dropped the ball on this file, so much so that the minister responsible for this failed buyback program was not even aware of what an RPAL was mere months ago.

When will the Liberal government stop attacking law-abiding firearms owners and get serious about holding the real criminals accountable?

Adjournment Proceedings

Patricia Lattanzio: Mr. Speaker, let me be perfectly clear that the government is taking action and wants to hold criminals responsible, but legislation alone will not fix the problem. The provinces and territories play a critical role in administering justice, conducting bail hearings, supervising individuals on release, ensuring compliance with conditions and investing in programs that will prevent reoffending. The federal government is stepping up with new laws and major investments in policing. We encourage our provincial and territorial partners to lead with us and continue funding their courts, training justices of the peace and expanding community supports.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:37 p.m.)

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