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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay before the House, pursuant to subsection 61(4) of the Canadian Human Rights Act, the report from the Canadian Human Rights Commission for the year 2025.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(e), this report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

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[*Translation*]

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: Pursuant to subsection 15(3) of the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons, it is my duty to lay upon the table the list of all sponsored travel by members for the year 2025, as provided by the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY

Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, entitled “Canada’s Defence Industrial Strategy: From Innovation to Readiness”.

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

[*English*]

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives would like to put forward a supplementary report.

Canada’s defence industrial capacity must be understood as part of the broader national strategy of sovereignty and resilience. As Canada enters a more uncertain geopolitical era, economic strength, energy, security, technological capability and military readiness are increasingly inseparable.

Stated plainly, we view defence industrial renewal as inseparable from our linked national objectives. The first of these is restoring strategic self-reliance in energy and critical resources. The second is rebuilding military capability through faster and more agile procurement. The third is asserting Arctic sovereignty through dual-use northern infrastructure. The fourth is ensuring digital sovereignty so that defence-relevant data systems and intellectual property remain under Canadian control.

A defence industrial strategy requires more than incremental administrative reform. It requires a broader national effort to strengthen what is in Canada’s control: strategic resources, Arctic infrastructure, procurement speed, sovereign industrial capacity, innovative deployment, digital sovereignty and operational readiness.

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 19th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, regarding the membership of the committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence on the 19th report later this day.

While I am on my feet, I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 20th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, entitled “Becoming a Candidate in an Election: A Review of the Criteria”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to quickly discuss a supplementary opinion to the report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

Christine Normandin: Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for the collaborative approach it has taken to ensure that elections run smoothly, which unfortunately has not always been the case. The Bloc Québécois supports all of the recommendations in the report except one, and that is the recommendation that seeks to limit the number of nomination papers a voter can sign to one per voter.

We respectfully submit that if this new rule were to be implemented, it would not limit the number of candidates running in an election. Mr. Kingsley, the former chief electoral officer, and Mr. Perrault, the current Chief Electoral Officer, said that there would not necessarily be enough time to cross-reference the signatures to determine whether any of them appear on nomination papers associated with an organization seeking to have a large number of candidates run in an election and also on the nomination papers of candidates not affiliated with such a campaign. In any case, both witnesses suggested that a candidate's nomination should not be rejected even if they have many signatures. Therefore, limiting the number of signatures would not prevent multiple valid nomination papers from being filed or prevent a large number of candidates from ending up on the ballot.

However, some negative consequences have been identified, including the fact that voters who are told that they are only allowed to support one candidate could call into question the secrecy of the vote. Voters might feel, indirectly and implicitly, that they are backing a candidate in order to cast a vote for them rather than to simply allow them to stand. Voters who are still undecided would also not have the opportunity to support two candidates in order to see them face off in a debate, for example, so that they can decide on the best choice among the candidates on the ballot.

We therefore respectfully maintain that limiting the number of signatures a voter can provide on nomination papers is not a measure that will resolve the issue of excessively long ballots. On the contrary, such a measure would have unintended consequences.

[*English*]

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a supplementary report from Conservative members of the committee.

The longest ballot committee constitutes a coordinated effort to undermine our elections, undermine confidence in a democratic process and sow confusion among voters. Conservatives support the recommendations in the report to close the loopholes in the Canada Elections Act that the longest ballot committee has taken advantage of.

I would add that it was an initiative of the Conservatives that led to the study, and it was the Conservatives who first called on the Liberal government to take action to address the disruptive activities of the longest ballot committee. We now urge the Liberal government to speedily introduce targeted legislation to prevent groups like the longest ballot committee from disrupting future elections.

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it being later this day, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 19th 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)

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PETITIONS

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Pauline Rochefort (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition signed by Nipissing—Timiskaming residents who wish to draw the attention of the House to Bill C-218. The petitioners express concern regarding proposed amendments that may affect eligibility criteria and existing safeguards as they relate to the protection of vulnerable persons, particularly those suffering from mental illnesses.

Accordingly, the petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to uphold strong safeguards, ensure continued parliamentary review and approach any legislative changes to medical assistance in dying with caution, transparency and respect for charter principles as they address matters involving end-of-life decision-making.

● (1010)

START-UP VISA PROGRAM

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of citizens and residents of Canada concerning the start-up visa program. The petitioners are concerned that in recent years, start-up visa applicants have faced extensive and unpredictable processing delays, often lasting several years, despite having undergone rigorous vetting by designated organizations.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to increase annual permanent residence admissions under the start-up visa program; allocate additional resources to reduce application backlogs; adopt a risk-based triage system to fast-track low-risk applicants; and resume issuing a limited number of work permits to essential founders so that they can build early business traction while their applications are being processed.

TAXATION

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise and present a petition on behalf of concerned constituents. They are concerned because, as we all know here, the poverty rates among people in the disabled community in Canada are shamefully high.

The petitioners point out that after COVID, a lot of services that are essential for people in the disabled community are provided virtually, but the tax system has not caught up to this reality, so disabled Canadians are taxed on services that are a medical necessity. Prior to COVID, had they gone in person to receive them, they would have been tax-free.

The petitioners are asking the Minister of Finance to revise the criteria, review the real-life situation of Canadians living with disabilities and establish a new standard for tax exemptions to enable organizations to offer tax-free virtual support services and programs. It is a matter of essential justice.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a Conservative petition regarding the flawed amendments the Bloc and the Liberals are proposing to Bill C-9. If passed, it would put the religious freedoms of Canadians in jeopardy. My residents of Abbotsford—South Langley have voiced their concern regarding this development and how it may restrict their freedoms.

As our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms clearly states in sections 2(a) and 2(b), the freedoms of expression and religion must be preserved and are crucial to Canadian society. Therefore, the petitioners call on the government to protect religious freedom, uphold the right to read and share sacred texts and prevent government overreach into matters of faith.

SPORT FACILITY IN ABBOTSFORD

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition. I rise today on behalf of petitioners of Abbotsford—South Langley to highlight an important issue affecting the growth and safety of local athletes. The lack of adequate training facilities for the home Wolverines Field Hockey Club limits development, compromises safety and restricts competitive opportunities.

Therefore, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to provide funding assistance through the federal sport infrastructure grant or relief programs, and partner with provincial and municipal bodies to support the construction of a grass hockey field suitable for training, development and competitive play.

MARFAN SYNDROME

Hon. Karina Gould (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to rise today to present a petition on behalf of residents of Burlington and citizens of Canada.

Following the tragic loss of her daughter Katie Pryla, a constituent of mine noted that connective tissue disorders, such as Marfan syndrome, often go undiagnosed, despite clear clinical signs such as scoliosis, hypermobility, long limb proportions and early connective tissue complications. It can lead to unforeseen medical consequences, particularly for those who become pregnant.

Therefore, the petitioners are requesting that the Government of Canada establish national screening guidelines for Marfan syndrome and related connective tissue disorders, especially for patients presenting with scoliosis or similar connective tissue disorders; implement national education and awareness programs for physicians, specialists and other health care professionals on identi-

Routine Proceedings

fying and managing connective tissue disorders; require genetic and cardiac screening protocols for IVF and high-risk pregnancy patients with connective tissue indicators; and support public awareness initiatives to educate Canadians on the signs and risks of Marfan syndrome and the importance of early education.

If the government were to do such things, it could help prevent the tragic and unnecessary loss of life.

I am pleased to be able to present this petition on behalf of my constituents.

• (1015)

RIGHT TO DEFEND

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition signed by the law-abiding property owners of Carleton, Kanata, Nepean, Nipissing—Timiskaming and my great riding of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

The petitioners are raising awareness about the lack of legal protections homeowners and landowners have when they must protect themselves, their property and their families against violent criminals emboldened by a decade of Liberal soft-on-crime policies. They support the Conservatives' stand on guard act, Bill C-270, which would clarify the legal standards around self-defence and defence of property so that those who are the target of crime would not be punished for fighting back to protect those they cherish.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition from dozens of Canadians who are concerned about mental illness and recognize that mental illness is a serious and real illness, but who are calling on the House to support Bill C-218, which would reverse the law extending eligibility for MAID to people with mental illness as their sole underlying medical condition. They believe that mental illness should be treated and not given a death sentence.

Business of Supply

SALMON FISHERY

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling a petition on behalf of constituents in Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford who are deeply concerned about proposed changes to the salmon allocation policy that would decimate regular recreational fishing opportunities for coho and chinook in British Columbia.

Recreational fishers fully recognize conservation in first nations' constitutionally protected food, social, ceremonial and commercial fisheries. For generations, salmon have been managed by the government as a common property resource, held in trust for the benefit of all. Changing this common property principle risks turning a shared public resource into an exclusive privilege, reducing access for many Canadians and undermining confidence in fisheries management. Petitioners note that this would be devastating to our tourism economy and the billions of dollars that flow into conservation efforts.

Therefore, petitioners are calling on the Minister of Fisheries to leave the current salmon allocation policy alone and uphold the cultural rights and traditions of all British Columbians.

* * *

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, please.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—TARIFF-FREE AUTO PACT

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC) moved:

That, given that,

- (i) auto production in Canada has halved since the Liberals took office in 2015, including another 7.8% since this Prime Minister took office,
- (ii) Canada lost over 5,000 jobs in the auto sector since the Prime Minister took office,
- (iii) exports of passenger cars and light trucks have fallen by more than 53% since the Prime Minister took office,
- (iv) unjustified American tariffs threaten to end our auto sector,
- (v) the idea of a permanent rupture with the US auto market is a dangerous illusion as the US buys 90% of Canadian-made automobiles and the rest of the world buys 1%,
- (vi) the Liberal government has failed so far to table a plan that would persuade Americans to remove tariffs on Canadian goods,

the House call on the government to support the Conservative plan to double automotive production through a tariff-free auto pact that includes:

- (a) making it easier to build and buy Canadian by removing the GST on all Canadian-made vehicles, ending counterproductive Liberal EV mandates and re-

bates, and harmonizing tailpipe emissions reductions with our North American partners;

(b) bringing home production through performance by implementing a rule where for every car produced in Canada, the same manufacturer would get to sell a car in Canada, duty-free, from a CUSMA partner, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, similar to the 1965 Canada-US Auto Pact;

(c) protecting North American supply chains by maintaining the minimum 75% North American content and existing CUSMA rules of origin;

(d) developing automotive security and technology by creating a harmonized North American cybersecurity and data standard, while banning vehicles using software connected to China or Russia; and

(e) standing firm against unfair trade by aligning with North American partners on Chinese tariffs if they accept this plan, for maximum leverage in CUSMA renegotiations,

to secure tariff-free access to the US market, and to save and expand Canada's auto industry.

The Speaker: Today being the last allotted day for the supply period ending March 26, 2026, the House will proceed as usual to the consideration and passage of the appropriation bills.

Do hon. members agree to have the bills distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1020)

[English]

Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Oshawa.

What we have witnessed over the last decade of Liberal governance of this country is the decimation of the Canadian auto industry. There is no other word that appropriately describes the decline that the Liberals have allowed to happen to our once proud auto sector.

Look at where we were under the last year of a Conservative government, when Canadian auto companies manufactured two million vehicles per year. Fast-forward to the last year on record, which is 2024, and that number has declined by almost 50%. We now manufacture 1.2 million vehicles per year. That is the Liberal government's record in terms of managing the Canadian auto sector.

I cannot stress enough how important, how critical, the auto sector is to the Canadian economy. Number one, auto manufacturing in and of itself is a \$17-billion contribution to Canada's GDP. When we look at the ecosystem, which includes the parts and tool and die, it is \$94 billion. That is how important it is. There is also the advanced manufacturing we get with auto. If we did not have an auto sector, Canada would lose the critical advanced manufacturing that is important for things like defence production and other things.

Business of Supply

The managed decline that the Liberals have allowed to happen to the auto sector is completely unacceptable. They announced, to great fanfare, their new auto strategy, which I think is actually managed decline. I say “managed decline” because there is nothing in their auto strategy that talks about how we get from 1.2 million vehicles per year, the decimation they allowed to happen in the sector, back up to the two million vehicles a year we manufactured in 2015. They have no plan for that.

What they do have are some maybe clever-sounding sound bites. I think the industry minister said we are going to manufacture the future electric vehicles that the world wants. She said something like that. Let us break that down for a second.

Number one, over 95% of the vehicles we produce in Canada get exported to the United States. Number two, where would these vehicles go, these mythical Canadian-manufactured EVs that the industry minister talks about? Would they go to Europe? More cars were stolen in Canada last year, including two of the Minister of Justice's vehicles, than were exported to Europe last year. Let us put that into perspective. It is a fantasy. There are no other markets on the planet for Canadian automobiles that can even come close to replacing the United States.

The only way we actually have a market in the United States is if we have tariff-free access. That is the only way this works. The Liberals have been saying a whole bunch of things lately, one of which is that we have to accept that there will be tariffs in order to have access to the American market. I know they are talking about auto when they say that, because apparently, a while ago, they almost had a deal with Donald Trump that would have included permanent tariffs on Canadian automobiles. Let us talk about what that means.

Right now, the tariffs work out to be about 15% on Canadian autos that get exported. The tariff is actually on the non-American portion of the vehicle. It is a complicated formula but it works out to be about 15%. When the tariff is at 15%, we are paying to Donald Trump \$2.5 billion a year. The Canadian auto industry cannot absorb those kinds of losses. Let us actually break it down. If we got to something like 5%, it is \$800 million. Again, these are losses that the Canadian auto industry cannot survive.

• (1025)

What is the plan for tariff-free access? There is no plan. The Liberals say weird statements such as that they are going to build the strongest economy in the G7. However, we have the only economy that is declining in the G7. They have all these fancy words they like to say, and then they wrap themselves in the flag and ask why we are talking down Canada.

I want to be very clear: I am incredibly proud of our auto sector. I have been on the line with auto workers. I have met with the auto workers in Brampton who have lost their jobs as a result of the incompetence of the Liberal government. Canadian auto workers make the best vehicles in the world, with the highest quality and the highest profitability. Companies should want to have manufacturing facilities in Canada to be able to export to the United States. That is why the facilities are here. We actually manufacture only 130,000 vehicles per year that are bought in Canada. Of the 1.2 million vehicles manufactured, only 130,000 are purchased here in Canada.

Let us be very clear: Auto manufacturing in Canada is critically dependent on the U.S. market, and the Liberals have no plan to gain access to the U.S. market. Our plan is to link production with the ability to import tariff-free vehicles. This is a modified version of the old auto pact.

The Liberals say we are going back in time. I think Canadians would love to go back in time, because under the auto pact, auto production in Canada went from 700,000 vehicles a year to three million. I think we would love to go back to that. If the Canadian auto sector could produce three million vehicles a year, it would be a boom to our economy and would surge employment. Instead we are going in the opposite direction with the Liberals.

We were at 1.2 million vehicles. Here is the shocking thing: Since the new government came into power with the new Prime Minister, auto exports are down 55% from the 1.2 million that we manufacture. This is critical decline. The Liberals sit there and pretend they are doing something while this is all happening. They are not doing anything.

I want to turn to some of the more troubling statements that the Liberals have made about auto in Canada. We just talked about their fantasy markets. First, it is deeply troubling that the industry minister thinks there is some fantasy market that can replace the U.S. market.

Another troubling thing is that the Liberals talk about new manufacturers coming into Canada. They talk about maybe having a Korean manufacturer come into Canada. Let us be very clear: No manufacturer is coming to Canada if it does not have tariff-free access to the United States, because 90% of the vehicles it would produce would be sold into the United States, just as 90% of vehicles currently produced in Canada go into the United States.

Another disturbing thing the Liberals have said is that maybe Chinese EV manufacturers would set up factories here. Let us break that down for a second. They would not integrate into the local parts ecosystem, because we are talking about Lego vehicles and breakdown factories. The vehicles are completely manufactured and assembled in China. They are sent over to Canada and then are assembled by very few employees.

For example, BYD, a Chinese manufacturer, has 50,000 employees in its plants in China. In its 15 plants around the world, it has 3,000 employees, because they just bang these things together. There would be no benefit for the Canadian economy. The Liberals have an EV battery strategy they spent billions of dollars on. Do we think a Chinese EV is going to use a battery made in our facilities? It absolutely would not. It would hollow out that facility as well.

Business of Supply

Our plan is that if someone wants to import a car into Canada tariff-free, they would have to build a car in Canada. That is the rule. This would cause production in Canada to grow, from 1.2 million vehicles to two million over a decade. Taking the GST off Canadian-made vehicles would accelerate that.

This is a plan that is approved by the men and women who work on the lines in the assembly plants. The president of Unifor Oshawa assembly had this to say about our plan: "Finally, a common sense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers. A plan that restores past production levels and secures a long-term future."

We have a plan. We believe we can convince the American President to adopt this plan. The Liberals have no plan. Why do they not vote for our plan?

• (1030)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for a year Conservatives said nothing. I would like to go back in Hansard and see how many times the member said "tariffs" before today. Conservatives said nothing. Then, suddenly, a year into the problem, they decided their solution would be to come up with the same plan that existed in 1965. That is literally what they did.

Can the member explain to me why the Conservative Party, and in particular the Leader of the Opposition, would not have gone out and consulted some of the unions who have had this to say?

John D'Agnolo, the Unifor Local 200 president and auto council chair, said, "So, there's some work that needs to be done. I suggest that he revamps his policy or pact, whatever he wants to call it, so it reflects modern day."

How could the Conservatives possibly come up with something when they had a year to work on it and never bothered to consult with those who would actually be affected?

Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable. The Liberals' defence to overseeing the decimation of the Canadian auto industry is to have competing quotes.

I have a quote from the Unifor local in Oshawa, the people who actually make the vehicles, who said that it is a great plan.

Rather than talk about the plan or say the Liberals have a plan to get tariff-free access, the member tries to say there is a bad quote here. That is their defence to watching factories like Paccar close, in Brampton and in Ingersoll, with thousands of workers losing their jobs and exports down 55% since their leader took over as Prime Minister.

The member's defence is that we got a bad quote. It is pathetic, just like their strategy for the auto sector.

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, is the Conservative motion not just a move to benefit Ontario's auto industry and put Quebec at a disadvantage by ending EV purchase rebates, among other things?

[English]

Kyle Seeback: No, Mr. Speaker, this will grow our auto production from 1.2 million vehicles a year to two million vehicles a year, and the parts ecosystem it puts into that is across the country. There are parts suppliers in Quebec that are going to benefit incredibly from this. There are parts suppliers in Ontario that are going to benefit from this. If we get our production up to two million vehicles a year, that is tens of billions of dollars of additional GDP, and Quebecers will benefit from that as well.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the work that our Conservative opposition has done on this plan.

I would like my colleague, if he would, to summarize the difference between the Liberal plan and the Conservative plan.

Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the Liberals' plan is, and I do not think they know what their plan is.

What is amazing to me is that the member over here, in his question, said that we never talk about tariffs, which is patently false. I have been talking about tariffs and the Liberals' failure to get tariffs removed for almost a year.

Let us be very clear what the Liberals do not talk about. They never talk about what their plan is for tariff-free access for the auto sector. What we need to understand, and the auto workers understand this, is that without tariff-free access, the Canadian auto industry might not survive. Therefore, what these people should be explaining to Canadians, and particularly Canadian auto workers, is what their plan is for tariff-free access for Canadian automobiles in the U.S. They do not talk about it because they have no plan.

We have a plan that is going to reshore production here in Canada and actually increase production in the United States, which is why the American President would be very interested in a plan like this. I hope the Liberals adopt it.

• (1035)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course we want to see the tariffs reduced. Who does not?

A Conservative member of Parliament from Oshawa goes to the States, meets with the President and the Vice-President and no doubt talks about tariffs or whatever. Who knows? Then he comes back and says that Canadians are having a hissy fit.

His leader went down to the U.S. Did he talk to the President and the Vice-President about tariffs and the Conservative plan?

Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, what is incredible is how they never tell us what their plan is on anything.

What is the Liberal plan to get tariffs removed from the United States? What is their plan for CUSMA review? How close are we to any of these things? We never know, because the Prime Minister never tells us.

The Liberals have no plan to get rid of tariffs, and it is embarrassing.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to rise this morning on behalf of my neighbours in Oshawa about a great concern that touches so many of our lives.

I would like to take a brief moment, though, to thank those of this House, as well as those of the Christian community who joined us this morning at the 60th National Prayer Breakfast. I was honoured to be in attendance.

In my community, the auto industry is not just another sector of the economy; it is part of who we are. It is early mornings at the assembly line. It is generations of families who have built their lives around honest, skilled work and parents who put food on the table because of a job at the Oshawa assembly plant. Right now, those workers are worried. They are watching their jobs disappear to the United States. They are watching shifts at plants get cut. They are watching uncertainty in an industry they fought hard to rebuild. They are asking a simple question: Who is fighting for us? It is as simple as that. Who is fighting for us?

The facts are hard to ignore. Since the Liberal government took office in 2015, auto production has fallen by half, from over two million vehicles to just 1.2 million. Since last year alone, under the current Liberal Prime Minister, it is down 7.8%. Thousands of auto workers have already lost their jobs, including in Oshawa.

Let me remind the House that it was this Prime Minister who said while he was campaigning that he was the man with the plan and the one to get a deal, and that he was the one Oshawa could apparently trust to do the job. Exports are down, plants are under threat, and entire communities are feeling consequences. This is not just an economic issue; it is a personal one.

What has been the Liberal government's response? Well, the Liberals seem to have accepted it. They have accepted unjustified tariffs imposed by Donald Trump, the decline in Canada's proud auto industry, and the idea that Canada should settle for less. They seem to simply be content trying to manage the decline of our Canadian auto sector, rather than reinvigorating it.

That is not good enough for Oshawa, and it is not good enough for Canadian auto workers. For months now in question period, I have asked the Prime Minister and the Minister of Industry a simple question: When will the government start standing up for Oshawa and all Canadian auto workers? Every single time, we get excuses. The minister tells me to talk to General Motors or to talk to Unifor. I have done exactly that. What I hear on the ground tells me a very different story from the one the Liberals are proclaiming here in this House.

Just last week in Oshawa, I met again with representatives from General Motors from Canada and the United States. They welcomed our Conservative auto plan, specifically as it clearly aligns our regulatory, emissions and safety standards with those in the United States. They acknowledge that this is exactly what the Canadian auto industry needs to grow, because right now we are asking Canadian workers to compete under a different and often heavier set of rules than their American counterparts. That does not strengthen our industry; it simply holds it back.

Business of Supply

As was mentioned, local Oshawa Unifor president said, "Finally, a commonsense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers." More importantly, he also said, "A plan that restores past production levels and secures a long-term future".

They are not content to sit on their hands and wait to see if the Liberal government will ever stand up for auto jobs here in Canada. I know many of my neighbours in Oshawa are afraid of the decisions and uncertainty coming out of the United States from the current President, and I share their concerns. However, we cannot simply pretend that we can walk away from the United States and replace that market with somewhere else. It is geographically impossible. Canada's auto industry was built on partnerships with the United States. For decades we built cars together, we built supply chains together, and we built prosperity together. The United States buys about 90% of the vehicles we make here in Canada, whereas the rest of the world buys almost none. Even today, Canada exports less than 2% of its vehicles to Europe, so when the Prime Minister suggests that we can just pivot away from North America, that is not a plan. It is wishful thinking, and auto workers in Oshawa cannot build their future on wishful thinking.

• (1040)

Therefore, the question before the House is simple: Do we accept that future and continue to live in the fear and the uncertainty coming out of the White House, or do we as Canadians take a stand and fight for something better? Conservatives are choosing to fight. We will not just sit and wait and hope that the Liberals come up with some way of getting a deal. We are putting forward a plan, and we and our leader have asked the Prime Minister to feel free to steal some pieces of it or all of it, should he so choose, to rebuild Canada's auto industry and bring jobs back home. It is a plan built on a simple idea: If they sell here, they should build here.

The Conservative auto plan would make it easier to build and buy Canadian by removing the GST, and the GST portion of the HST, on Canadian-made vehicles, and to add up to 30,000 new sales a year. That means lower prices for Canadians and more demand for vehicles built by Canadian auto workers. We would also implement a clear rule that, for every vehicle a company builds in Canada, they would sell one vehicle in Canada, duty-free, from a North American partner, one for one. This is about fairness and about balance, and it is about sending a clear message that if they want access to Canadian consumers, they need to invest in Canada and in Canadian auto workers.

Business of Supply

The approach is not new, and we have received some criticism that we are moving back to the past, but my argument is this: The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Perhaps we should look to a strategy that has worked for us in the past and brought our production from 700,000 vehicles to three million vehicles. Perhaps it can work for us again during these times. We know what works. The problem is that we walked away from it, and now we are paying the price.

Our plan would also protect supply chains. Despite what others may imply, we would maintain the 75% North American content requirement. We would support the parts workers who make the engines, the transmissions and the components that keep this industry running. Canada's auto industry is not just assembly lines, and it comes back to this: It is thousands of jobs across the entire supply chain, and each job is a person and a family.

The Conservative auto plan also focuses on protecting our security and our future. We would establish a North American cybersecurity and data standard and ensure that vehicles connected to hostile regimes would not operate in sensitive environments in Canada. That is because our auto industry is about more than economics. It is also about sovereignty, by combining Canadian excellence with Canadian independence.

Finally, we would stand firm against unfair trade. We would work with our North American partners to push back against unfair practices. We would fight for what Canadian workers most need: tariff-free access to the United States market. Some will say this plan is too ambitious, but what is truly unrealistic is believing that doing nothing and not negotiating with the U.S. administration, despite promising to negotiate a trade deal with the United States by July 21 of last year, will somehow make things better. Right now, Canadians buy about 1.9 million vehicles every year, but we build only 1.2 million vehicles. Our plan is about closing that gap, rebuilding what we once had and getting back to producing two million vehicles a year.

Oshawa has a proud tradition of producing automotive excellence built by generations of skilled men and women who believe that if something is made in Canada, it should be made to compete with the best in the world. That same standard must guide our Canadian auto industry today and into the future as we fight to protect jobs, grow production and restore pride, because R.S. McLaughlin, the founder of General Motors of Canada, believed this: "One grade only, and that the best".

• (1045)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the core of this issue is the fact that the United States is taking a protectionist approach to its economy. The United States of America is no longer interested in free trade as it used to be. There is this notion that somehow Conservatives are going to change everything that Donald Trump has stood for in the last year. He has put tariffs on just about every country in the world.

How can the member, in good conscience, stand in the House and suggest that if we suddenly pivot to an idea that the Leader of the Opposition based on what we did in the 1960s, suddenly Don-

ald Trump is going to say, actually, yes, this will be the one exception where he does not want tariffs anymore?

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, we could do what the Liberals are doing right now, which is sitting back, doing nothing and managing the decline that is happening. What we can do, instead of simply offering supports, new job training and all these things to manage this decline, is not sit on our laurels. We can present a plan. We can try to negotiate. Something that Unifor members across this country understand is negotiating and getting a deal. I believe Canadians can get that. I believe we can get it and the United States can be happy with it as well.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, why do they want to put an end to transportation electrification when every country in the world, except the United States, is working toward that?

Also, as another member just said, would we not just be playing into Donald Trump's hands by reinstating the 1960s auto pact?

[*English*]

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, let me correct the record. Conservatives do not want to end the electrification of future manufacturing and of vehicles. We simply would like the market to decide how that will go. On the other hand, I think we can have both. I think we can have oil and gas. I think we can have electrified vehicles, and we will move away. What I do not agree with—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, as for the heckling from the other side, what I do not agree with is the idea that we are giving EV incentives to the United States and folks like Elon Musk. Why are the Liberals doing that?

Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague has been intimately involved in labour negotiations before, but also negotiations in general. One of the things about negotiations is that we always have to understand what the other party wants. In the policy put forward by my colleague, the shadow critic for labour, is the whole concept of the other party benefiting as well as Canada benefiting. That is perhaps what the U.S. administration wants.

Can my colleague comment on both parties winning in a negotiated strategy?

• (1050)

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, the basis of any successful negotiation strategy is figuring out what the person we are negotiating with needs, what they are looking for and what they want. Our country, as it currently is run, seems to be capitulating to everything that the U.S. wants. I suggest we look at negotiating: They are looking for this; we are looking for this. How can we make that work together to the benefit of both Canada and the United States?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada understands the importance of the automobile industry to the entire country. We appreciate the efforts and the work of the best workers in the world. There have been negotiations from day one with President Trump in dealing with the tariffs. In many ways, Canada has been leading the world in dealing with the administration of the United States.

My question to the member is this: Why is it that it is only in the last couple of days that the Conservative Party has come to the realization that there is an industry that needs to get that special attention—

The Deputy Speaker: I need to cut off the parliamentary secretary to give the member for Oshawa a chance to respond.

Rhonda Kirkland: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting. We hear words like “appreciate,” “we understand,” and “we stand with our auto workers.” I suggest the Liberals stand with them in the unemployment lines, and that is unacceptable to Conservatives. We are not the government right now. We are the opposition. It is up to the Liberal Party of Canada and the Liberal Prime Minister to negotiate a deal to the betterment of Canadians. He is failing at the job he promised us he could do.

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to the motion, which I will be opposing because it would roll back 50 years of environmental progress and protection. It embraces not the last era, but three eras before of automotive production in Canada. It also rejects a strategy that we know is already working to bring modern vehicles, with a modern means of construction, to a modern workforce, which is the best workforce in the world, as recognized by so many. Investing in that and in the capacity we have to build the cars and the technologies of the future is what our strategy does.

Again, the motion harkens back to the era of the auto pact. If we follow the history of this file, my constituent Dimitry Anastakis, the renowned automotive historian in Canada, has written about the different eras of automotive production in Canada. We started with the pre-auto pact era policy. Then policy-makers came together, from Canada and the United States, to create the auto pact, which resulted in a real golden age of production and new facilities. With new pressures and new opportunities, policy-makers on different sides adapted.

The third era of auto production in this country involved the invitation of Japanese automakers in the 1980s, with governments cooperating to do that at a time when a lot of people thought this was something of a risk and that the entry of non-North American automakers was something that was a threat to auto workers and a

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threat to auto production. Were those naysayers correct? No. In fact, right now, Toyota and Honda manufacture approximately three-quarters of the assembled vehicles in Canada. That was the right move at the time, despite the naysaying. Policy-makers adjusted and adapted.

In the 2000s, during the financial crisis when the competition for investment heightened and there were deep financial issues, especially with the North American auto companies, what did policy-makers do? The party on the other side, when in government, was a bit slow on this, but eventually it joined with the Government of Ontario and the U.S. administration to invest in auto companies, including those here. We had a rich tradition for most of the 2000s and 2010s of Ontario and Canada co-operating to attract new investment, and the attraction continues to this day.

However, we are now in a new era of automotive production because of this disruption that the chief government whip so articulately pointed out. It is a disruption that we had not been hearing much about from the opposition until lately.

First, I want to say that, I think in April 2025, the Canadian people had a choice about who they were going to trust to have these kinds of negotiations and discussions with the U.S. administration. Quite clearly, they chose that it was going to be this party on this side of the House that was going to be conducting those negotiations.

I do recall that many questions from the other side of the House, when we got questions about trade from the other side of the House, were generally encouragement to rush to a deadline. In fact, the Conservatives continue to repeat a deadline they think we should have adhered to in the service of any deal. The motion before us is calling for something that would not have been deliverable if we had listened to that party's advice. Instead, we came up with, and we continue to work on, a strategy. It is an important five-part strategy, and I just want to outline it here briefly, because I think it is important for the House to hear the full extent of what this strategy is doing.

First, the strategy is focusing on attracting investment, with \$3 billion allocated from the strategic response fund and up to \$100 million from the regional tariff response initiative to attract new investment. I will talk a bit about what is happening in different parts of Canada when it comes to investment, which is, in some cases, prompted by some of these government investments, but it is also prompted by the choices of U.S. and international automakers to invest here.

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Let us look at some communities, such as Woodstock, Cambridge and Alliston, which is where Toyota and Honda do their manufacturing. Again, three-quarters of manufacturing in Canada is currently done in those plants. The Cambridge and Woodstock plants recently received their 23rd J.D. Power Plant Quality Award, including 13 that are gold or platinum, which is a testament to the quality of the plant. A number of members joined the roll-off of the 2026 RAV4 in Woodstock, which is plant recognized by the home office as one of the best in the world, or the best in the world. It is a plant that is attracting new investment.

• (1055)

In Windsor, we have the third shift that was announced at Stelantis. The NextStar plant, with government investment, has recently churned out one million new fuel cells, and the engine plant at which Unifor Local 200 is based is making engines for the very vehicles that my colleague, the member for Dufferin—Caledon, wants to be made. There was a bit of dismissal around the Unifor 200 plant facility in Windsor, but that is an essential plant.

At a plant in Oakville, there has been multi-billion dollar retooling done by Ford. In St. Thomas, a new PowerCo battery plant is rejuvenating a part of Ontario that includes the riding of my colleague, the deputy government House leader. That area has not had auto investment in a while after the departure of the Ford Crown Victoria St. Thomas plant.

As we know, there are plants and facilities where there have been some struggles and some challenges in Brampton, Ingersoll and Oshtawa. I think colleagues have heard the government, the Minister of Industry and the local MPs in those areas who are working on behalf of those workers in those plants to fight for that investment, making it very clear to the companies that if they do not honour their commitments, then we will take legal action.

However, the broader space of auto investment in Canada goes far beyond any individual plant. The plants are key core parts of production. We cannot have an auto sector that is thriving without those plants, but there is a lot more to it. We have world-leading parts manufacturers, many of whom are employing more people outside Canada than in Canada. However, that benefits Canada. The intellectual property is here. The profits return here. The workers are here benefiting. Those parts plants exist all across southern Ontario and beyond.

We also have the broader set of sectors that benefit from this strategy: electric facilities, battery supply chains, electrification and software developers. The very modern vehicles, the very modern methods that are now in cars these days, are part of a sector that is being built here in Canada and is growing in Canada. We cannot have that sector without, first, the investments that I talked about at the beginning, but it takes more than just those investments in the plants themselves. It also takes an investment in the electrical strategy and the connectivity that we need for vehicles, for plants and for consumers to be able to access the new modern vehicles. That is a key part of our strategy.

Our strategy involves an investment in electric charging infrastructure of over \$1.5 billion through the Canada Infrastructure Bank to create a charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure initiative. We need a national EV charging network to benefit from the

vehicles of the future, vehicles that Canadians want to buy now, but they have some issues around range anxiety and they have some issues around accessing these vehicles. We also realize as a government that there is an economy to be built around electrification. There are distributed benefits that go far beyond southern Ontario when we take electrification seriously and when we make those investments. It is a common good. It is a shared good. It is something that requires government investment. Through our investments we are doing just that.

Our strategy also includes a real important focus on sustainability. I think it is really important to point out how disruptive the opposition party is when opposition members use perhaps the more generic words in the motion to talk about “harmonizing tailpipe emissions reductions with our North American partners”. What they are doing when they say this is rejecting 50 years of increasingly stringent auto emissions standards, which have cleaned our air, helped adapt the vehicles and helped adapt the technologies, so that new investment is in the cleanest vehicles. New investment is in those things that consumers want, but that are also good for the climate.

Increasingly stringent vehicle emissions standards are good for our climate. They are good for consumers and they are good for Canada. What the opposition party is doing is aligning itself with a radical, far-right idea, which has been embraced by elements of the U.S. administration, to say it wants no vehicle emissions standards whatsoever. It is an abandonment of 50 years of progress, and it is something that we cannot accept on this side of the House.

We are going to align with jurisdictions and places like California and Europe. We are going to adapt our Canadian standards, but we are going to make sure they are increasingly stringent because this is what Canadians want and because it will clean our air. We know from history that when this was done, manufacturers have adapted. Manufacturers will adapt to cleaner vehicles.

• (1100)

There was an era when seat belts were not required in vehicles in Canada. There was an era in which eight-track tapes were playing in our vehicles. There was an era in which the K-car was being driven around. There were eras when engines—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, maybe there are some K-car drivers still here.

The kind of strategy the opposition is talking about is one that frankly needs the heritage licence plate on it, because that is kind of the strategy being proposed here.

This focus on emissions reduction in a smart way, working with partners, that makes vehicles better is a key part of our plan and a key part of our progress. In every era of automotive production around the world, governments are working with business and working with the technologies that are available, or that could be available, to make cars cleaner, safer, more reliable and cheaper. This is what this strategy will do.

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Speaking of making vehicles more available, it is a key part of our strategy that we have reintroduced electric vehicle rebates, something that was advocated strongly by this caucus, especially by the member for Guelph, who is the chair of our auto caucus, as well as members of our climate caucus and indeed all members on this side of the House, who made a very strong advocacy to bring these rebates back.

I am very pleased to report, and people can go to the Transport Canada website now, that the program for electric vehicle rebates will be launching on March 31 for eligible vehicles that are bought or leased on any date after February 16. This is an exciting time for Canadians to access the vehicles they want to buy, where they just need a bit of a bridge in financing to make them more available. These vehicles have not just long-term benefits to Canadians, but short-term benefits to Canadians.

I gassed up this weekend, and we know that because of the war in the Middle East, there has been a spike in gas prices. My RAV4 used to cost me about \$47 to fill up. Over the weekend, it was over \$60. I know from my constituents and from the constituents of members on both sides of the House that they are feeling anxiety around this moment in the war. They are feeling anxieties in lots of ways, including for the people who are suffering in that war, but here at home, it has a real effect on gas prices. A smart electric vehicle rebate policy, one that highlights and elevates the rebate this year so that it is available when people are thinking about these issues, is an especially important part of our policy.

The policy and our new strategy also celebrate workers. We are working hard with workers and with union leaders, as I have mentioned before, to make sure that where there is a threat that investments are being pulled out by some North American automakers, we are being very aggressive in making sure we are standing with workers to say that those investments we are committed to must return. We are also creating a new work-sharing grant, creating a new workforce alliance and providing employment assistance and re-skilling supports for up to 66,000 workers with a \$570-million investment.

Finally, our strategy, and some of my colleagues have already referred to this, is about defending our trade interests. Canadians chose, in April, this party and people on this side of the House to defend Canada's trade interests in Washington, D.C. Yes, there are elements in this motion that we applaud. In fact, we are working daily with the administration and on this side of the House to make sure that we get the very best deal for Canada.

The Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, obviously the Prime Minister, the Minister of Industry, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and others are engaged regularly on the set of questions around this. It is a testament to the engagement we are doing that we have been able to get to this point where the tariffs have not unduly hurt us. In fact, Canada, overall, has the best tariff arrangement of any country in the world, and we are going to continue to defend that. We are going to continue to defend those CUSMA exemptions. We are also going to push back, so if a company is not building enough here, we will make sure it is not able to sell as much here. That is a key part of our strategy through our remission framework.

It would be helpful, of course, if that perspective on getting the best deal for Canada was shared by every member of the caucus on the other side. If I understand the motion correctly, it calls for a trade deal to be done similar to the Canada-U.S. auto pact. I do not know if the member for Bowmanville—Oshawa North brought the auto pact with him when he went to Washington, D.C., but I think it is very unfortunate that the sole representative of the Conservative caucus who went to Washington, D.C., was talking down Canada after his engagements. I think that weakened our trade position rather than strengthened it. I look forward to hearing how the Conservative caucus is going to repair that damaging interaction.

● (1105)

There are a few parts of the motion about Chinese tariffs and access to the Chinese market. I have not heard the other side yet refer to the real, substantive gains that were made in that arrangement for canola farmers and producers in western Canada. I know that when I went to Saskatchewan and Alberta in the past weeks, I heard with great acclaim how appreciative they were that we had some very focused arrangement with China that allowed the unleashing of the canola trade, which had been restricted. Let us just remember that this is a very focused reopening of access to the Canadian marketplace for Chinese EVs that harkens back to what we had a few years before the specific conflict we had with them. We are just reopening back to that era.

When we were in that era, I did not hear Conservatives being especially concerned that we were having a limited number of Chinese EVs in the country at that time. Any future Chinese EV enlargement will be subject to the kinds of investments that we are saying we need to look for. Again, we have a five-part strategy that focuses on investment, on workers, on sustainability, on consumer incentives like the EV rebate and on a strong trade arrangement.

Our auto strategy is coherent, and it is complete. It depends on Canadian workers, a history of investment and a need to adapt to the new era. An auto strategy that harkens back to an era that is 60 years gone, in which our main partner is not interested anymore, is not destined to succeed. For that reason, I will be opposing this motion.

Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to ask a question, because I do not think I want to hear the answer. Quite frankly, if I am going to comment, I would say that I have been fortunate. Honda has been in my riding for many years, before this redistribution, and I have worked with them for many years. I can tell members about the frustrations that Honda has had with the Liberal government. “This is a new Liberal government”, we hear time and time again. It is the same government. When I am hearing comments about battery cars and EV cars, they are missing the whole idea behind this: We need to sell something that people want to purchase.

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A lot of those companies, quite frankly, have been doing great work on their GHGs, and they are concerned that they have a government, once again, that wants to dictate what kind of technology they need to use to get to those numbers. There is extreme frustration.

The other part of it that I want to mention is that a lot of them that are not tier one or tier two parts suppliers have no foreign investment anymore, because it is the same government proposing the same issues. Quite frankly, it is killing our automotive industry.

• (1110)

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians want the Civic, they want the RAV4 and they want some of the cars that are coming out of the plants that we think we can attract. I think Canadians want the vehicles that are being made here, and they want to be part of the electric future, which does not mean just the vehicles, but all the connected technologies, software and parts that are made in Canada.

When we take a look at the bigger picture, yes, we have some of the vehicles, and yes, we are building more and more of the technologies that are connected to that.

[*Translation*]

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague opposite on his speech. His argument in favour of transportation electrification and electric vehicles was certainly music to my ears. I could not agree more. However, over the past year, the sector has experienced a significant funding shortfall. The government unilaterally ended the EV funding program, and that caused a drop in demand.

What does my colleague think about the fact that his government's actions slowed the transportation electrification market and caused major supply chain disruptions in Quebec and the industry as a whole, which is facing significant challenges as a result?

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, that is a good question and here is my answer. We have reinstated the incentives and we have created a new electrification strategy. In these changing times, what with the war in the Middle East, I think that our existing policies and the incentives that will be announced next week will be well received by Quebecers and Canadians.

[*English*]

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is before the House today is a rather myopic look at a few things that could happen in the auto sector, whereas the Liberal government's plan is comprehensive. I wonder if my colleague would talk about how the government's automobile strategy looks at the full supply chain and what the benefits are for Canada, looking at things from critical minerals to the dealership.

Karim Bardeesy: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, this plan is pro-dealership, including through the EV rebates. We have a critical minerals strategy, not only for domestic but for export. We have a software and a parts industry, including in the hon. member's riding, and she has been such a champion of those sectors and emerging sectors that are more tied to this space. I know she has an interest in artificial intelligence, and we have had a standing committee study on this. There are a variety of technologies being produced or being

invented in Canada that can reach into this new era of electrification, a new era of safety and affordability.

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, for most Canadians, my hon. colleague's speech fell flat because it does not actually respond to the problems that we are hearing about. The Liberals are so intent that their answer is the only right answer that they refuse to listen to any other options. Their answer keeps coming back to the fact that our answer is an answer from the past, but the reality is that we have had the president of Unifor Local 222 in Oshawa say that this is a common-sense solution.

The reality is that what the Liberals have been doing for the last decade has absolutely destroyed our auto industry and has hurt people because they cannot afford things. They cannot afford to buy groceries. They cannot afford to put gas in their vehicles, and they sure cannot afford to buy new vehicles. Does the member opposite believe that we need to do everything in our power to bring affordability back and bring things back to Canada, yes or no?

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, yes, I agree. We do need to have a focus on affordability and bringing jobs back to Canada. That is why these investments and the strategy, which responds to the moment and the situation that was created in the last year, not 10 years ago but in the last year, are the right strategy for Canada.

• (1115)

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague on his speech.

Times of crisis are known to bring about rapid change and opportunities for growth. We saw this during the first oil shock in 1973, which led to the rise of more fuel-efficient vehicles, such as the Japanese cars that are still on the roads today. In 1979, the second oil shock left Chrysler and American Motors bankrupt. We are probably going through something similar today. I think that the world is realizing that dependence on oil and instability go hand in hand, and something is going to come out of that.

Does my colleague not think that our comparative advantage lies in processing the resources and critical minerals that we have here?

Should the government's main objective not be to develop this sector and expertise in this area, and then enter into various partnerships, especially with Europe?

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is quite right. He clearly demonstrated the possibilities. We have made commitments on this, but there is still a lot more work to be done. That is one of the reasons why the ministers and the Prime Minister have been travelling to Europe and other countries to forge partnerships with respect to critical minerals. Yes, we need to invest more in processing these minerals to manufacture products used in automobiles.

[English]

Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary, in his speech, talked about affordability and gave the real-world example of filling up his car just a week ago and how much that cost has increased. We have seen the price of a barrel of oil go up to almost \$120.

Given that Canada has what some describe as the least fuel-efficient fleet in the entire world, we are seeing that cost right now. As part of the motion from the Conservative Party, the Conservatives are talking about making sure that we align our tailpipe standards with those of the U.S. Looking at this right now, in B.C., the average price of gas is over two dollars a litre, and that is costing people over \$18 to drive 100 kilometres. If we had the European standard, it would be below \$10 for that same run, and if people were driving an EV, it would be two dollars.

I was hoping the member could speak to why we should maybe not go down the route of aligning our tailpipe standards with those of the U.S.

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, my colleague has been a long-time advocate for the kinds of policies that get results for the climate and affordability, and I want to share my appreciation for that.

He has laid out some very good specific numbers that show what is possible with the right kinds of investment in the right kinds of vehicles. The flip side is that if we go back to a 60-year-old policy and abandon 50 years of auto emissions standards, it is a complete reversal. It embraces a far right idea.

Yes, my colleague is right that we have to work together to provide those opportunities to Canadians so that, overall, our marketplace provides vehicles that are safer, more reliable and more affordable, and that reduce our emissions profile.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge the member opposite on the statement he made that this has only happened in the past year in our auto industry, when in the past decade, we have gone from the production of two million cars down to 1.2 million.

My question is, why are you continuing with a plan that is trying to mitigate production losses, instead of supporting our Conservative plan, which would double production with a tariff-free pact with the United States?

The Deputy Speaker: I would remind members to speak through the Chair and not directly to members.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has 15 seconds or less.

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, this is a pro-investment plan with which we intend to attract more auto investment to Canada,

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and it is the one defending our trade interests every day south of the border.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my friend from Repentigny.

Today's debate makes me think of *Back to the Future*, a movie that was popular when I was a kid. The characters used a car to go back to the 1960s. A few years later, Hollywood came out with *Back to the Future Part II*. The movie was no good, but at least they thought of using a car to propel themselves into the future. That is not the case in Ottawa. Here, the Conservatives keep wanting to bring us back into the past. Their car has just one gear: reverse.

The motion essentially proposes three things. The Conservatives want to put an end to the transportation electrification initiative, scrap the rules that require manufacturers to make electric vehicles available and eliminate the measures that encourage consumers to choose electric vehicles. By the way, in 2025, 43% of the zero-emission vehicles sold in Canada were purchased by Quebecers. I am not sure why the Conservatives want to punish Quebecers with their motion today, but that is the way it is.

In addition, 22% of new vehicles sold in Quebec in the last quarter were electric. That is a good thing. Every litre of gas put into a car is money that leaves Quebec. That money is transferred directly from Quebec to Canada, particularly to the west. Conversely, every kilowatt of electricity put into a vehicle is money that stays in Quebec, creates jobs in Quebec and funds Quebec's own government, schools and hospitals. This is not only an environmental issue; it is an economic issue. If only for that reason, the Bloc Québécois would be justified in opposing the Conservative motion. This motion goes against the interests of Quebec.

However, that is not all. The Conservatives also want Canada to import Donald Trump's policies on pollution and climate change. Their way of resisting Donald Trump is to imitate him, to quietly turn Canada into the 51st state. As I was saying, their car is in reverse.

That is not all. They want to set our trade relations back to 1965. This seems like a good time for a little history lesson. Ontario's auto industry developed in the early days of the automobile in the 1920s and 1930s. My colleagues may recall that the United States introduced very high tariffs after the crash of 1929 under the controversial Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930.

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The rest of the world, including Canada, adopted reciprocal tariffs. Since American cars were subject to high tariffs, American industries began assembling cars in Canada for the Canadian market. That is how Ontario's auto industry developed. However, it was not very efficient. Automakers had to do everything twice. The same model would be assembled in two plants: one in Canada and one in the United States. Cars were more expensive and fewer models were available. Such was the price of protectionism. That is why the auto industry demanded an end to this system.

In the late 1940s, automakers began calling for free trade and an end to tariffs, but Canada refused, fearing it would lose its industry. That brings us to 1965, the year referred to in today's motion. Under the auto pact, Canada agreed to lift its tariffs, but on condition that tariffs would only be abolished for companies that maintained a Canadian production level comparable to our share of the North American market, around 10%. The auto industry operated under this protectionism-lite, known as managed trade, for 23 years, until the 1988 Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement.

It sparked a rather heated debate at the time. Ontario was opposed to free trade, which it saw as a threat to the auto pact. Turning down a free trade deal with the United States was the 1980s version of "elbows up". On the other side, Quebec, led by Jacques Parizeau, Bernard Landry and the steelworker union, supported free trade. For us, it was a way of gaining access to the world, rather than being locked up inside Canada. We know what happened next. The agreement was signed. It later became the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, which then became the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA.

Today, the wealth gap between Quebec and Ontario is half of what it was back then. It is important to remember that, in 1965, Quebec was mainly exporting raw materials. Our leading manufacturing industry was textiles and clothing. That meant low wages, occupational illnesses and a third-world economy. As for the idea that today's motion will help make Canada great again, things were not so great in Quebec.

I want to emphasize that today's motion is ill advised when it comes to trade. The Conservatives are eating out of Donald Trump's hand. Under CUSMA, the three North American countries must sit down together on July 1, but that is all it provides for. If the three countries agree to change the agreement, then it could be changed. If they do not agree, then it will remain as is. That is the current situation.

Obviously, if the U.S. Congress decides to vote in favour of withdrawing from the agreement, then it can do so and give six months' notice at any time. Does anyone in the House seriously believe that the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, which require a 60% margin, will vote in favour of that?

• (1120)

In the U.S., treaties are ratified and terminated by elected officials, not the President. Donald Trump does have power over how treaties are implemented, which does give him the ability to create chaos, but he cannot change or terminate treaties. Only Congress can do that, and it has never given any indication that it intends to do so. It is quite the opposite, actually.

Now today's motion is playing right into Donald Trump's hands by proposing to replace CUSMA with the auto pact. I have to say that I do not really get this. Does it mean that everything is fine and we do not need to do anything? No, on the contrary.

We are currently in a crisis. It is global, and we are right in the eye of the storm. Then again, crises are periods of accelerated change, and accelerated change can bring opportunities.

The 1973 oil crisis, when the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries turned off the tap, put an end to the American auto industry's monopoly over the continent. The three-ton gas guzzlers that got five miles per gallon became obsolete. Japanese cars arrived en masse and were here to stay. There was another oil crisis in 1979 with the Iranian Revolution and the bankruptcies of Chrysler and American Motors Corporation. We are seeing something similar today. The world is realizing that dependence on oil goes hand in hand with instability, and this realization will certainly have lasting effects.

Yesterday, I was reading an article by historian Nils Gilman in *Foreign Policy* magazine. He said that the new Cold War would be different from the previous one, which pitted capitalism against communism. The two competing models today are the petrostates and the electrostates. They have two different development models, two different types of infrastructure, and two different supply chains.

Donald Trump's United States is a caricature of a petrostate, anxious to make the age of oil last as long as possible. The same could be said for Canada. When Canada says it wants to be an energy superpower, it is referring to oil and gas, but that is a pointless choice. Oil is a non-renewable resource and climate change is real, whether or not people are willing to admit it. Then there are the electrostates, which are shedding their dependence on oil and switching to less unstable and more sustainable economic development. Europe has chosen this model, but there is one problem: That leaves it dependent on China, which currently controls the entire supply chain for that new economy.

That is where Quebec comes in. The new clean economy is really our strength. We do not have oil; we have renewable energy. We have everything we need to become one of the main links in the electrostates' new supply chain. That is where our future lies.

My colleague, the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, who was the Bloc Québécois industry critic before me, understood that. His region sits on rich deposits of critical minerals. When the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology undertook a study of batteries and the modernization of the auto industry, it became clear that there were two opposing models.

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The first one involves subsidizing the auto industry to help it modernize. That is what Ottawa did when it spent over \$30 billion, more than 90% of which went to Ontario for projects where Canada had no real comparative advantage, except in winning a subsidy race with the United States. The results are clear today. However, there was another option. It would have been possible to support the development of an entirely new market: the processing of an existing resource. In this area, we have a comparative advantage. In fact, we have a unique asset: the resource itself. It is an asset that would have made us indispensable in the new economy, but that was not the choice Ottawa made. Our projects ended up underfunded. Many collapsed. Quebec lost money. Canada and its petro-state policy represent a missed opportunity for Quebec.

Yet the current context gives Quebec the opportunity to take full advantage of its own strengths and to reconnect with its true nature. Quebec is the bridge between America and Europe. We are that bridge through language and culture, as we know, but we are also that bridge economically. While Quebec attracts only 9% of American investments in Canada, it represents 40% of European investments. The trend is the same in trade, even if it is less pronounced. We can move away from the oil-based development model and resolutely choose a sustainable economy. If we commit to it, we can give Europe the ability to abandon the petro-state model without becoming dependent on China. We can be the new economic Eldorado.

Unfortunately, Canada has chosen the petro-state model, which is not our own. When the government talks about being an energy superpower, it is referring to oil and gas. These are two things that Quebec would be wise to get rid of because they are making it poorer. The government is talking about pipelines so expensive that they will only break even if they operate at full capacity for 20 years, locking the next generation into this outdated model.

When the Conservatives ask us to import Donald Trump's policies, they want to lock us into that model and throw away the key. That is not where Quebec's future lies. The Bloc Québécois will vote against the Conservative motion today.

• (1125)

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. I would like to thank him and congratulate him on his remarks.

My colleague spoke about the true nature of Quebec. I would nevertheless like to remind him that, over the past year, the province consumed 20 billion litres of oil, which represents an increase of 2.1%. However, that is not the point I wanted to raise.

Has my colleague, who drives an electric car like me, noticed that last year was the worst year for the EV industry worldwide? Canada had the worst record, with a drop of over 40% in EV sales. That is because this government kept taking the wrong measures and offered no predictability. On January 13, 2025, overnight, they cut financial supports without warning anyone in advance, which destabilized the industry. In May, two senior ministers stated that the subsidies would be reinstated. In fact, they were reinstated a year later.

Does the member agree—

• (1130)

The Deputy Speaker: I must interrupt the MP to give the member for Joliette—Manawan the opportunity to answer the question.

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for his remarks. I could not agree with him more. The entire transportation electrification industry brings into focus one fundamental principle, which is predictability. While the transition to the electrification of transportation is under way in Europe, China, and everywhere else in the world other than the United States and Canada under this government, we are now seeing our American neighbours move backward. It appears that the Prime Minister and his predecessor are taking a page from Donald Trump's policies by doing less and destabilizing the supply chain, preferring to remain stuck in the past rather than looking to the future, while under this model, Quebec has everything it needs to succeed.

Natilien Joseph (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on his speech.

Do members know who applauded our auto strategy? It was Ontario premier Doug Ford and his Conservatives. Listening to the member for Dufferin—Caledon, it is very clear that he does not know what the government's plan is. Our strategy is to see the world as it is today, not as it was in 1965. Our plan is being applauded in that province.

Is my Bloc Québécois colleague aware that the Conservatives are sitting back and continuing to want to drag Canada and Quebec back into the past?

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, what we need to do is seize this crisis as an opportunity to modernize by adopting the next-generation economic model adopted by Europe and most of the rest of the world, with the exception of Donald Trump's United States and, unfortunately, our own country under our government's excessively timid measures. We must accelerate transportation electrification. One of the most promising ways forward is to develop the resource and get that manufacturing happening here, not to invest \$30 billion in Ontario's auto industry, which does not have that great a comparative advantage, as the results have shown.

Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the past 10 years of Liberal governance, the number of vehicles produced has declined from 2.3 million to 1.2 million. Exports have dropped significantly in the past year.

Can the Bloc Québécois member comment on those numbers? Does he know how far the number of cars in Quebec has fallen over the past 10 years and what impact that has had? Can he comment on that?

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, Quebec no longer has any automobile manufacturing. There was a plant that made Camaros in Laval's north end a few decades ago. When that closed, Jean Chrétien decided to abandon that industry on the pretext that auto manufacturing belonged to Ontario. The Liberal legacy lives on. I recognize that these are very important jobs and that this is a very important industry for Ontario.

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I would also remind my colleague that this industry, like all others, is constantly evolving. We are facing crises, so we need to be able to adapt in order to face the future during this crisis and deal with Donald Trump's hostile policies, even though the U.S. will always remain our largest partner. What I am proposing is to accelerate the electrification of transportation, including in the automotive sector. In that regard, our key comparative advantage lies in the resources we have and our ability to process them here.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by saying that the Bloc Québécois does not support the Conservative Party's motion. In fact, by moving yet another motion on the auto sector, the Conservatives are unfortunately confusing the interests of Ontarians with the interests of Quebeckers. They are also protecting the interests of Canadian auto manufacturers, which are lagging behind internationally compared to electric vehicle manufacturers. Once again, they are protecting the interests of oil companies.

What the Conservatives are doing is trying to bring Canada in line with Donald Trump's policies. The Conservatives are proposing an alignment with U.S. positions, including positions on tariffs that target Chinese vehicles, emissions standards and rules of origin, before trade agreement negotiations even begin.

Obviously, we are skeptical about the Conservative proposal to resurrect the 1965 Auto Pact. This pact was not free trade. It was a managed trade agreement essentially designed to protect Ontario's auto industry. Quebec was never afforded such protection. Rejecting the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA, in favour of a measure like this would essentially mean reverting to a model that systematically favoured Ontario at Quebec's expense.

The second part of the motion asks several things of the government, including ending the EV subsidy and removing the GST on Canadian-made vehicles. Removing the GST on vehicles in the current context would be terribly counterproductive. With regard to his tariffs, Donald Trump has largely spared the sectors that are currently covered by CUSMA. If Ottawa begins to tax foreign vehicles through the GST and other means, but not vehicles produced here, Donald Trump will inevitably interpret that as a tariff on American vehicles. In short, while the Conservatives want to favour local production, this measure will very certainly have the opposite effect and will provide Donald Trump with the perfect pretext to impose new tariffs, or even to repudiate CUSMA and tax the entire Canadian economy, including the Quebec economy.

Regarding EV subsidies, this is yet another proposal by the Conservatives to oppose the reinstatement of subsidies for the purchase of electric vehicles. This measure has proven effective in stimulating the EV market since it was introduced in 2019 here in Canada. We are talking about new subsidies that have been implemented after a one-year suspension that led to a major decline in electric vehicle sales. This decline was the result of the government suspending these subsidies overnight. Yes, we need a short-term subsidy. What is interesting, however, is that this subsidy is capped for vehicles with a price tag under \$50,000.

Obviously, Quebeckers have everything to gain, because Quebec is where the most electric vehicles are sold in the country. When we look at the impact of subsidies, we see that a subsidy of \$1,000

leads to roughly a 10% increase in electric vehicle sales, according to the Canadian Climate Institute. The International Energy Agency has confirmed that the global EV market is booming despite economic uncertainties caused, among other things, by U.S. tariffs. In 2025, 25% of new light-duty vehicles sold worldwide were electric. There is even talk of two out of five vehicles by the end of the decade, if not more. Currently, China is continuing its conquest of this market, which is literally growing everywhere on the planet except here in Canada.

Let us take a look at China. People always say that China needs to step up its efforts. Right now, it is leading the transition to electric vehicles, including with very competitive tariffs, high-performance vehicles and more affordable models. As we speak, 50% of new vehicles sold in China are electric, and that figure is likely to rise to 80% by 2030, if not sooner.

Therefore, the Conservatives are mistaken. EV subsidies must not be eliminated, but the supply side needs to be addressed as well. That is what Canada had with the electric vehicle availability standard, which the government abolished. However, a number of studies suggest that relying solely on purchase incentives is not the best way to boost sales. More is required. What happened with the EV availability standard is another step backward by the government, which a year ago had a far more ambitious standard than what has been proposed.

● (1135)

We do not know how what was proposed in January will translate into regulations. The government has once again lowered the bar, and it is far from certain that it will meet even this new low bar. Whereas it previously aimed for 100% of new light-duty vehicles sold by 2035 to be electric, it is now aiming for only 75%, and the regulations are still not in place. It is reasonable to believe that the reason Ontario manufacturers and Doug Ford are applauding the government's backtracking is that it is moving backward and risks retreating even further.

The purpose of targeted subsidies is to make vehicles more affordable from the get-go. Right now they are still needed to close the remaining gap between electric vehicles and other vehicles, while the development of charging infrastructure boosts market confidence and consumer confidence while fostering this future-oriented economy that needs to be developed.

There are other key measures that concern us at this time. One of our concerns is the fact that electric vehicles manufactured in Europe do not have access to the Canadian market because the safety standards are not recognized as being equivalent. Our point is that if we want to diversify the market, then we need to facilitate access to these high-performance, lower-cost vehicles, which are currently being blocked by absolutely useless government measures. Mexico, for example, allows these vehicles into the country, but Canada does not, even though they are the same vehicles. If we were to let these vehicles into the country, it would help to bring down the cost and give people access to a wider variety of models, including smaller models that are virtually non-existent in Canada. The same goes for Chinese vehicles. However, there are issues related to the production of Chinese vehicles. It is important to be vigilant, particularly regarding espionage, forced labour and Chinese interference in Canada.

As for Canada, there has been a drop of nearly 50% in EV sales across the country. We are, I believe, the only country where sales have fallen, dropping from 18% to 9% of total vehicle sales last year. In Norway, the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries in particular, Europe in general and in China, electric vehicle sales account for over 50% of new vehicles sold. We are lagging behind here in Canada. The Conservatives are essentially proposing we slow that pace even further in order to protect the Canadian automotive industry, which has failed to adapt to the new global reality of climate change and the performance and efficiency of EVs. That is why they want to block new vehicles from entering the market and do not want to force manufacturers to produce more vehicles. Clearly, the industry is completely behind the times and is in cahoots with the oil companies, which have every interest in ensuring that more oil is sold. Obviously, the electrification of transport threatens oil company profits.

When the Conservatives propose ending EV mandates and rebates, they are also proposing to align vehicle emission reductions with those of our North American partner, the United States. In other words, they are asking for permission to pollute without limit, like Donald Trump's United States. President Trump announced the repeal of vehicle efficiency standards that extended over time the driving range of vehicles per gallon of gas. Under the current administration's plan, that amounts to 34.5 miles per gallon, compared to 50.4 miles per gallon under the Biden administration.

● (1140)

Obviously, this standard has an impact on production lines. If it is removed, manufacturers will no longer be forced to produce higher-efficiency vehicles, including electric vehicles. In the United States, this measure is estimated to save \$23 billion in gas costs. These gas costs go straight into people's pockets. If manufacturers are under no obligation, we know they will not comply. We know that vehicles will use more gas and cost more. We know that households will have fewer options when it comes to small, fuel-efficient vehicles and electric vehicles.

Unfortunately, once again, our Conservative friends are essentially suggesting that we go back to the Stone Age. They want to go backward at a time when the entire world is moving forward with the electrification of transportation and is taking the fight against climate change seriously. Obviously, we believe that aligning our-

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selves with the Trump administration is completely unacceptable. The government has already backed down on the electrification of transportation and related measures. What it should do is improve its auto strategy by setting more ambitious targets and taking action to ensure that we have more EVs from regions like Europe, not by doing less, as the Conservatives are proposing.

● (1145)

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, going over the Conservative motion, one cannot help but conclude that the Conservatives do not take into consideration the whole concept of electric vehicles, whether they are hybrids or purely electric. It is really unfortunate that the official opposition is failing to recognize an important aspect of the industry.

I am wondering if my friend from the Bloc can provide his thoughts on this, given that the Province of Quebec, in the past, has provided EV incentives, as have the Province of Manitoba and the Province of B.C.

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, in our view, the Conservatives' proposal is utterly backward. Quebec is a leader in transportation electrification, and it needs the federal government's support. That means implementing ambitious measures, but the government's latest auto strategy is not ambitious, unfortunately. In terms of targets, it is not enough.

There is also absolutely nothing in it about medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, even though those types of vehicles must be electrified. There is also no new money for charging stations outside of big cities, for the small charging station projects we need to ensure that charging is available everywhere.

Yes, the Conservatives are backward, but we also need the Liberals to be much more ambitious. We need them to stop listening to automakers and the Ontario auto industry lobby, which are dragging us down. They also need to stop listening to the oil industry lobby, with which the government is deeply complicit.

Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Sainte-Thérèse was once home to an auto manufacturing facility, and even though Quebec no longer manufactures cars, it remains a very important industry in that province. Parts and engines are still manufactured there, for example. Thousands of workers are employed in that industry.

Can the Bloc Québécois comment on the impact that the Liberal's policy is having on Quebec and on this staggering decline of more than a million cars? Although vehicles are not fully assembled in Quebec, this does have an impact on parts manufacturing.

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Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, there are currently 130,000 jobs in the electric mobility sector in this country and many of those jobs are in Quebec. That number is expected to triple by 2035. Quebec does not manufacture gas-powered vehicles. It manufactures electric buses, light-duty electric trucks, heavy-duty electric trucks, trains and streetcars. Quebec can do that and is interested in developing the components, batteries, charging station systems and the electrical system.

That is where the jobs of the future are and that is where the government should be investing. Canada will not move forward by waiving environmental measures or eliminating them, as the Conservatives want to do. The federal government is currently dragging Quebec down when we could be world leaders. Obstacles are being put in our way. The federal government is making investments that exacerbate the problem, when it should be supporting the solutions that exist in Quebec, which require investments.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when I opened the newspaper last week, I was surprised to see that Ontario premier Doug Ford, a Conservative, had the audacity to ask Quebec to abandon its electric vehicle sales targets. Today, the Conservatives have put forward a motion that seeks to do pretty much the same thing. It uses different words, but the message is the same: There will be no more support for the transportation electrification sector.

It seems that both Conservative parties, the federal party and the Ontario party, are joining forces with some sanctimonious people who want to undermine this movement in Quebec. What does my colleague, the Bloc Québécois environment critic, think about that?

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, Quebec has everything to gain from quickly moving away from oil and gas. Over \$10 billion per year is leaving Quebec on oil purchases alone. Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Conservatives, oil companies and auto manufacturers are all working against electrification. We hope that this government will stand up and propose measures to help Quebec break free of oil and gas, rather than continuing to help oil companies make profits.

• (1150)

[*English*]

Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to our Conservative motion to protect and grow Canada's auto sector. I will be splitting my time with the member for Windsor West.

As the member of Parliament for New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, I have the honour of representing the workers at the four million square foot Honda Canada manufacturing facility in Alliston, Ontario, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. The 4,200 workers at Honda Canada build vehicles for Canadians from all walks of life, including the 2026 Canadian car of the year, the Honda Civic. They are highly skilled, experienced and among the best in the world at what they do.

Each year, they produce more than 400,000 vehicles. They source over \$3 billion in parts from Canadian suppliers, supporting roughly 30,000 spinoff jobs across the country. They also give back to their community, supporting charities and local initiatives that make all Canadians' lives better. However, despite all their hard

work, they are being let down by a Liberal government that has allowed the production and investment to decline, employment opportunities to disappear and uncertainty to take hold in this pivotal industry.

Since the Liberals first formed government, automotive production in Canada has steadily declined, falling from 2.3 million vehicles in 2016 to 1.2 million vehicles last year. That decline has continued. In the first month of 2026, exports of passenger cars and light trucks have fallen by a whopping 32.5%.

Canadian workers are bearing the impacts. Over the past decade, employment in the production of passenger vehicles and light truck assembly has fallen by thousands. Entire communities have experienced layoffs in major facilities, which has had effects extending beyond the plant floor to suppliers and small businesses that support them.

Investment decisions in the auto sector are increasingly being made outside Canada. Major manufacturers are committing billions of dollars and creating thousands of jobs in other countries, shaping the future of the industry beyond our borders.

When he was first appointed, the Prime Minister promised to protect auto jobs, but in his first year, there have been job losses in the auto sector every month. He said he would move at speeds Canadians had never seen before, but no one expected that meant accelerating job losses.

The Liberal approach to the automotive sector is not really a strategy at all. It is the managed decline of an industry that has been struggling for some time. There is a lot at stake, and there are a lot of issues. For one, it assumes we can shift to producing more electric vehicles and make up for lost access to the U.S. market by selling to Europe, but that does not reflect how the market works. Right now, fewer than 2% of vehicles we export go to Europe, and Europe is putting rules in place to favour vehicles that are built there.

At the same time, U.S. tariffs are adding significant costs for Canadian manufacturers, and the government's credit system does not come close to covering these costs. The result is a plan that leaves our auto sector facing more pressure and more uncertainty, without a clear path forward. Our country needs a plan that will protect our auto jobs here at home and build leverage to achieve tariff-free trade with the United States.

No one has a monopoly on a good idea. As His Majesty's loyal opposition, the Conservatives are promising real solutions in this motion that the government needs to adopt urgently. We need to make it easier for Canadians to buy the vehicles that are built here. Removing the GST on Canadian-made vehicles would help close the gap between what we produce and what Canadians can afford, unlike the Liberal plan, which would send incentives abroad rather than supporting domestic production right here at home.

● (1155)

We also need to tie market access directly to production. Under the Conservative plan, manufacturers who build vehicles in Canada would earn the ability to sell vehicles here duty-free from our North American partners. This creates a clear and immediate incentive to invest in Canadian facilities, Canadian workers and Canadian supply chains. It reflects the reality that this is a continental industry and ensures that Canada remains a central part of it.

The plan would also reinforce the North American supply chain by making more parts and having more work done right here in North America. This would support jobs across the broader economy, including Canadian parts manufacturers, local suppliers and thousands of small and medium-sized businesses that depend on the sector.

I have met with many of those suppliers over the past year. One of them told me a different story of how difficult the Liberal government has made it for them to navigate the red tape around tariffs, remissions, and import and export rules. They are being squeezed from both sides: pressured abroad by Trump and burdened at home by the government. Our plan addresses this so they can focus on production, hiring workers and growing their operations.

Another significant issue with the Liberals' auto strategy is their continued obsession with electric vehicles. Following their disastrous EV mandate that they have finally backed down on, the new version of the mandate is an EV rebate that will give taxpayer money to the wealthy for electric cars that everyday Canadians do not want and cannot afford. It does not support the production of the clean and fuel-efficient vehicles already being produced right here in Canada, including those at Honda.

Instead, our plan would align our emission rules with those of the United States so manufacturers can build for one North American market instead of two separate systems. That lowers costs and supports continued production in Canada, including of hybrids.

We are living through a period of real economic uncertainty. Global conflicts and strained international relationships are putting pressure on our economy, but the Liberals' approach to the auto sector is adding to that uncertainty. Their policies leave Canadian manufacturers guessing, and when companies are left guessing, they hold back investment. However, the uncertainty the Liberals are piling on is felt not just in the boardrooms. It is also felt on the plant floors by the workers who do not know if their jobs are secure, and it is felt across entire communities as well, by the people who rely on auto plants to support their family and keep their local economy going.

The motion is about restoring stability to a sector that supports hundreds of thousands of Canadians. It is about giving manufactur-

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ers the confidence to build here, invest here and hire here. Conservatives have a plan that reflects how the auto industry actually works, a plan that would support production in Canada, strengthen our place in North America and give workers and families a clearer path forward. The workers I represent at Honda in Alliston, and workers across the country, have proven their ability to compete and succeed every single day. It is time for the Liberal government to support them by voting for our motion.

The Conservative plan would rebuild our industrial base, restore confidence here at home and ensure that Canada remains strong, self-reliant and secure in the world.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Conservatives are basing their entire plan on a 1965-era world and environment that we lived in. Back then, there were three major manufacturers of automobiles in the United States and Canada: Ford, Chrysler and GM. Today there are dozens. In 1965, pretty much all production was done in the U.S. and Canada, and it was heavily labour-intensive. Today many sell but do not manufacture in Canada, and the manufacturing is a lot more automated.

In addition to that, the supply chains were heavily regional between the United States and Canada. Today they are much more globalized, and the supply chains are working throughout the entire world.

How can the member stand and suggest that this plan would work in today's context?

● (1200)

Scot Davidson: Mr. Speaker, the number one thing I was hearing was uncertainty, and uncertainty is a job killer and an investment killer.

Let us take the EV mandate, for example. The government spent years talking about the EV mandate, not to mention the 10 years they talked to Canadians selling the carbon tax, but we will just forget about all that. Back to the EV mandate, this presented uncertainty in the industry. Now, the Liberals are saying that they are going to cancel the EV mandate, which is still on the books and has not been repealed. It is still the law of the day and companies are still dealing with it, and now we do not even know what the tailpipe emissions are going to be for companies. They are still struggling with uncertainty.

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Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before the redistribution, Honda was part of my riding. I am very happy that the member who represents them now is seeing what is going on in our community. I know how important Honda is. I have many employees in my riding who work there. They do great community work and a lot of charitable work.

Could the member for New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury update us on what the folks are saying and why they need the plan that has been presented by the Conservatives?

Scot Davidson: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for Simcoe—Grey for representing the great people of New Tecumseth all those years.

I want to follow up on uncertainty. This is the problem with the government, and we hear it from many parts manufacturers and feeder plants, including Honda, that I go to. Companies need certainty to invest. They need to know the rules of the game, and right now no one knows the rules of the game. It was the Prime Minister who promised, in the election, to get a deal with Donald Trump by July. I did not say it; he did. I would like the government to understand that, as the official opposition, our job is to make the government the best it can be.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are correct in saying that the Liberals do not have a plan to reduce American tariffs, but what they are proposing is not a plan either. It is unconditional alignment with Donald Trump's positions. It is a pre-emptive surrender.

How much would it cost to have all these tax exemptions for Canadian vehicles and not for foreign ones?

Is it possible that Mr. Trump might interpret this as a tariff on American vehicles and that this would have the opposite effect?

[*English*]

Scot Davidson: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but I missed the first part of my colleague's question.

The number one thing that I would like to talk about is uncertainty. What most Canadians asked me when I was in the riding last week was, what is the update on the CUSMA negotiations? What is the update on the deal with the United States? This is one of the most secretive deals. We get no updates from the government. What is the government's plan?

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today not with an abstract theory but with a testimony, the testimony of men and women who rise before dawn, who punch in, who build, who weld, who assemble and who simply ask only this of their country and its leaders: Stand with them as they stand for their nation.

I speak for the good people of Windsor, Oshawa, Kitchener, Oakville, Ingersoll, Simcoe—Grey, Brampton and New Tecumseth, for all the workers who hold the beating heart of Canada's auto industry in their hands. I speak for communities where a factory is not just a workplace but the spine of the local economy, the anchor of family life and the promise that if we work hard, we can get ahead.

Let us begin with the simple truth. We are told often and with great confidence that this is a new government, but most Canadians are not so easily persuaded. They remember that it is the same Liberal government that has been in power since 2015. The story we are about to tell is a story about the government written over that decade. During this decade, Canadians remember being told the budget will balance itself. They remember a very casual approach to deficits, as though fundamentals and fiscal anchors no longer mattered. Even when concerns were raised, too often the response was, who cares? Workers in Windsor care. Families balancing bills care. Seniors trying to keep body and soul together care. Young Canadians wondering if they will have a future in this country care.

Let us look at the facts for a moment. In 2015, we had roughly 1.5 million manufacturing jobs. Today, after nearly a decade, we have about 1.56 million. This is an increase of roughly 60,000 jobs, which is simply 4% more. Over that same period, Canada's population grew by four million to five million. That is a 10% to 12% increase. We added millions more to our country, but barely added enough jobs in the sector that builds our economy. That is not growth. That is simply more people competing for the same opportunities.

Let us turn to the auto sector, because Windsor does not just participate in this industry; it defines it. In 2016, Canada produced over two million vehicles a year. Today, that number is about 1.2 million, which is a decline of about 35%. Since 2019 alone, production has dropped by about 33%. Meanwhile, the United States is holding steady compared to its prepandemic levels, but Mexico is moving ahead, and Canada, as we know, is falling behind.

The simple truth is that when production falls, jobs follow. Tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs have been lost. Assembly lines are disappearing and part suppliers are under immense pressure. This is not just decline. It is instability and uncertainty. It is workers wondering if they have a job next week, families wondering if the next paycheque is secure and parents wondering if their kids will have to leave the city, province or country to find opportunities.

We have an economy growing at around 1%. In aeronautical terms, it is an economy operating at stall speed, certainly not at the unprecedented speeds promised by the Prime Minister. Countries do not drift into prosperity. They decide it, and we are choosing to go the other way.

There is a deeper concern, one that Canadians increasingly feel, even if it is not always said out loud. It is that the government has lost its way. It does not seem to know what it wants to do. It is pulled in different directions by competing ideas, competing ideologies and competing factions within the party. It seems to have put up a tariff wall of its own against anyone trying to invest here or build in this country.

Instead of de-risking our manufacturing and trade systems, instead of protecting them from shocks, we have added more uncertainty through unpredictable policy, making it harder, not easier, for businesses to plan, invest and grow. The result is no clarity and no direction, but plenty of hesitation. It is a government caught between choices and increasingly frozen into inaction. What we see from it is announcements, press conferences and repackaged ideas, but people are asking where the results are. As we well know, we cannot run an economy on announcements alone. We cannot build an industry on uncertainty. We cannot de-risk a fragile manufacturing base while piling on regulations that choke competition and slow down investment. We certainly cannot lead a country if we are unsure of our own direction.

● (1205)

Sadly, it is the Canadian worker, the Canadian family and the Canadian entrepreneur who are paying the price. People in the manufacturing sector are telling the government the same story. They see policies introduced and then reversed. They see mandates announced and then withdrawn. They see regulations layered on top of regulations without regard for competitiveness. They see barriers within our own country, where free trade between provinces is still a dream rather than a reality. They see labour unable to move freely to where the jobs are, and they ask how they can compete globally when they cannot even compete internally. In their own words, these businesses face gale-force winds of uncertainty and are being blinded by the word salad being spewed by our friends opposite.

When businesses are driving blind, they slow down, they delay investment or they go somewhere else where the conditions are calmer and more predictable or consistent. That is exactly what we are seeing. Even the infrastructure that is meant to support this industry, the very arteries of trade, are delayed. The Gordie Howe International Bridge, so critical to Windsor and our national supply chain, is still not open. We do not know when it will open, and at a time when we should be accelerating trade, we are still waiting.

What is required? It is not reinvention nor slogans, but a return to basics. That is exactly what the proposal from His Majesty's loyal opposition represents. It begins with an idea so simple, so grounded, that it resonates beyond politics. If we want to sell cars in Canada, we should be building cars in Canada. It is a modern auto pact, not a nostalgic hearkening to a bygone era, and it is practical and modern in its application. Simply put, if companies build here, they get to sell here duty-free. If they invest in this country, they see a return on their investment.

We would tie local production to local market access. We would reward work done here in this country. We would remove GST on Canadian-made vehicles and support Canadian auto workers directly. We would align regulations with the United States and remove

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barriers that drive investment away. We would secure access to the U.S. market and compete where it matters most, and we would focus on building the infrastructure, the connectivity and the internal trade corridors that would actually grow GDP, not just talk about it.

Here is a reality check: Our integrated supply chains are with our North American neighbours, not European or Asian neighbours. The question we have to answer is not whether we engage, but whether we do so strategically.

There will always be debate and there will always be concern, but we must measure any approach against facts. The current path delivered a 35% drop in production, a decade of stagnation and an economy at snail speed. At some point, we must move beyond defending the status quo and start changing it. The simple truth is that if we make it easier to build somewhere else, companies will build somewhere else. If we make it harder to build in Canada, investment will leave Canada. That is not ideology; that is reality. If we ignore this simple reality, we will lose more jobs, we will lose capacity and we will lose skills. Once the skills and talent are gone, they will not come back.

This is not about left or right. It is about whether Canada still believes in building things, whether we still believe in our workers, in our industry and in creating opportunities for a better future, or whether we accept a timid future, a future of steady decline dressed up as progress. If we continue on this path, we already know where it leads. It leads to more stagnation, more uncertainty, more loss and eventually more despair. In other words, it is managed decline leading to a permanent loss.

The people of Windsor and across southwestern Ontario and Quebec are not asking for perfection. They are asking for leadership. Let us give it to them. Let us stand up for production. Let us stand for workers in Canada. Let us stand for Canada.

● (1210)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member needs to spend a little more time being careful about the words that he uses. When he writes a speech, he should be reflecting on what he is actually proposing. In the beginning of his speech, he talked about how the government is repackaging ideas, but then he literally went on to talk about how the Conservatives' entire plan is a repackaging of a 1965-era auto pact. By the way, that entire auto pact was hinged and grounded on the principle that the United States of America was interested in international trade. The United States of America is now taking a protectionist approach, which does not support international trade. It is not interested in trading with anybody. It put tariffs on everybody.

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Why does this member think that this plan is suddenly going to reverse all that?

• (1215)

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, that is a fantastic question.

I still speak with people who used to work when the auto pact was in place. My uncle worked at the Ford Motor Company for nearly 40 years. My other uncle worked at Chrysler for nearly 35 years. They know what that plan was, and they still harken back to it and say, “We wish we had the auto pact.” We talk to people in Windsor—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, can I answer?

The sad truth is that our production capacity has declined significantly. The U.S. is manufacturing 10 million vehicles, meanwhile consuming 13 million. We are producing one million and consuming two million, and Mexico is leading. We need to do better.

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, given all the plant closures, not only those that have happened but those to come, the massive layoffs and the anxiety and hardship that go along with that, all the Liberals have to say is, “Well, let them do something else. Let them manufacture defence vehicles.”

Even if we could find the companies, even if we could re-skill the workers and retool the plants, I would like to ask the member from Windsor, how realistic is it to have these workers and plants just do something else?

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, folks in Windsor have already started diversifying, and they started diversifying over 10 years ago. However, the uncertainty that the last year and a half has brought is something that is unprecedented. They were looking to the government for some solutions, because the Liberals promised them. They said, “We will have a deal by July 21. Don't you worry. We will have the best deal.” Meanwhile, we have no deal.

We have plants that are being courted from Michigan and Ohio, and they are on the verge of leaving because they cannot sustain themselves in this environment. We are chasing away investment, and we are chasing away workers, because we have not done enough for them. In fact, we have not done anything for them, sadly. We have people who want to build plants here, but they are complaining about the regulations and policies that are choking them out of being competitive. Nobody wants to come to a non-competitive place.

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it puzzles me that the member from Windsor would not be celebrating that federal government investments in the NextStar plant mean 1,100 jobs in his riding. The people at Stellantis are excited to add a third shift.

The people are looking to government to support them in this difficult period with a challenging trading partner. I am hearing a lot of “throwing up our hands” on the other side of the House, but the proof is that these investments have worked in the past.

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, the reality is simple. Canada's auto sector has declined over 30% in production, while manufacturing jobs

have barely grown, despite millions more in this country. That tells us that the current approach is not working.

What we are proposing is grounded in common sense. If people want to sell cars in Canada, they should be building them here. By tying market access to production, reducing unnecessary regulatory barriers, improving infrastructure and strengthening North American integration, we can de-risk the sector, attract investment and protect jobs.

Right now, businesses are facing uncertainty, tariffs and mixed signals. That is why investment is hesitating. The plan restores clarity, competitiveness and confidence in our folks.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague from southwestern Ontario, the member for Guelph.

It is always a privilege to stand in this House and to defend workers, to defend the people who sent us to this House, especially and particularly workers from our neck of the woods in southwestern Ontario. For so long, southwestern Ontario has been known to be the heart of Canada's auto sector. Cities like London, Windsor, Ingersoll and St. Thomas are deeply tied to the manufacturing sector. This recognition comes because of the workers. World-class workers in our region have given us a spot on the map to be able to be a competing industry in Canada but also in the world. It is an honour and a privilege to rise today to speak to this motion. This debate touches the realities of what Canadians face every single day.

I want to begin by saying something in very simple words. When one builds a plan for workers without talking to workers, it is just not a plan. Let us just put it out there. It is not a plan. There is no plan without the people who have to participate in that plan. The need for good and well-paying jobs in the auto sector is there. Unifor, which is Canada's largest private sector union, representing more than 40,000 auto workers across assembly, parts manufacturing and dealerships, was not consulted before the Conservatives' grand plan. We are happy to see that they are finally working on a plan. We are happy to see them join the conversation, which has been taken up not just by workers but by families across this country, particularly in southwestern Ontario, for the last year or so. They are just joining the conversation now, and it is never too late to defend workers in Canada. It is never too late to defend families in Canada, so we are very happy to see this conversation going. However, they have not consulted workers.

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How do we know? John D'Agnolo, chair of Unifor's national auto council and president of Unifor Local 200 in Windsor, said it plainly: "What was most frustrating is the fact that you think you [would] go to the experts that have to deal with it every day and sit down with our leader who's been involved." That is his quote, not my quote. I want this House to hear that again. The experts who are dealing with this every single day, the workers who live this reality in Windsor, Ingersoll, Brampton and Oshawa, were not in the room when this plan was built. They were not consulted. There was no conversation. There was no phone call. When they responded and raised their concerns publicly and professionally, the response from the opposition was to amplify one local leader who agreed about the Conservatives' plan and to be quiet about the rest of the people, who were calling on them to consult. As I said, this confirms that this plan is not for the workers, as it purports to be.

I represent London West. Ingersoll is in my backyard. I know what happened at CAMI Assembly. I know what it means for 1,200 workers. They showed up for a job that was supposed to be Canada's electric vehicle future and found that the plant was closing. I have spoken to some of the leaders there. I have spoken to the workers and the families that are impacted. I will not stand here and let a plan that workers themselves have raised serious concerns about go unchallenged.

Let me tell this House exactly what Unifor said. The Unifor national president, Lana Payne, wrote directly to the Conservative leader. She said, "We are encouraged by your effort, but skeptical that this plan can restart idled Canadian facilities. In fact, we fear it may prevent potential future growth—which I do not believe is your intent." That is her quote, that it would not "restart" but "prevent...future growth". That is the union that has been fighting for the workers in Brampton. That is the union that has stood with the workers in Ingersoll. That is Unifor telling the opposition members that their plan, designed to save the auto sector, could not make things work for the very plants that need saving the most. Madame Payne was also clear that plans for the auto sector must be rigorous, well researched and defensible, and that the ideas must be rooted in the experiences of auto workers and formulated with auto workers and their families in mind, and this was not it.

• (1220)

On the central one-for-one production-to-sales ratio at the heart of the Conservative plan, the chair of Unifor's national auto council said directly, "That means we don't need Brampton, and we don't need Ingersoll because we don't sell enough of those vehicles to get one for one". That is just simply wrong, saying that we do not need Brampton and we do not need Ingersoll. This is not what we are saying, and this is not a plan that anyone should get behind.

The union that represents the workers in Brampton is Unifor. Unifor National President Payne also addressed the mathematics directly behind this plan, calling the claim that the plan will restore Canadian auto production to two million vehicles per year just "mathematically incorrect" and noting that the auto industry today is global, with dozens of automakers building and selling cars in Canada who have no local production presence at all. The 1965 auto pact worked because four North American automakers dominated both production and sales on this continent. That world does not

exist anymore. We cannot take 1965 and paste it onto 2026 and call it a strategy.

I want to be fair. Unifor acknowledged that the threat to Canada's auto sector "warrants government attention, regardless of political affiliation", and it was encouraged to see the opposition engage on this issue. As I said when I started my speech, we are glad to see the Conservatives join the conversation that Canadians have been having for over a year. I share that. The opposition is finally talking about the auto sector in substantive terms, and that conversation really matters for all of our workers, for all Canadians. However, the workers who know this industry best have looked at what was proposed and said that the ideas were not rooted in their experience. They were not formulated with auto workers in mind. They were not rigorous enough to restart what needs to be restarted, and that also matters. Not to play for any partisan points here, but as a matter of basic respect for the people who sent us to this House to represent them every day, we are supposed to adopt policies that work for them, and this plan is simply not it.

Let me tell this House what our government is doing. Our approach actually looks like this. The difference between the Conservative approach and the government's approach is not just policy and talking points. It is a process. It is a process that we built with the workers. It is a process that we have announced and have consulted on across different regions and sectors. This government has been at the table with unions like Unifor, with the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association, with plant chairs, with mayors and with economic development leaders across southwestern Ontario, not after announcing a plan but before building the plan, and then getting to the place of announcing it.

I know what that looks like. I have been part of some conversations as well. Two weeks ago, I convened a closed-door meeting with the economic development leaders from across southwestern Ontario, alongside FedDev Ontario. The auto sector was part of that conversation. The questions those leaders asked, the barriers they named and the priorities they raised are things that have been taken back to Ottawa to work on with our colleagues who are tasked to do this work, like the Minister of Industry and many other colleagues who have been talking about the specific impact on our workers. That is what consultation looks like.

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When GM and Stellantis failed to meet their production commitments in Canada, our government decided to cut GM's tariff remission quota by 24% and Stellantis' by 50%. This is the government that is telling automakers plainly that access to Canadian markets comes with obligations to Canadian workers. They do not get to take and not give back to our workers. That is consultation. That is keeping our workers in mind.

The Canada-Ontario workforce tariff response announced this month is a joint federal-provincial initiative that directly supports workers through retraining, upskilling and work-sharing programs for sectors impacted by the tariffs. The workers at CAMI in Ingersoll, the workers across the supply chain who lost shifts or jobs because of a trade war that was not started by us and is unwarranted, those workers are at the centre of what our government is building. They are not an afterthought. They are not just people to whom we are going to announce what we are doing. We are working directly with them, consulting with them to come up with a plan that responds to the very challenging needs that our workers have and that Canadian families are facing.

I want to talk about Ingersoll one more time, because every time this debate happens about production ratios, tariff framework and CUSMA leverage, I think about the specific human reality of what this region is living through. The workers who built Canada's first full-scale electric vehicle-manufacturing plant in Ingersoll believed they were building the future of this country's industrial base. They had—

• (1225)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I am afraid the time for debate has expired. The hon. member will have time to take it up again during questions and comments.

The hon. member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we have just heard from the other side is that there is a need for more research and more time to consult, but they have had one year to get a deal done, and they have produced zero. In that year, there have been closures and job losses. We are now stalled in talks with America.

We, the Conservatives, have put forth a clear plan that calls for a tariff-free auto pact. That member just spent 10 minutes tearing it apart. I want to ask the member, are you really going against a tariff-free auto pact? Is that what you want to tell the constituents?

• (1230)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Members are to address comments through the Chair.

The hon. member for London West.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I find the question of the member opposite to be disingenuous because it leaves out the fact that this is a very—

An hon. member: Debate. Debate.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. The hon. member for London West has the floor.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, let me restart my answer. The question that the member opposite is asking is disingenuous. It

does not take into account the fact that this is an unjust tariff war we are facing as Canadians. We have been working and collaborating with workers across our impacted sectors to make sure we can build a plan that responds now and in the future.

Most importantly, they have had a whole year to join this conversation. The Conservatives just stitched up a plan without even consulting the workers who have been impacted. I think we sit on the better part of this end of the stick. We have been collaborating. We have been working. We have been responding in many different ways. The workers are looking for a response from the government.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate many of the comments that my colleague has put on the record. It is interesting, as it seems that the Conservative Party believes that all they have to do is just click their heels and, poof, the tariffs would be gone. What silliness.

At the end of the day, we have a government that has been, from day one, working and doing what it can to deal with the tariff issue. Unlike the Conservatives on the Trump one version, we are not going to capitulate. We will continue to wait it out and get the best deal we can for the workers of Canada and all Canadians. If that takes a while, we are going to do that.

I am wondering if the hon. member could provide her thoughts on that issue.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, expanding on what I was saying, our government has been working with industry experts and unions to make sure that we can work for a plan that is beyond just a tariff, to look at and imagine the future of the auto sector and what it is going to look like on the other side.

Unfortunately, that is what the government has to do. The Conservatives cannot understand that because they have been in opposition for 10 years. In the 10 years that they have been in opposition, this is the first time they have stitched up a plan for the auto sector, and they have done it without even consulting workers. I am sorry. We cannot take their plan. We have to continue to work with Canadians, industry experts and automakers to make sure that we have a plan that works for Canada.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to mention that we literally just heard from the opposite side that the Liberal plan and strategy for Canadian auto workers is to “wait it out”.

Yes, we have come to the table with a plan, a common-sense plan, that would keep workers working in Canada. All I have heard is scrutiny of that plan and cherry-picked quotes from Unifor to say that the plan is not okay.

I would like to ask the member opposite what she has to say about this quote from Unifor Local 222: “A common sense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario auto workers.” We are glad to see it.

What is your comment on that?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Comments are to be directed through the Chair.

The member for London West.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member opposite was able to notice that there have been many quotes that have come out in response to their patched-up plan to respond to the auto sector a year out from the conversation.

The Conservatives are talking about waiting it out. We are not waiting it out. We have a strategy that we have put in place with the collaboration of industry experts, automakers and unions. We have also provided many supports through our regional agencies to make sure that workers, even when they are struggling and losing their jobs, have opportunities to re-skill, to go into other skill sets, to continue to have jobs. Unfortunately, I am sure she picked only one quote out of the many quotes that have been said on this—

● (1235)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Guelph.

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we just cannot run the 2026 auto sector with a 1965 rule book, unless the plan is to drive Canada straight into the past. The members opposite are saying we need a plan. On February 5, the new government presented a plan in consultation with all of the industry associations and workers. It was received with universal acclaim.

This is not the first time the Conservatives have come together with a hodgepodge number of different sentences that may or may not make sense. On February 12, the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot had a CPC opposition motion with an opposition strategy. At the industry committee, twice now, we have had studies on the auto industry.

This is important because auto workers and the industry need us to really be thinking these things through, but we have a robust plan, and this opposition motion is just not it. This ill-conceived proposal is centred on a new, tariff-free auto pact that is modelled after a 1965 version. The plan is so old, it predates seat belts and the Canadian vehicle safety standard, and only major North American automakers dominated the production at the time. Now they make up less than 30% of domestic production, and they are the only ones endorsing this proposal.

The reality today is that we have a globalized multi-manufacturer environment that operates very differently. The reality is that this motion does not take into account the entire ecosystem of parts or critical minerals or dealerships and what that means. This is also a proposal that arrives late and looks backwards. The plan is not just out of date; it did not show up in time.

Our strategy, released February 5, provides \$3 billion in strategic response to help our fabulous automakers weather these unjustified illegal tariffs. There is \$1 billion for regional tariff relief. I know of

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businesses in Guelph, parts manufacturers, that have needed this to help keep their shop floors busy and to position for the future. The federal government's plan supports workers, which is something that is completely absent from the proposal of the members opposite.

This proposal, so-called, waits for Washington instead of Canada to lead. A real strategy leads. This proposal waits for permission and is looking backwards. It is like waiting by the phone for an unreliable boyfriend to call, and I think that we should be making other plans.

Of course we want zero tariffs. That is hardly a novel idea. Do we want to preserve a highly integrated auto sector that has benefited both Canada and the U.S.? Absolutely, that is the goal. We can have contingency plans and a forward-looking strategy that looks at global trends such as electrification.

Our auto sector cannot depend on the political stripe of our neighbours. That is not smart and it is not sustainable in every sense of the word. The workers have rejected this proposal, and they have been ignored.

I am going to read for the House remarks made by John D'Agno, Unifor Local 200 president and auto council chair: “The problem is that he [being the Leader of the Opposition] went ahead and did not consult with Unifor, and it was very, very frustrating to see the things that he put in place knowing we would be in big trouble”. He also said, “He didn't recognize engines. There's a prime example. He didn't recognize imports. He didn't recognize exports of parts that we make, which is discouraging.” He continued, “He didn't recognize the fact that the one-for-one would mean they wouldn't need to put a product in Brampton. They wouldn't need to build a product in Ingersoll, and they wouldn't need a third shift at Stellantis.” He went on to say, “What it looks like is he reflected from 1965...and he tried to put details in there.... Today, the industry is totally different.” He then said, “That was because they didn't consult with us, the people that are working on this every day. So, we [are] frustrated with that.”

I am frustrated with that too. We have been hearing the Conservatives talk down the auto sector and talk about this decade of decline for the last couple of hours, but we have the best auto workers in the world. The proof is that in April 2024, Honda announced a \$15-billion investment in an EV plant in Alliston, and they are ready to go. We know that Toyota Cambridge is the most awarded plant for quality in the world. Guess what. They had record sales in 2025.

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I do not know where opposition members are getting their information, but they are talking down an important sector when it needs our support. It needs stability, and it needs unity.

● (1240)

The Conservatives are not offering a realistic path to two million vehicles per year. Where did that number even come from? They offer no plans for supporting that new production, and they have no legal or operational explanation for their tariff-free models or how they would magically get there, when they have zero experience negotiating something like that in a context like this.

The opposition members have no vision for batteries, critical minerals or the future of assembly. They ignore everything that actually builds the vehicles today. We are looking at battery supply chains, critical minerals and EV platforms. The Conservatives have no plan for autonomous systems or next-generation manufacturing. They are ignoring global shifts in EV and moderate emissions standards.

Globally, 20% of all vehicles are EVs. The market is actually leading here. If we look at the United States, 20% of all luxury vehicles that are sold are EVs. Why is this? It is because the technology is great. People love them. The adoption will then take place and that technology is going to move to lower-priced vehicles. Like most trends, we will see adoption.

Since the House resumed in September, the Conservatives have asked for a take-note debate on the auto sector, brought two motions to the industry committee and now proposed this sad plan. What is consistent throughout all of these proposals is the lack of consultation, for one, and their attack on EVs. It is not surprising, because in March, the Leader of the Opposition appeared on a podcast, where he described the policy of net zero as a “pretext.” He said, “It’s all B.S.” He called it a “net-zero fraud” that takes “away the opportunities of the people who actually do the work.” The narrative is pretty clear.

A cursory understanding of science and what is happening in the world would tell members otherwise on climate change and EVs. I worked for 10 years for an insurance company. Global reinsurers believe in climate change. They are hardly the woke left. They see the frequency and severity, and they know we need to act.

The opposition members hate EVs so much that they would sacrifice the future of the automotive industry. Would they shut down the battery plant in Windsor that is employing 1,100 workers, just as it starts to mass produce, or Canada’s largest EV battery facility in St. Thomas, which is expected to have 3,000 jobs? Looking at Toyota’s sales results for February, electrified sales represented 55.9% of overall sales. Why is this? It is because consumers like the convenience of being able to charge at home. It is also a lot less expensive, and it is a great ride.

If we look back at Toyota’s record sales in 2025, electrified vehicles continued to lead the way for Toyota Canada in 2025, representing a 5.4% year-over-year increase and 49.7% of all 2025 sales. It is where the market is going, undeniably.

It is not just on these passenger vehicles. When we look at what is happening in the United States, Tesla opened its first publicly ac-

cessible Megacharger station for customers of the Tesla Semi. There has been massive infrastructure spending because the future is electric. Increasingly, heavy mining vehicles are electrified with regenerative braking for when they are going back down into the mine.

This Conservative plan risks blocking the future growth of the EV sector. It actively gets in the way. Unifor warns us that the CPC proposal could prevent future growth. It does not address competitive pressures from the U.S. or the EU and has no long-term, and certainly not an integrated, electrification strategy.

Let us be kind. The members opposite have never negotiated anything close to this, so how could they know? What they are proposing risks weakening Canada’s position in CUSMA negotiations, and the GST proposal could be seen as a non-tariff barrier. The CPC plans to end EV subsidies and rejects the electrification incentives. It undercuts Canada and the fastest-growing segment of global auto manufacturing.

Why would the House adopt a half-baked plan when Global Automakers of Canada, Unifor and the Canadian Automobile Dealers Association, which all endorsed the government’s plan a month ago, were not even consulted?

The Conservatives’ plan ignores the best auto workers in the world. They have no plan to support the industry, and they are neglecting the industry’s future. Canada’s new government has a plan. It is thorough and forward-looking. That is what I am going to support.

● (1245)

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member’s colleague, the parliamentary secretary, just said part of the plan and strategy was to wait it out. I would like to know if the member supports that ideology and thinks that workers who are out of work in the auto sector should go along with the strategy to just simply wait it out.

Dominique O’Rourke: Mr. Speaker, \$3 billion in the strategic response fund, \$1.5 billion for infrastructure to create certainty in electrification and \$1 billion for tariff relief is not waiting it out. Supports for workers and retraining to help auto plants retool and auto parts manufacturers keep people on the shop floor is not waiting it out.

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I have confidence in our ambassadors and our negotiating teams. We all want zero tariffs on vehicles.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we all have things we want. What Canadians want is tariff-free access. What is the plan for tariff-free access? We keep hearing about the Liberals doing this and doing that, but while they are doing this and doing that, auto production has gone from two million to 1.2 million. Since the Liberal leader became Prime Minister, auto exports to the United States are down 55%.

Despite all these things they are allegedly doing, if their plan is so great, why is auto production continuing to decline and what is their plan for actual tariff-free access, which is the only way the auto industry survives?

Dominique O'Rourke: Mr. Speaker, I have two things. One is that there are ongoing negotiations with Washington regarding unjustified, illegal tariffs. That is number one. Number two is that this uncertainty caused by the American tariffs has put a hold on things like the Honda plant. It has created uncertainty, so a number of automakers are waiting to see. That is a private sector decision.

What is the opposition's plan to get tariff-free access? Let me read what they want to do. They want to bring back the Chinese tariffs. What are you going to tell your canola farmers and the fishers? The Conservatives have no skills to negotiate a deal. They would push us to accept a bad deal, and we are not going to do that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): There is a bit of back and forth happening here. I remind members to direct their comments through the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from his seat, the member says we do not have to export the canola to China; rather, we will just convert the canola into bio-fuels. I wonder if the farmers in the Prairies would agree with that assessment. Let me give him some advice. They would not agree with that assessment.

In the Conservative plan, they say there is no problem. They will just get rid of the tariffs. Members will recall that when we had the first CUSMA deal with Donald Trump, the Conservatives jumped the gun, saying we should capitulate and just sign any agreement. The automobile industry is too important to Canada to do what the Conservatives want to do. I am wondering if the member could provide her thoughts on handling this issue.

Dominique O'Rourke: Mr. Speaker, if the Government of Canada had a magic wand for tariff-free access to the United States, the Conservatives would oppose it.

We can do more than one thing at a time. We can fight for the auto sector and the canola sector and the fisheries sector. That is what being in government is. It is all of it. We cannot have a myopic plan that does not consult anybody and will not yield any results.

[*Translation*]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I will be sharing

my time with my colleague from Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore.

As we begin this debate on the auto industry, my thoughts are with the 475 Paccar workers in Sainte-Thérèse who have lost their jobs over the past few months. That is 475 men and women and 475 families who have been directly affected by the collapse of Canada's auto industry over the past few years.

Unfortunately, the Liberal decade saw Canada's auto industry decline dramatically. Let us remember that Canada produced 2.3 million vehicles in 2016, but last year, it produced only 1.2 million. That is more than one million fewer vehicles being built here in Canada, and this has ripple effects from coast to coast to coast, and especially in Quebec for auto parts production. This year does not look good, with a decline of 7.8% so far. Most notably, there was a 55% drop in exports, which are a major driver of wealth in our country. Furthermore, jobs are being lost. This industry employed 37,000 workers in 2015, but now it employs only 23,000.

The GM plants in Ingersoll and Oshawa closed down, as did the Stellantis plant in Brampton. Earlier, I also mentioned how 475 people were laid off at the Paccar plant in Sainte-Thérèse. The situation has not improved at all since the current Prime Minister and his government were elected. In fact, it has gotten worse.

Who would have thought? There are people doing a worse job of managing the economy than Justin Trudeau, and Canadians are the ones paying the price. Let us remember that the Liberals got elected by saying that they were going to keep their elbows up when it came to relations with the United States, but what ended up happening? The Prime Minister went to the White House twice.

• (1250)

[*English*]

What we are seeing is the House of Commons going from elbows up to thumbs-up. Twice we have seen the Prime Minister, very happy, with his brand new friend, the President of the United States. What was supposed to be elbows up has finished as thumbs-up, and Canadians are paying the price right now.

Let me remind the House what happened. A year ago, the Prime Minister said he would fix this situation by July 21.

[*Translation*]

That is not at all what happened. On July 21, we celebrated the anniversary of the first moon landing, but that is where the celebrations ended because, since the new Prime Minister has been in office, tariffs have cost the Canadian auto industry \$2 billion. That is why it is time for a responsible and realistic plan based on a vision for the future.

Business of Supply

Our plan seeks to make it easier to build and buy vehicles by removing the GST on all Canadian-made vehicles. That is a win-win proposal. In politics, we sometimes say that we need to kill two birds with one stone. A policy will enable us to do that. By eliminating the GST on new vehicles, we will be helping both buyers and industry workers.

[English]

It is a one-two punch to the guys who want to buy and the guys who work in the auto industry. This is the Conservative way to help people: no more taxation and no more programs. Cancelling the GST is the way to address the issue.

[Translation]

We also want to bring production home and set much more effective targets, including adjusting our way of doing things within North American standards with a dollar-for-dollar approach. We also want to ensure that this applies to the manufacturing of both cars and car parts to which Canadians contribute. We want to improve security and technology, together with our partners. It is important to understand that Canada's auto industry is closely linked to our neighbours to the south and it is not all going to change overnight.

We also need to take action on security and safety matters. If I had been making this speech about security and safety maybe 15 or 20 years ago, I would have been thinking about road safety. However, today I am talking about national security. We need to be very aware that today's cars are equipped with computers and surveillance cameras. We are not necessarily talking about spies, but some people might take advantage of that. The technology could be used by bad actors. We need to develop a security plan and a technology plan.

[English]

In the last few hours, what we have seen in this room are members of the Liberal Party talking about the virtue of the electric car. They think they are the best in the world to address this in Canada. However, the government is a world-class failure in EVs.

• (1255)

[Translation]

First of all, I would like to declare a conflict of interest: I drive an electric car. I have been driving an electric car for two-and-a-half years now. So far, I have travelled 120,000 kilometres between Quebec City and Ottawa and all around my area. Even better, it is a second-hand car. I am proud of that, because there is nothing greener than an electric car except a second-hand electric car. Why did I buy a second-hand car? I did it because there are no subsidies. Yes, it is possible to drive an electric car without a subsidy and without any strings attached. I looked at my needs, and I love this technology. I am a car guy, as those who know me are aware, and I wanted to make choices that, first and foremost, suited my needs.

Unfortunately, electric cars do not meet everyone's need. There are people who might want to drive an electric car, but who have needs that the technology cannot yet meet. We need to accept that reality. However, when the technology meets a person's needs, they are able to drive an electric car, even without a subsidy.

Last year, electric car sales shot through the roof, reaching 20% worldwide, 33% in Europe and 48% in Asia and South America. Electric vehicles sales are on the rise everywhere, except in one place: the Canada of the new Prime Minister's Liberals.

Predictability is important for any industry. The Liberals did everything they could to ruin the EV industry. Think back to January 13, 2025, when former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau abruptly announced that the EV subsidy was ending. A lot of people were claiming it, but predictability is vital and there was none. On the contrary, it was suddenly announced that the subsidy would be ending in three days and nothing more was said about it. As a result, people who were thinking of buying an EV faced a time crunch, and dealers had no idea how to handle the rush. That was the first problem.

Then, in May, two senior ministers, the Minister of Industry and the Minister of the Environment, said not to worry because they would bring back electric vehicle rebates. Is that so? When? One can almost imagine them singing an old folk song about holding out hope for better times ahead and giving the new government time to fix things. The problem is that everyone waited. May, June, July and August passed with no news. September and October passed. Then came November and the budget. Everyone expected there would be something in the budget, but, at the end of the day, there was absolutely nothing. Everyone figured it was over. Let us speak of it no more, thank you, good night.

Then, in January, out of the blue, the Liberals announced that they were bringing back the rebates. How wonderful. Everyone was happy. It was like magic. After a whole year of literally leaving everyone in the automotive system without a clue, here come the Liberals like knights in shining armour championing electric cars.

These people are not to be trusted when it comes to EVs. Canada's record on EVs under the new Prime Minister is the worst. Now the Liberals want us to look at the future from an EV perspective. EVs are obviously part of the future. I am living proof—driving proof, if you will—that people can drive electric cars without rebates or mandates.

Buying electric vehicles from China still raises major security issues. Why buy vehicles from China when we could open up new markets and source vehicles from Europe? Renault sells electric cars that cost about the same as those from China. The government may want to open its eyes and take a fresh look at how it mishandled electric vehicles last year. The government should also be much more open to the European market before turning to China.

Business of Supply

[English]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoyed listening to the member speak. I always enjoy his comments, but I, in particular, applaud him for discussing his EV. If I heard him correctly, he said he has had it for just over two years, and he has put 120,000 kilometres on that EV.

What was surprising to hear from the member was that he suggested that the infrastructure is not there for the majority of Canadians. I would argue that not only is the infrastructure there for the majority of Canadians, but particularly in Quebec, the infrastructure for EVs is far superior to the rest of the country. I genuinely appreciated what he had to say. I do not disagree with him, but I want to hear what the member would say if he was trying to convince somebody else that they should also drive an EV.

• (1300)

Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I welcome this question from my true friend and colleague from Kingston, because I am living proof that we can run an electric car on a daily basis without subsidies and without mandates. Yes, Conservatives like their electric cars.

What we do not like is subsidies, because subsidies will have some movement inside the market. This is why the Liberals decided to take \$2.3 billion of taxpayer money and pick out the winner. If they want to help the electric vehicle industry, maybe they could invest more money into the future instead of picking the winner and the loser.

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I find that a bit ironic. They are saying that there is no need for subsidies for electric cars and that EVs can be bought without them, but at the same time they want to cut taxes for Canadian-made vehicles. If incentives do not work, then why are they good for oil but not for electricity?

Basically, the Conservative motion is really all about helping Ontario's auto industry while doing nothing for Quebec. That has put Quebec at a significant disadvantage in the past. I also know many people who bought gas-powered cars without any subsidies or tax exemptions. I find that those kinds of anecdotal examples prove nothing.

Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague that there is a big difference between a subsidy and a tax cut. A tax cut does not cost other taxpayers anything. When the government provides a subsidy, that means taking \$2.3 billion of workers' money, which comes out of the pockets of workers who do not earn millions of dollars a year, and giving it away. The government is deciding who gets the money and who does not.

It really makes sense to invest if one believes in the future of electric cars. They are part of the future. We are not against that, quite the contrary. I am living proof of that, or I should say, driving proof. However, if the goal is really to help, why not use positive incentives instead of subsidies?

[English]

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the fantastic speech my colleague gave. He talked about EVs. The Liberal government says it has an EV manufacturing

strategy. How can we have an EV manufacturing strategy when we do not really manufacture any EVs in Canada, only about 700 Dodge Chargers, and the government is going to let in a flood of Chinese EVs, which will undercut any domestic Canadian EV industry? It may not sound like a lot, but 49,000 Chinese EVs makes up about 30% of the entire EV purchase market in Canada.

Can my colleague explain the absolute incoherence of the Liberal policy on EVs?

Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague, first and foremost for his passion to fight for Canadian workers in the auto industry. This is a great example that we shall follow each and every time we want to fight for an issue we believe in, as he is doing with auto workers.

What we have seen in the last 10 years is that it is only the Liberals who let the car industry crash. In the last year, they did everything to crash the electric vehicle market here in Canada. This is why we have the worst result in the world for EVs.

Today the Liberals are trying to explain to us that, no, this is the future, and they are the only ones who can do it. The Conservatives are not opposed to it. No, we are all open to a free market, open to letting the people decide by themselves, and we are also open to helping the future and not helping friends.

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today in strong support of today's Conservative auto strategy.

For far too long, Canadian and Windsor auto workers have been tossed aside because the government is subsidizing foreign electric vehicles and standing by as thousands of Canadian auto jobs vanish, all while prioritizing everyone but our own workers. Despite this, I have good news. Today's Conservative auto strategy is simple. It is about auto workers and their families in Windsor and across our beautiful country.

For generations, Windsor has been the beating heart of our auto industry. It is not just a manufacturing region; it is the place I proudly call home. Thousands of families do as well because they want to build their lives around stable, well-paying automotive jobs. Today, unfortunately, those workers are watching their livelihood slip away, not because they failed but because the Liberal government failed them.

Business of Supply

In 2016, Canada produced approximately 2.4 million vehicles. Today that number has collapsed to 1.2 million vehicles, nearly cut in half. Over the same period, production in competing countries has remained stable or even increased. Meanwhile, here in Canada under the Liberal government, our industry has been gutted to fill the needs of foreign manufacturing, and workers in Windsor, Oshawa, Brampton, Ingersoll and Sainte-Thérèse are being expected to watch.

In fact, employment in vehicle assembly has declined significantly over the last decade. In 2015, roughly 32,700 Canadians worked in assembly plants. By 2024, that number had dropped to about 23,700. Last year alone, nearly another 6,000 jobs were lost in our auto sector. That means that during the 10 years that the Liberal government has been in power, it has managed to decimate our auto industry by nearly half.

That is not a transition. That is a failure of Liberal government, yet what has been the government's response? Instead of defending Canadian workers, it has doubled down on failed policies that subsidize foreign production. My Conservative colleagues and I will never stand for this, and I promise I will always defend and stand up for our auto industry.

Today nearly 90% of vehicles sold in Canada are imported. Canadians are buying cars, but we are not building them. Now, under the current government, Canadians are being asked to use their tax dollars to subsidize the purchase of those imported vehicles. That is not an industrial strategy. That is an industrial surrender.

Conservatives are not and never will be willing to back down from this fight, so why is the government ready to lie down when our workers most need its support?

I am begging for the Liberal government to adopt our motion today, because we know it would work. In 1965, Canada entered the Canada-United States auto pact. That agreement tied production to market access. If a company wanted to sell vehicles in Canada, it had to build vehicles in Canada. The results were transformative: Auto production in Canada grew from roughly 700,000 vehicles annually in the mid-1960s to nearly three million vehicles by the late 1990s. That was not an accident. It was because Canada had a strategy that ensured that Canadian workers benefited from Canadian demand.

Today we have the opposite: a government that has accepted tariffs as permanent; a government that has failed to secure access to our largest market, the United States; and a government that is actively subsidizing foreign-built vehicles while Canadian auto jobs in Oshawa, Brampton, Ingersoll and Sainte-Thérèse disappear. Families and auto workers in Windsor are worried they will be next.

• (1305)

Windsor is not just another city; it is one of the most auto-dependent regions in the entire country. Tens of thousands of jobs in Windsor-Essex are directly and indirectly tied to the auto sector. When a shift is cut in Windsor, it is not just a factory issue. It also affects spinoff jobs, restaurants, small businesses, suppliers and entire communities.

These Canadians, who once had a promise that if they worked hard they would have a stable life, are now experiencing mass job losses in Brampton, Oshawa, Ingersoll and Sainte-Thérèse. Supply chains are unstable, and livelihoods are at risk. My community and workers across Canada should not have to wake up every day wondering if they are next.

Auto workers are asking this simple question: "Who's fighting for us?" Our Conservative auto strategy answers that question. First, it supports a plan that would make it affordable to buy Canadian vehicles by removing the GST on Canadian-made cars, putting our workers first. Second, it would restore balance to production by ensuring that if a company wants to sell in Canada, it must build in Canada on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Third, it would protect North American supply chains by maintaining a 75% North American content rule under CUSMA, which would ensure that production stays here and not overseas. Fourth, the plan would stand firm against unfair trade by aligning with our North American partners to confront state-subsidized Chinese electric vehicle imports that will undercut our industry.

Finally, it would strengthen our national security by ensuring that vehicles operating on Canadian roads are not connected to the software systems of foreign companies. Let us be clear: The Liberal government knows that these modern vehicles are not just machines but also data systems. They collect location data, behavioural data and infrastructure data. Allowing vehicles connected to hostile regimes into our market is not just bad economics but also a national security risk. If members will not take my word for it, they should ask why the Minister of Industry will not say that she would drive a foreign-made car. It is because she knows it is a major security risk and threat, not just to herself but to every Canadian.

This is the difference between a Conservative government that believes in Canada, and our current Liberal government, which has given up. The Liberals' approach not only welcomes but subsidizes foreign production, accepts tariffs and pushes a false narrative that this will benefit Canadians.

Our approach is simple. We build here, we buy here and we protect our communities. We will bring back production by taking Canada from 1.2 million vehicles per year back up to two million vehicles, not just restoring our auto industry but also restoring the promise that Canada is a place for opportunity. It is about giving Windsor workers not just hope but a future.

I would say to the auto workers across Canada that Conservatives see them. We understand what is happening, and we are fighting for them. They are not alone. I, alongside my Conservative colleagues, will always stand up for our auto industry, and let me be clear: This is not just about an industry. It is about the thousands of families and other Canadians who depend on this sector's prosperity. A country that cannot build its own cars, maintain its production and create more jobs is a country that has lost control of the future.

Canada can be a manufacturing powerhouse again. We have the workers, the resources and the history. What we need now is the leadership. That is what the motion represents, that is what the plan would deliver and that is why I urge all members of the House to support our motion, not only for my community but for our workers and the future of Canada's auto industry.

• (1310)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in order to accelerate investment in Canada's automobile manufacturing industry, the government is investing \$3 billion to ensure that we can continue to see some growth in that area.

My question for the member is this: Does the Conservative Party support that more than \$3-billion investment?

• (1315)

Kathy Borrelli: Mr. Speaker, if the Conservative Party starts making deals with other companies for production, we are going to tie those companies to agreements that will support workers. We are going to tie those agreements and that money to jobs. We are not going to just make contracts with companies without assurances that our workers will have jobs.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, once again, with this motion, the Conservatives are prioritizing oil and Ontario's auto industry above all else, at the expense of Quebec. They are even proposing to eliminate EV subsidies and to lower environmental standards to please Mr. Trump.

Does my colleague think such a motion will be welcome in Quebec?

[*English*]

Kathy Borrelli: Mr. Speaker, any improvement to the auto industry will affect any province across Canada that builds for the auto industry. In Quebec, they build for the auto industry. More cars being made means more work for those companies in Quebec and provinces across Canada that are producing parts for the auto industry, whether they do assembly in that province or not.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thought that was a fantastic speech by my colleague.

What we continue to hear from the Liberals during this debate is our plan does not make sense, or this, that and the other thing, but we have actually seen no plan from them. We have seen production go from two million vehicles a year to 1.2 million, and then they talk about these programs, yet exports of autos are down 55% over the past year.

Business of Supply

I cannot figure out what the Liberals' plan is. Canadians cannot figure out what their plan is. Auto workers do not know what their plan is. Does the member have any clue what the Liberals' plan is? I really have no clue.

Kathy Borrelli: Mr. Speaker, honestly, I agree with my colleague. I do not understand the Liberals' plan either.

It benefits a foreign, hostile country by accepting imports of its vehicles and it gives an incentive to buy other foreign-made cars. When Canadians, who are not getting the jobs to build cars, need a car, they are going to dig deeper into their pockets to buy an electric vehicle that is being incentivized.

It just does not make any sense to me whatsoever. We need to build cars and car parts in Canada.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, could the member indicate whether or not she supports the Government of Canada's countertariffs on auto imports coming from the United States, where they are warranted? Does the Conservative Party support those countertariffs?

Kathy Borrelli: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure about those tariffs the member is talking about. What I do know is that we should not have any tariffs. We have enjoyed free trade between Canada and the United States for many years. We need a strong leader to go to bat and do those negotiations in Washington, which will bring about a free trade situation again.

[*Translation*]

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kingston and the Islands.

I am pleased to rise in the House of Commons today to speak to the future of the Canadian auto industry and the measures our government is taking to ensure its long-term success.

The Government of Canada fully understands and recognizes the importance of our auto industry, a key driver of our economy that relies on thousands of dedicated workers and generates \$16 billion in economic activity every year. This sector is and will remain an important part of the Canadian economy.

With a world-class workforce, Canada's auto sector is building the vehicles of today and will help build the vehicles of tomorrow. It provides quality jobs that define communities and make Canada a trusted partner in global manufacturing.

The auto sector is facing very strong headwinds. The industry is under immense pressure. Let us be clear: This pressure stems from the U.S. tariffs on vehicles, which are driving up costs and creating uncertainty in the North American market. That market is deeply integrated, by the way.

Business of Supply

Let us be clear. This is happening as a result of policies put in place by the U.S. administration, which has very clearly indicated that it wants to bring all car manufacturing back to the United States. No, we are not going to sign any old agreement with the United States. We are going to ensure that we secure an agreement that will minimize tariffs and ensure the long-term survival of this industry.

Since the government fully recognizes how important this sector is to the Canadian economy, it reacted quickly to the tariffs, which are obviously unjustified, illegal and, more importantly, counterproductive, even for the Americans.

As I said at the outset, the industry is highly integrated in North America. U.S. tariffs are having a negative impact on American companies based in the United States. We also have retaliatory measures, countermeasures, to try to force our American friends to make some changes. This measure has been supplemented with a performance-based duty remission framework to protect Canadian production. Under this framework, Canadian auto manufacturers are able to import CUSMA-compliant U.S.-assembled vehicles duty-free, provided that they maintain production in Canada. That is very important. They have to maintain production in Canada, or they are not eligible for remission.

The Government of Canada is taking proactive steps to position the sector as a leader in manufacturing next-generation vehicles. On February 5, the Prime Minister launched a new automotive strategy to transform Canada's auto sector in the long term. This strategy aims to ensure that Canadian-built vehicles create good Canadian jobs and a strong Canadian market. This means that we need to strengthen our domestic manufacturing presence, and we need to start by investing in the transition to manufacturing EVs and connected technology. We will then need to diversify our export markets, because the future of our industry depends on EVs and export diversification.

Recognizing that the future of the industry lies in electrification, we are building on our free trade agreements with 51 countries, which give us access to more than 1.5 billion consumers around the world, to attract new investment and diversify our export markets.

We are supporting major investments in auto manufacturing and helping businesses adapt, grow and diversify by allocating \$3 billion from the strategic response fund and up to \$100 million from regional tariff response initiatives.

● (1320)

With a view to bolstering domestic production and supporting long-term competitiveness, we have launched public consultations to strengthen Canada's automotive remission framework. We have launched consultations. We are in constant discussions with the industry to determine the best way to ensure its long-term viability. We are aiming for a performance-based tool that is designed to protect Canadian workers, strengthen supply chains and position Canada as a destination of choice for automotive investment.

Our top priority is strengthening the domestic market for the vehicles of the future. The new five-year EV affordability program offers incentives of up to \$5,000 for battery electric and fuel-cell electric vehicles and up to \$2,500 for hybrid cars. We believe that

EVs are the future of the automotive industry. To ensure the industry's long-term viability, we must be part of this market.

We are lowering costs for Canadian families and businesses while ensuring that Canadian-made vehicles have a clear advantage in the domestic market by exempting them from the \$50,000 transaction cap.

We are also providing long-term certainty regarding our path to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, because the reality is that GHGs exist and that they are harmful to both our physical health and our economic well-being. We are introducing new, more stringent Canadian GHG emission standards for model years 2027 to 2032 to drive emission reductions in a technology-neutral manner.

In addition, we will repeal the electric vehicle availability standard and focus instead on the outcomes that matter to Canadians without placing an undue burden on Canadian industry.

This strategy is about vehicles and manufacturing, but most importantly, it is about workers. We are introducing a new work-sharing grant to prevent layoffs and support worker retention. We are investing \$570 million in employment assistance and reskilling supports for up to 66,000 workers, including auto workers who may have lost their jobs.

We are also establishing a new workforce alliance of industry, labour and training partners to address bottlenecks and catalyze private investment. Canada has a highly skilled workforce, critical minerals, abundant clean energy, and a proven track record of innovation.

Canada understands and supports the auto industry, and the future of the auto industry lies in electric vehicles.

● (1325)

[English]

G rard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to say in English that the member is one of my political heroes. I want to inform this House and the people in Canada from coast to coast that this gentleman balanced the budget in Quebec. That is great. I hope those who are opposing us now will listen, be very careful and get inspiration from the Liberal member. He is on the wrong team, because it is the team of the deficit.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

I want to say this to my colleague: He is a man who knows how to do the math and who has a vision for the future. However, what we have seen over the past year is anything but sound policies regarding electric vehicles. The current government has failed to provide any predictability. As a result, last year, we had the worst EV sales on the entire planet.

Does the government realize that, with this dismal track record, its current plan lacks credibility?

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his kind words.

To come back to the deficit, when a country is going through a period of turmoil and economic crisis triggered by a neighbouring partner that is no longer reliable, the government has to step in on a massive scale. That is what the government has done. That is what must be done. We are proud of that.

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary made a compelling case for electric vehicles. I must commend him for that, but I still cannot help but point out that his government basically gutted the transportation electrification industry over the past year, with disastrous results for the industry. Now, the government is trying to patch things up, but it is going to be difficult to turn this situation around.

My question for the member is this. I am already convinced, but if he is so certain that the electrification of transportation is the way of the future, then why is his government still investing more in oil than in electrification? It seems to me that if the government believes that something is the way of the future, then that is where it would put the money. It would not be putting more money in the past than in the future.

• (1330)

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, there is a saying about being able to walk and chew gum at the same time. That is what we are doing. Right now, with the war in the Middle East causing fuel shortages, it is increasingly important for Canada to produce oil. We do produce oil, but we can also transition to EV-related technologies at the same time. We are doing both at the same time.

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, given that my hon. colleague is the former finance minister for the province of Quebec, I would like to ask him whether eliminating the GST on vehicles manufactured in Canada could increase the deficit.

I would also like him to comment on the government's plan for the automotive sector and on the importance of investing in that industry, both now and in the future.

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I will have enough time to answer all of these very important questions. I will answer the question about the GST.

That makes no sense, and everyone is well aware of that. The GST cannot be applied selectively. Certain products cannot be subject to the GST while others are not. It does not work like that. A value-added tax like the GST cannot be applied in that way. Come on. I think everyone should know that.

On top of that, it would be expensive. The folks proposing this measure are advocates of fiscal restraint. No, it would be very expensive.

[English]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this opposition motion and, quite frankly, the entire Conservative plan around the auto industry in Canada come down to one thing. They come down to denialism. I am going to demonstrate that by talking in particular about three things that they are denying the reality of. They are denying the reality of the auto sector and what exists today. They are denying the reality of the trade situation that we have with the United States, and they are denying the reality of the emerging EV market.

I will start with the auto sector. The reality here is that the auto sector that the Conservatives are trying to harken back to is one from the 1960s, when the auto industry sector in North America was completely different. For example, back in the 1960s, there were primarily just three auto manufacturers in North America: Ford, Chrysler and, I believe, GM. Now there are literally dozens. This is one of the key reasons why it would not work.

There is one other major difference between the 1960s and now. I cannot believe I have to explain this to the Conservatives, but when we consider the fact that they live in the past, it makes sense. The reality is that supply chains are different now from back then. What they are talking about is a fundamental shift to the reality of the sector that we have right now, as it relates to auto. Do not take my word for it, because I am certainly not an expert when it comes to the auto industry. Instead, let us listen to what some of the experts are saying.

John D'Agnolo was referring to the Leader of the Opposition when he said, "He looked at a pact from 1965 and he tried to put details in there". He went on to say, "Today, the industry is totally different." He continued, "So, they put out these numbers, and unfortunately, they didn't do their homework". That was from the Unifor Local 200 president and auto council chair.

Now the member for Dufferin—Caledon and a number of Conservatives have gotten up to say, "Well, you're just cherry-picking. That's just what one person said. You're talking about one quote." Well, then, I will not stop there. I will go further. Lana Payne, the Unifor national president, talked about the Leader of the Opposition. This is what she said—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I know members opposite would love to drown out her words, but I would like to repeat them in the House. She said:

I have concerns and questions with some of what your party has presented. We are encouraged by your effort—

That is good news, guys, that you get an A for effort.

—but skeptical that this plan can restart idled Canadian facilities. In fact, we fear it may prevent potential future growth....

Business of Supply

Again, that was from the Unifor national president, but I will not stop there, because I know the members opposite want more.

This is from Tom Venetis, an industry expert, who said, “I think some of these ideas are sort of reviving an aspect of the old 1965 Canada-U.S. auto pact.” He went on to say, “They don't seem very well thought out. It's an argument that I don't think he understands will not work.” An auto expert said that the Leader of the Opposition, in his words, does not understand that it will not work. That should not surprise anybody except Conservatives, who are living in the 1960s, quite literally, as it relates to this motion.

However, the other issue about the auto sector today, versus the 1960s, leads to the second denial of reality from the Conservatives, which is about the trade relationship that exists with the United States. I do not know if they have not been paying attention or have had their heads in the sand for the last year, but I would like to explain in as clear terms as I possibly can to my friends across the way about the reality of what is going on in the United States. I am about to use an economic term, so I want them to really focus on this. The United States right now are relying on something called protectionism. This happens periodically throughout history as different countries look to internalize, resist and shut off all trade coming and going from their country. The United States of America is currently in a period where they are employing and putting forward and bringing in protectionist policies. These policies are meant to prevent trade. They are meant to bring jobs back home.

• (1335)

Now, economists around the world will argue that it is a horrible policy, and I completely agree with that. Our party agrees with that, but the fundamental fact here is that Conservatives are denying the fact that it exists. They are saying, “Hey guys, here is our plan. We have this great plan for how we are going to kick-start it,” but what does that plan rely on? That plan relies on the Americans actually wanting international trade. Now, I think I clearly laid out that they do not, and that is the reality, so the Conservatives' plan is genuinely a non-starter. This is why we decided, since we are a country that still believes in trade, that we will find partners that also want to participate in trade, rather than denying the fact that this is the world we live in.

Nostalgia is great. Let us be nostalgic. I remember what my life was like back in the 1990s. I recently shared a post about it, but that does not mean I think I am still that person today, because things change, and nostalgia is not a strategy, even though the Conservatives tend to think it is.

It is interesting that the Conservative member for Oshawa said earlier that she had been listening the whole day and that we have to know what the person we are negotiating with wants. The Conservatives literally do not understand what Donald Trump wants. He does not want trade. That is why he has tariffs. Tariffs are meant to prevent trade. By the way, it is not just with Canada. It is with just about every developed and developing nation throughout the world. The U.S. administration has put tariffs on trade. Why are the Conservatives hell-bent on trying to insist on something that is never going to happen?

I will go to my third and final point about denialism with respect to the Conservatives. I have given this speech so many times in the

House, but they deny the fact that our entire auto industry is on the way to being completely electrified. One in four cars sold in the world right now is an electric vehicle. If the Conservatives want to think that somehow North America, in particular just two countries, are going to form a coalition that hives themselves off from the rest of the world, it is absolutely ludicrous. We are electric.

The member for Dufferin—Caledon, who talks about this, should look at what is called the “innovation curve”. He will see along the innovation curve that once we get to one out of four, which is 25%, of penetration of a new technology into the market, we are going to eventually get to the point where that technology fully and completely makes its way into the market.

Conservatives can use this idea of nostalgia to dictate everything they do, but I would caution them that maybe it is time for self-reflection. Maybe they should think about why it is they are where they are, and I mean that both metaphorically and physically speaking, in the House of Commons. It is because they do not have foresight. It is because they insist on using all political tactics in terms of rage-baiting and looking for opportunity, rather than really dedicating themselves to finding solutions that will benefit our country well into the future, which is what the Prime Minister is doing.

The Prime Minister is looking for the solutions that will benefit Canada, not just in the next month or two months or three months, but into the future, so that when we look back at this generations from now, when our markets have diversified, we can say, “At that particular moment in time, we did the right thing. More importantly, Canadians did the right thing, and that was not listening to Conservatives.”

• (1340)

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there was so much incoherence and drivel in that speech that I do not know where to start.

I will start with this: Is it really the Liberal government's position that the United States wants no trade? Is that what the member thinks its position is? If the U.S. wants no trade, we understand why the Liberals are getting no deal on trade, if that is what they think the position is.

Business of Supply

Second, the member talked about the future as electrification and said that when we get to 25%, it is some kind of curve. That explains what the Liberals' EV policy is. However, 49,000 Chinese EVs are 30% of the EV market in Canada. I guess the Liberals' plan to create good jobs in the auto sector is to create good jobs in China for Chinese EVs, because let us be clear, the only EV we manufactured in Canada was a Dodge Charger 700. Is this really their plan?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, listening to the member say things like, "Once we get to 25%, we get to some curb," it underscores his lack of understanding of some basic, elementary economic principles of supply and demand. The reality is that it is not even 25%. The member for Dufferin—Caledon should know that the chasm point is actually 7.5% market penetration of a new technology. That is the tipping point. It is not even 25%.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order, please. We will have a chance for the back—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The member for Dufferin—Caledon will come to order.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, back in the 1960s, it was actually Lester Pearson who came up with the auto pact agreement, and it was the right agreement for the time. It is going to take a prime minister such as the one we have to meet the challenges of today's automobile industry, because the industry has changed.

As the member has pointed out, back in the day, we had American Motors, Chrysler, GM and Ford. Today, our biggest manufacturers are Toyota and Honda. There is a world of supply. Can the member provide his thoughts on that?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the added detail.

The reality is that only Conservatives would look at what has happened over the last year and say the best idea is to try to find a way to have more trade with the United States, when the rest of us, the vast majority of Canadians, have said it may not have been such a good idea to be so heavily invested in trade with the United States over the last several decades. We are saying it may be time to start to diversify.

That is what the Prime Minister and the government are doing. They are looking for new opportunities to diversify. They are looking for new trade relationships, so that when people look back on this in the future, they can say diversifying at that particular time in our history was the most important thing we did, because it made us less reliant on the United States.

• (1345)

Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will stand up to ask a question and let my colleague across the way take a breath.

On the path toward his fantasy of electrification, if he looks at any electrification vehicle policy in Canada, they have failed everywhere, costing billions, tens of billions and fifties of billions of dollars. How many billions are we going to spend on this experiment before we realize we are forcing a market?

I will not let the member across talk to me about supply and demand. I could give him a lecture and a course on it, because I do not think he understands it, but the whole thing about market penetration is that we have to let the market go. There are going to be electric vehicles in our future. We know that. It will not be because of the forced mandate the government tries to push on it. It is managing our decline.

Why is the member opposed to such a great idea of getting back to producing things in Canada?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I would really encourage the member, who I know is an economist and understands these things, to take four steps forward to the seat in front of him, sit down next to the member for Dufferin—Caledon and explain to him what the innovation curve is and what it means for new technology. I am sure he could help the member for Dufferin—Caledon immensely, because he is not taking it from me. I would encourage him to do that.

As it relates specifically to this criticism I hear from Conservatives about how we have tried to give incentives to buy EVs and their talk about giving out money, I never once hear Conservatives talk about the way the government has subsidized oil over the years. Canadians should know the degree to which oil has been subsidized. Conservatives never talk about that.

Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am going to bring the temperature down just a touch, get a little decorum and speak a little more calmly, but I am happy to participate in this debate today on the auto sector.

I am also happy to let the House know that I will be splitting my time with my friend and colleague, the great member for Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake.

As my friend from Niagara Falls knows all too well, as a former summer student at GM in Niagara, the Niagara region was central to the development of our country, from making steel, refining critical minerals and shipping the world its grain through the Welland Canal, to harnessing the immense power of Niagara Falls to electrify a growing nation. We also made great cars.

Generations of workers and communities in Niagara did not just support the national economy, but powered it. In Fort Erie, a place where the battles of war and conflict literally led to the creation of Canada, the majestic Peace Bridge transits the vehicles of commerce across the border to the United States and beyond.

Business of Supply

At the heart of that Niagara legacy stands the auto sector, one of the most important pillars of Niagara's industrial base. It used to be a pillar, but it is not so much anymore. What we are seeing today is further disintegration of our once dominant auto sector shrinking into a small semblance of its former glory as one of Niagara's and Canada's anchors of economic strength.

A decade ago, Canada produced over two million vehicles a year. Today, that number has fallen to just over 1.2 million. The value of auto manufacturing in Niagara has changed. It is no longer the sprawling, multiplant, labour-intensive industrial engine it once was. While it remains critical and highly specialized in our economy today, it is in a bit of precarity. The sector remains vulnerable. In the last year alone, production has dropped 7.8%.

Thousands of skilled, dedicated Canadian workers are now out of a job, and this did not happen by accident. It happened because of decisions that caused the slow but constant export of manufacturing to everywhere but Canada. Canada's complacency was not imposed on us. It was chosen through neglect by abdicating our industrial strategy through economic hibernation and by focusing on social constructs, virtue signalling, postnationalism and open borders. Remember, "the budget will balance itself."

Exacerbating all of this is that Canada created a bureaucratic behemoth whereby our system is mired in red tape, leading to capital flight and underinvestment. We have allowed declining productivity, chronic underinvestment, bureaucratic gridlock and the lack of an industrial strategy. Our largest source of new jobs in Canada has been in building redundant bureaucracies. That is the national disgrace and a fiscal disaster.

We may want to blame Donald Trump for the shockwaves in the global markets, but the signals have been here for a very long time. Trump's rhetoric may offend us. It offends me for sure. We can denounce him from the rooftops as reckless, dangerous and destabilizing. It gives us a fleeting sense of moral satisfaction, but it accomplishes nothing.

Like it or not, the United States has, overall, seen significantly stronger productivity growth than Canada has over the past decade. The U.S. capital investment per worker is substantially higher. Business creation and job creation have been stronger. In fact, Canadians started more businesses in the United States in 2024 than they did in Canada. Let that sink in. Canadians started more corporate entities in the United States than they did in Canada in 2024. If that is not a testament to failure, I cannot imagine what is.

Energy production in the U.S. is surging, but ours is not so much. Do members remember when there was no business case for LNG? Manufacturing investment is reshoring at scale in the U.S. As the government talks about pivoting away from the United States in what seems on the surface like a reasonable strategy, we need to recognize some fundamental facts, particularly with respect to the auto sector.

The government is asking Canadians to believe that we can replace the U.S. market, where over 95% of our vehicles are sold, with exports to Europe and overseas. That is not a strategy. That is an illusion.

As I listen to the answers to the questions in this House, the government's focus is on saying, "We believe in Canada." The Minister of Finance says that ad nauseam. He is a bit of a master of righteous indignation. Frankly, it is nothing more than a deflection from inaction, a slogan without substance and abdication instead of action.

• (1350)

The Prime Minister continues to talk about balance, pivoting toward China as if geography were a suggestion, rather than a fact. At the same time, we are using Canadian taxpayers' dollars to subsidize the purchase of vehicles that are not even made in Canada. Think about that. We are taxing Canadians to help buy foreign-made cars while Canadian workers are losing their jobs. That is not industrial policy. That is surrender, and the cost of that surrender is enormous.

Geography is destiny. Geography is gravity. Canada shares the longest undefended border in the world with the United States, and 75% of our exports go south. Markets follow scale, infrastructure, proximity and legal certainty. We cannot close the gap of distance to other markets. Business grows to where capital flows. Canada's trading relationship with the United States is structural, not discretionary. To suggest anything different is not only foolish, but delusional and, ultimately, destructive.

As such, we must renegotiate CUSMA and leverage our strategic advantages to secure a durable trade deal. We have the resources, the critical minerals and the raw materials that can finally bring more homegrown value added to our products, rather than simply shipping raw materials and buying them back at market prices. However, most of those strategic opportunities are solidly stuck in a bureaucratic quagmire. Whether it is approving a pipeline or LNG terminals, or eliminating interprovincial barriers, it has been like watching the government push rope uphill.

That is why my leader is calling out for a new auto pact. It is because we cannot afford to watch this industry slowly slip further away. This plan is grounded in a principle Canadians understand: fairness. If someone wants to sell cars to Canadians, they should be building cars with Canadian workers. The plan would restore tariff-free trade with the United States, but with a clear expectation that production in Canada must match access to our market. That is how we bring investment back, that is how we secure jobs and that is how we rebuild confidence in our industrial future.

Statements by Members

If we get this right, Niagara will not just be part of our industrial past, but it will be central to our industrial future, because every day tariffs remain in place, Canadian manufacturers are losing ground. Billions of dollars are flowing south. Investment is leaving. Plants are not being retooled here, but in the United States.

I may be an MP, but I am also a business person, and I see the tragic outflow of capital every day. The best and brightest are going south, to where capital, commercialization and scale exist. Capital investment happening here is highly leveraged against tax dollars. It is happening in my riding, where two EV plants exist. One never opened and one has been delayed by years because the market collapsed. Hundreds of millions of tax dollars were committed to these projects that are now stuck in EV purgatory.

Conservatives are putting forward a serious, practical strategy to rebuild Canada's auto sector and restore our economic strength. It is a plan rooted in reality, a plan grounded in results and a plan designed to bring our industry back to life. Our goal is clear. It is to restore Canadian auto production to two million vehicles a year. We would remove the GST on Canadian-made vehicles and make it easier for Canadians to buy Canadian. We would end subsidies for foreign-made vehicles. We would bring production home. We would introduce a simple and fair rule that for every vehicle a company sells in Canada, it must produce one in Canada to earn duty-free access. It would be a one-to-one system: build here and sell here.

Let us be clear about what is at stake. It is not just about cars. It is about jobs. It is about our communities. It is about whether Canada remains an industrial nation or continues to slide in productivity while ceding more of its economic future to countries like China and Italy. That is not an option.

• (1355)

Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leaders from Unifor, whom I also had the chance to meet yesterday, have clearly stated that they were not consulted, and they have raised serious concerns that the Conservatives' proposal lacks key details and risks undermining jobs across the sector.

I am curious. Why did the Conservatives choose to try to develop a national auto strategy without engaging the very workers whose livelihoods are at stake, and why are they ignoring the concerns raised by the biggest auto union in the country?

Fred Davies: Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the hon. member is getting her information, because this side of the House has been meeting with auto workers and unions for several years. They understand our plan and support our plan. I do not know what the plan of the government is. I wish the Liberals would explain it beyond just criticizing our plan, which is based on a historic and successful tradition of trade between Canada and the United States.

Let me remind the government that the border between Canada and the United States is never going to disappear. The trade routes and the supply chains that have been developed over generations cannot simply be replaced or ignored. The government seems to think that pivoting to China is an alternative to developing a new, stronger relationship with the United States.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for bringing the temperature down in the House a little bit and for bringing some pragmatic solutions to the table.

In Kitchener Centre, there are constituents who are worried about their jobs. They are worried not just about assembly but also about the broader ecosystem of parts manufacturing for the auto industry. Can my colleague please explain briefly what we would do, in our Conservative plan, to protect not only assembly but also the broader ecosystem?

Fred Davies: Mr. Speaker, the heart of our policy is to recognize that with respect to the cars that we manufacture in Canada and that are going to be purchased by Canadians, there is a two-way street with the United States. We need to be able to ensure that with the cars that are built here, that are purchased by Canadians and that have access to the American market, it is done the same way. We would not engage in any agreement that does not favour Canadian workers. We have stood up for the workers in the past and will continue to do that.

I look forward to my colleagues' actually negotiating that agreement with the United States.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I will not in the next 60 seconds be able to do justice to the accomplishments of Dr. David Suzuki.

Scientist, geneticist, broadcaster, author, educator and activist, David Suzuki has been a recipient of the highest citizen award in this country, the Companion of the Order of Canada. He has received awards from universities around the world too numerous to mention; awards from Japan, Australia, throughout Europe and from UNESCO and the United Nations; and the so-called alternative Nobel Prize, the Right Livelihood Award.

As host of *The Nature of Things* for decades, he educated generations of Canadians, making and increasing our awareness that nature itself is a miracle.

He has been, in his personal life, a devoted husband, father, grandfather and now great-grandfather.

David Suzuki is much loved by millions of Canadians, and for good reason.

His 90th birthday is today, and I wish him a happy birthday.

Statements by Members

● (1400)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims.

The UN warns that during times of geopolitical strife, facts are manipulated, victims retraumatized and violations erased. This is not abstract. Many constituents in my riding have shared that their own family members are enduring these conditions in Iran today.

When a government turns against its people, the first things taken are food, water, dignity and truth. This is a collective responsibility. When people cannot speak their truth, we must speak it for them, so today, learn the names, share the stories and bear witness, because the most powerful thing any of us can do is refuse to let the truth disappear.

* * *

FLOOD PROTECTION

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week we had another serious flood warning in the Fraser Valley. Today I plead with the government to listen to the concerns of our region, a key national economic corridor.

On November 24, 2021, in the House, I was promised that the Liberal government would be a partner in rebuilding Abbotsford for a stronger future. We are still waiting for action. The government has signalled that the \$51-billion build communities strong fund will help my community recover, but what my riding is looking for is an assurance that this funding will be allocated accordingly.

I implore the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure to ensure that we are not forgotten. Every major railway runs through our area. The local airport is critical for national defence. Highway 1 is the key arterial road in British Columbia. The TransMountain pipeline runs through the flood zone.

The time for talk is over. We need action from the federal government. It needs to fulfill its promises.

* * *

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Gurbux Saini (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, across Canada, people from many cultures and backgrounds come together to contribute to a shared society. The safety, opportunity and sense of belonging found here are what have led many people to choose Canada as their home.

This week, as we mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we reflect on the importance of protecting these values. Respect, social cohesion and a strong spirit of living together are what allow our communities to grow and flourish. By encouraging these principles, we ensure that Canada remains a place where diversity is welcome and where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to mark a very important occasion in the history of Canada and Parliament.

Sixty years ago, a prairie girl was inspired by her grade 6 teacher's lessons celebrating Canada's 100th birthday, so inspired that a seed was planted in her heart. What she was not taught, and what, I dare say, was not even known at the time, was that a special event was being planned on the Hill by parliamentarians to come together to thank God for Canada's biblical values of faith, family and freedom: the first National Prayer Breakfast of Canada.

This morning, over 1,500 followers of Christ from across every province and territory gathered for the 60th annual National Prayer Breakfast, now the longest-running parliamentary event on the Hill. It is no accident that Bill C-9 will be voted on tomorrow. Called upon by religious leaders, legal experts, civil society organizations and hundreds of thousands of people of all faiths, I will vote against Bill C-9, as it would repeal the good-faith religious speech defence in our Criminal Code.

God is here today. He will still be here tomorrow.

* * *

● (1405)

[Translation]

SAINT-PHARD DÉSIR

Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am truly honoured to rise in the House to recognize the remarkable career of Saint-Phard Désir.

Mr. Désir served for 14 years as the executive director of the Centre d'établissement, de soutien et d'orientation communautaire, the CESOC. As he embarks on his well-deserved retirement, he leaves behind a legacy deeply rooted in service, engagement and compassion. Under his leadership, the CESOC experienced significant growth, expanded its services and strengthened its vital role in supporting thousands of francophone newcomer families in the area.

Thanks to his vision, unifying leadership and integrity, Mr. Désir transformed complex challenges into opportunities to build a more inclusive, more united and stronger society.

[English]

Saint-Phard Désir's departure marks the end of an era, but his legacy remains indelible. On behalf of our community, we wish to express our deep gratitude for his exceptional dedication and invaluable contributions.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

We welcome the new director, Ms. Jephthée, and I reaffirm my commitment and willingness to collaborate with her in her new role.

* * *

[English]

HOCKEY

David Bexte (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the community of Taber in my riding for being named a finalist in this year's Kraft Hockeyville competition and for being selected as Alberta's provincial winner, earning \$50,000 for arena upgrades, along with a chance to compete for the \$250,000 grand prize and the opportunity to host an NHL pre-season game. This recognition comes at a critical time for Taber. In December of last year, an explosion seriously damaged the town's arena and forced its closure, disrupting the local community, minor hockey and other community events.

Taber has a proud hockey tradition. It is the hometown of former NHL star Devin Setoguchi, and its rink has long hosted youth camps led by Calgary Flames alumnus Kris Versteeg, bringing the next generation of athletes together. Winning Kraft Hockeyville is a testament to community spirit, and Taber has shown exactly that in the face of adversity.

I wish the community of Taber the very best in the finals, along with the community of Tumbler Ridge, and I congratulate it on a truly deserving community-led effort.

* * *

WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY

Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today on World Tuberculosis Day, we reflect on our progress and the work still ahead. TB is preventable, treatable and curable, yet it continues to affect thousands of people, including here in Canada. In recent years, over 2,500 people in Canada have been diagnosed.

Yesterday, Health Canada approved a new drug that will expand access to shorter, safer preventive TB treatment. Canada is also advancing vaccine research and clinical trials and is working with global partners like Gavi to expand immunization worldwide. Organizations like Stop TB Canada and Results Canada are part of a broader network doing vital work on the ground and making a real difference.

Today we recognize all those contributing to this effort, and we renew our shared responsibility, because together we can end tuberculosis.

* * *

FARMERS IN FUNDY ROYAL

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the excellent work of Don and Geraldine Bettle, third-generation farmers in Pessekeag, New Brunswick. Their farm has been in operation along the Kennebecasis River since the 1800s. The river is a major factor on the farm, and the Bettles are committed to protecting water quality and biodiversity on their

land. The systems that the Bettles have put in place benefit the community and the local ecosystem, and they help to ensure that New Brunswickers can enjoy this river for years to come.

In September, the Canadian Cattle Association chose Don and Geraldine to receive the Environmental Stewardship Award for 2025, which recognizes cattle producers who explore innovative ways to protect and enhance operations and the environment. I congratulate Don and Geraldine Bettle on receiving this award, and I thank them for all the great work they do.

* * *

[Translation]

ACCIDENT AT LAGUARDIA AIRPORT

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a split second, tragedy struck. Two pilots lost their lives on Sunday in a collision involving their aircraft on a runway at LaGuardia airport in New York.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I wish to offer my condolences to the loved ones of Mackenzie Gunther. I also extend my condolences and full support to all the members of Antoine Forest's family. Antoine was barely 30 years old and hailed from Coteau-du-Lac in my riding. He likely saved dozens of lives before losing his own. My thoughts go out to the 41 people who were hospitalized, particularly to flight attendant Solange Tremblay, who miraculously survived after being thrown from the plane and is now recovering from her injuries. I also want to acknowledge the rapid emergency response.

To all the victims' loved ones and to all those in shock, may shared memories and affection bring them some comfort at this difficult time.

* * *

● (1410)

[English]

EDUCATION FOR AFGHAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre—Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at a time when girls and women in Afghanistan are being denied the basic right to education, Canadians are stepping up to help.

The Ottawa-Kabul Global Education Centre, a Canadian registered not-for-profit founded in 2024, is working to restore educational opportunities for Afghan girls and women forced out of classrooms. Through a fully online academic ecosystem, the organization now supports more than 18,000 students, including over 7,000 former female medical students continuing their studies with volunteer professors from around the world.

Statements by Members

With over 900 educators and professionals, many Canadians are helping ensure these young women can continue their education and pursue their careers in fields such as medicine, nursing and public health. This initiative reflects the best of Canadian compassion, leadership and commitment to gender equality.

I would like to recognize the volunteers and leaders behind this important work, many of whom are from Scarborough, and thank them for standing with Afghan girls and women.

* * *

AUTO INDUSTRY

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's auto sector is in crisis. Production has been cut in half since 2015 and dropped another 7.8% last year. Exports are down more than 53%. Over 5,000 workers are out of a job. In Brampton alone, 3,000 jobs have been lost.

Under the Liberal government, the promise to protect this industry has proven to be an illusion. Instead of fighting for our workers, it accepted U.S. tariffs as permanent. Nearly \$2 billion has been taken from Canadian auto manufacturers. What is worse is that the Liberals are subsidizing foreign-made vehicles while Canadian plants sit idle. That is not leadership. That is surrender.

Conservatives have a plan to remove the GST on Canadian-made cars, end costly EV mandates and bring home a new tariff-free auto pact to double our production to two million vehicles a year.

Let us rebuild our auto sector, restore our economic strength and stand up for Canadians.

* * *

IRAN

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary courage of the people of Iran in the face of immense hardship.

Across that nation, citizens have shown remarkable bravery. In particular, the women of Iran have stood at the forefront, risking their safety and their lives in their fight for dignity, rights and democracy.

We are witnessing devastating destruction and deepening chaos, with innocent lives caught in the turmoil of conflict. This violence must end. We must strive for a peaceful resolution that paves the way for a transitional government, one that reflects the will of the Iranian people and sets the country firmly on a path towards democracy.

A free and democratic Iran remains the dream of millions, both within its borders and across its diaspora. We stand in solidarity with them and hope that this aspiration may soon become a reality.

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AUTO INDUSTRY

Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the hard-working auto workers of Essex-Windsor, who build vehicles that keep North America moving.

Living on Canada's busiest border crossing, I understand firsthand how deeply connected Canada and the U.S. are and how vital it is to strengthen the auto sector on both sides of the border.

After 10 years of the Liberals in power, Canadian auto production has fallen by half, from over two million vehicles to just over 1.2 million. The Prime Minister promised to get tariffs removed by July 21, 2025, yet has allowed Donald Trump to collect \$2 billion in tariffs from auto manufacturers.

I am here today to say no more: no more job losses, no more empty promises and no more sacrifices from our auto workers. That is why I support the Conservative plan for a tariff-free auto pact. Essex-Windsor auto workers are among the best in the world and their jobs deserve to be protected.

* * *

● (1415)

[*Translation*]

FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION OUTSIDE QUEBEC

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we celebrated the International Day of La Francophonie on March 20, we also celebrated a new \$1.5-million investment to support francophone immigration to minority communities outside Quebec. It is no coincidence that these two things happened at the same time. As a Franco-Ontarian who arrived in Canada as a French-speaking refugee, I know what it means to find one's language, culture and place in a francophone minority community.

In 2025, 8.9% of permanent residents admitted outside Quebec were French speaking. Our goal for this year is 9%, and we are aiming for 12% by 2029. These figures represent families that choose to build their lives in French in communities like London and southwestern Ontario.

This investment is an acknowledgement of our francophone minority communities' contribution to our country. I will continue to be their voice in Ottawa and to ensure that francophones in southwestern Ontario—

[*English*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

THE ECONOMY

James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are failing Canadian workers, farmers and businesses. The Prime Minister promised he would have a trade deal done nine months ago, but we are still waiting. He is not even willing to sit at the negotiating table. While he dithers and delays, Canada has lost over 100,000 jobs in the first two months of this year alone. Our economy is shrinking. We have the second-highest unemployment, the highest household debt and the highest food inflation in the G7.

If the Prime Minister is looking for someone to blame, all he needs to do is look in the mirror. His government is running the biggest deficit in history and blocking growth with anti-energy laws. It added more bureaucratic red tape to construction projects and imposed an industrial carbon tax that punishes Canadian farmers and manufacturers. All this Liberal mismanagement results in our economy shrinking, jobs disappearing and our national debt rapidly growing out of control.

If the Prime Minister will not take blame, will he just get out of the way so Canadians can get back to work?

* * *

THE AGA KHAN

Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow Canadians will welcome His Highness Prince Rahim Aga Khan, the 50th hereditary imam of the Ismaili Muslims, to Canada. It is his first visit to Canada since his ascension to the imamate.

Canada and the Ismaili imamate have a decades-long history of partnership and co-operation, built on shared values and a commitment to improving the quality of life of people around the world. This relationship transcends politics and reflects the best of Canada in action in some of the most challenging places across the globe. This visit by His Highness will serve to reaffirm that commitment and to find new ways to work together in a complex world, supporting development through economic progress, collaborating to address global issues like climate change and food security and building a stronger, more pluralistic Canada.

For Ismailis, this visit holds special significance as it will be an opportunity for thousands of people in our community to meet with our imam and to recommit ourselves to our values of kindness, compassion, spiritual search and working to build stronger societies in which everyone can belong.

On this important historic occasion, I know that all members in the House will join me in welcoming His Highness the Aga Khan to Canada.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Auditor General exposed three Liberal ministers' complete mismanagement of immigration.

Liberal ministers in this government ignored evidence of widespread fraud involving 150,000 fake international students. They investigated 3% of cases and abandoned half of those because the suspected fraudsters did not respond to their emails.

Will the Prime Minister stand up in the House of Commons and fire these incompetent Liberal ministers?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we support the Auditor General's recommendations and have been taking action since 2025. In fact, 100% of cases flagged by institutions are followed up on, and we are investigating high-risk cases. The results are clear. Controls and checks are being strengthened. The number of student arrivals has decreased by more than 60%. We are restoring integrity to the system and getting it under control.

• (1420)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question was for the Prime Minister, who is here in Ottawa today. He needs to take responsibility for his three incompetent ministers, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, and the Minister of Immigration. All three have shown astounding incompetence. We are talking about 149,000 potential cases of fraud that were not investigated. Only 3% of the cases were looked into, and most of them were dropped.

Will the Prime Minister take personal responsibility for his incompetent cabinet and fire his ministers?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I got into politics because I love my country, Canada. The opposition member got into politics because he had tendinitis. He thinks that Canadians are losers and that his job is terrible. He is on video saying exactly that and also claiming that visas are being handed out to anyone and everyone across the province. That is irresponsible, and that is why we stand behind the Prime Minister.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with that kind of incompetent, incoherent answer, it is not hard to understand how that minister failed to investigate 97% of the 150,000 suspected cases of fraud in the international student program. Not only that but of the 3% that he did have investigated, the department abandoned half of those because the suspected fraudster did not respond to investigators' emails. This is the current Liberal government.

Oral Questions

Will the current Liberal Prime Minister take responsibility, fire that minister, the justice minister and the immigration minister?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if he wants to talk about incompetence in politics, he need look no further than the mirror. Let us listen to the approach he takes on Canada-U.S. relations, saying it is not the Americans' fault, but it is ours and that we are stupid, while his caucus colleagues go down to the south to say that we are throwing a hissy fit up here. If they want to see incompetence, let us look at the Conservative leader's statements, calling the RCMP leadership "despicable" and calling on his political opponents to be jailed. We will move forward with thoughtful policy that ensures our immigration system moves with integrity while we welcome newcomers who can help grow the economy.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is rewarding and encouraging incompetence by putting the single worst immigration minister in Canadian history in as the new Minister of Justice. That minister caused a 300% increase in population growth. Now we know that there were hundreds of thousands of potentially fraudulent cases that he refused to have investigated. Ninety-seven per cent of the cases of potential fraud were uninvestigated, and half of the remaining 3% were abandoned because the fraudsters did not respond to emails.

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for these incompetent Liberals and fire them now?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me repeat for that member and his entire caucus. As I said, since 2025, 100% of the discrepancies reported were followed up. They were followed up 100% of the time since 2025, with the high risk investigated. The Auditor General confirmed improvements took place. IRCC has tightened its approach, and we have control over the student visas. The numbers prove it.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now the mystery is resolved. Only 3% of the 150,000 cases of suspected fraud were investigated at all. Half of those investigations were abandoned because the alleged fraudster did not respond to their email, but now we learn that the government has followed up with another email, and the threat is clear: If there is no response to that email, there will be yet another email.

With this kind of total incompetence under the leadership of the Liberal Prime Minister, why will he not fire these three ministers so we can get the system—

The Speaker: The hon. minister has the floor.

• (1425)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me tell Canadians, this member and his caucus that the report examined 18 months. The government had already initiated improvements to the system way before the audit started. The Auditor General confirmed that the system is tightened, the student visas have been examined, and improvements have taken place. Since 2025, 100% of referrals from institutions have been examined.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is unfair for the Liberal Prime Minister to force that minister to respond for all of the mistakes of her two predecessors, whom he has promoted, but it really is the illusion of the Prime Minister. He refuses to stand and answer questions today, although he is in Ottawa, on the fact that we have the only shrinking economy in the G7, the worst food price inflation in the G7, the worst household debt in the G7, the worst housing costs in the G7 and 100,000 jobs lost in the first two months of this year.

Will the Prime Minister have the courage to stand up now and defend his terrible Liberal track record?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will stand up every day and be proud of the Liberal track record in standing up for Canada and building Canada. What the Leader of the Opposition has been treated to today is a minister who is in control of this file and who has seen immigration levels and student visas go down. In fact, last year, for the first time ever, Canada dropped 100,000 from its population. Canada has one of the best immigration systems in the world. People are proud of it, people stand by it and—

[Translation]

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

* * *

JUSTICE

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are listening carefully to the arguments being presented to the Supreme Court. Some of them are excellent while others range between stupid and downright insulting.

There is still time. Will the government acknowledge that it should instruct its lawyers to withdraw their submission and ask them not to present arguments against Quebec?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

It is very important to clarify the federal government's position. We have both an opportunity and an obligation to defend the Constitution. It is possible to defend the French language and the Constitution at the same time.

The case has reached the Supreme Court of Canada. That is the appropriate forum for this discussion.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in 2019, the Quebec National Assembly passed a state secularism law. Like it or not, it is legitimate.

Oral Questions

Is the government trying to tell Quebecers that the federal Parliament is superior and has authority over the Quebec National Assembly? Does Liberal Canada think it is in charge of Quebec?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not really understand my colleague's question.

First, we need to keep one thing in mind. We live in a country governed by the rule of law, where groups and citizens can challenge laws in court. Ultimately, a case can go all the way to the Supreme Court. That is what is happening with Bill 21.

If the member is suggesting that the federal government would use the power of disallowance, that power has not been used since 1943. I was not even born yet. I am pretty sure he was not born yet either. We have absolutely no intention of using the power of disallowance.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would be lying if I said that I was surprised that he does not understand.

Pierre Elliott Trudeau's Canada forced a constitution on Quebec. Quebec did not sign it and has never accepted it. Today, we are being told that Ottawa is in charge according to this Constitution and its charter designed against Quebec.

By taking action against Quebec in the Supreme Court, is Liberal Canada telling Quebec that its national assembly must submit and that Quebec is a colony of Canada?

• (1430)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that Quebecers are extremely proud to live in a country governed by the rule of law, where laws can be challenged. That is what some Quebecers are doing before the Supreme Court right now, and we are going to let the Supreme Court do its job.

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[English]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we can add the Auditor General's name to the long list of people who know the immigration minister is not very good at her job. She already has no idea how to address the millions of expired visa holders in Canada, and a new report found that, of over 150,000 fraudulent immigration cases, less than 3% were investigated. There is no accountability for the fraudsters and no accountability for anyone who broke the system. People like her and the last two immigration ministers still get to sit in cabinet, so I have a question again: When are they being fired?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said a couple of times already this morning, since 2025, 100% of discrepancies that were referred by the educational institutions to IRCC received follow-ups. The high-risk ones were fully investigated. The results are clear. We welcome the recommendation. We will continue to improve our

systems, but the Auditor General made it clear that we had already started to implement all of those prior to her commencing the report.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we get it. They got follow-up emails, but even her Liberal colleagues are telling the CBC that she is not fit for the job. However, none of that seems to matter to the Liberal Prime Minister, because this is how it works in Liberal Ottawa. Step one is someone fails at their job. Step two is they get a promotion. Step three is they start the cycle again. That is what happened to the last immigration minister, who is the culture minister, and the one before that, who is the Attorney General. Based on how it all works here, I have a different question for the Prime Minister: When is he giving the current immigration minister her next promotion?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, step one is they have a 25-point lead in the polls. Step two is we have an election. Step three is a member loses his seat. Why is the Leader of the Opposition still in his seat?

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the Liberal Prime Minister, the Liberals' immigration crisis is worse than ever before. They are giving sweetheart sentences to non-citizen sexual assaulters instead of deporting them. Bogus asylum claimants are getting better health care than Canadians, and there are over 150,000 cases of student permit fraud. There are millions of non-citizens with no legal reason to be in Canada, but there is no accountability.

Three of the most incompetent and destructive immigration ministers in Canadian history are still in cabinet. Why?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected this government last year because they know that it has a plan. Our plan has results. It is not based on a script, as happens on the other side. Over the last year we have reduced temporary residents by more than half. We brought down the asylum seeker numbers by more than a third. We have refocused economic immigration like it has never been done before. Canadians can see that this government is focused and has a plan.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the plan. There were 150,000 cases of student permit fraud under the Liberal Prime Minister. They just bought an entire hotel for asylum claimants, with tax dollars. Bogus asylum claimants are getting better health care than Canadian seniors who have paid their whole life into the system, yet the immigration minister still has her job. Why?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here they go again. The immigration minister has brought a situation under control, a situation in which, last year, Canada's population actually declined. Canada's immigration system is admired, as our country is, the world over. The immigration minister is executing on a clear plan to bring down temporary resident numbers in this country. Shame on the member for picking on Ukrainian war refugees for coming to this country and getting treated.

• (1435)

[Translation]

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the Auditor General, tens of thousands of people entered the country and stayed here without proper screening, even though many cases had already been flagged.

The government is unable to say which international students are following the rules, which ones have left the country and which ones remain here illegally. In other words, the Liberals opened the door, but they no longer control who is in the country. It is time for the Prime Minister to take responsibility for promoting the immigration ministers who created this chaos.

When will he fire the three worst immigration ministers?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, temporary status is exactly that: temporary. This is nothing new. Under our plan, Canada has set clear targets for temporary residents and extensions. We are sticking to our plan, but our expectation is clear: When a permit expires, the permit holder must leave. We will maintain our targets and enforce our rules.

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has completely lost control of immigration over the last 10 years. The proof came yesterday in the Auditor General's report, which confirms that 150,000 of the people who applied for a student visa had been flagged as high-risk.

The government is only able to verify 4,000 cases. The rest have been forgotten, lost in the system. Right now, the Liberals cannot even say who has remained in the country without a permit.

When will the Prime Minister fire his Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and the two former immigration ministers for incompetence?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while we were cutting immigration numbers, the Leader of the Opposition was travelling the length and breadth of the country promising visas to anyone and everyone. It is ridiculous.

We do not need an Auditor General to verify that the Leader of the Opposition and many of his MPs are incompetent. It is absolutely ridiculous. It is proof of the opposition's irresponsibility. I think they should be ashamed of this situation. One simply has to watch the videos on Twitter.

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the Auditor General, the immigration system for international students is completely out of control.

In just one year, as many as 150,000 fraudulent international student applications may have been submitted, and less than 3% were investigated by the government. This is not complicated: The Liberals have completely lost control of immigration, but they continue to issue permits as though nothing is wrong. Quebeckers want an immigration system that respects the intake and integration capacity of our Quebec nation.

Can the Prime Minister explain why he is keeping ministers who are doing more harm than good?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government's plan is working. Our plan is to maintain control over immigration, with the knowledge that Canadians trust us to do so. We were able to reduce immigration levels. For the first time in nearly 50 years, we have managed to slow population growth in Canada.

We will also ensure that we reach an understanding with the Government of Quebec. In fact, the lieutenant reached an agreement with the Government of Quebec last week, because we must be able to not only keep immigration under control, but also support businesses that are facing labour shortages.

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JUSTICE

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, three provinces are joining Quebec in calling for more power over judicial appointments. Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan all want superior court judges to be chosen from their own list of candidates. They also want to have a say in who sits on the Supreme Court. Quebec and the provinces are fed up with seeing the Prime Minister's inner circle meddle in judicial appointments to reward Liberals.

Will this government finally listen to their demands?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

It is very important to understand that we have a process that is working today. We receive recommendations from an independent committee, and we have opportunities to discuss proposals with my provincial and territorial counterparts. This process is working and there is no need to change it. However, if my counterparts want to participate in the process, all they have to do is make a call. It is as simple as that.

• (1440)

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec and three provinces want to select their own judges because Ottawa's process has a red tinge.

People will remember the “Liberalist”, the partisan tool that helped Liberals identify other Liberals to appoint. Among the judges who had been political party donors, 76% were Liberals. In 2019, five of the six judges appointed in New Brunswick were a Liberal minister's neighbour, the wife of his brother-in-law, and three donors.

Will the government include Quebec and interested provinces in an impartial process?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we currently have an independent process that works and that benefits from recommendations from the legal affairs committee. It is important to ensure that every candidate is able to participate in the judicial system.

[English]

We are going to continue to work with provinces and territories to take their feedback into the process and make talented appointments. Regardless of the political history of the candidate, we want the best people for the job, and that is what the process is providing.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal incompetence in our immigration system keeps getting worse. Yesterday, the Auditor General revealed widespread fraud in the Liberals' international student program. Even worse, of the 150,000 suspected fraud cases, the department reviewed less than 3% of them. This is only part of the Liberal immigration mess.

Did the Liberal Prime Minister fix this? Not at all. Besides keeping his terrible minister in place, he promoted the last two incompetent ministers. They are raining down destruction as his justice minister and culture minister. Why are three of the most incompetent and destructive immigration ministers still in his cabinet?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that question has been asked several times and answered several times.

I wonder if that member, who was growing up dreaming of being in the Parliament of Canada, is now having a reckoning with the fact that he is being handed some question by a 24-year-old in the leader's office and is being required to stand up in the House of Commons and read it. That is what is going on here.

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unlike that member, I do not work for the PMO.

The truth is that the immigration minister is so incompetent that her own Liberal colleagues told CBC that she was not fit for the job. The mess created by the previous two is self-evident, yet Liberals are pushing ahead with hundreds of thousands of new foreign work permits with no plans to remove the millions of expiring foreign visa holders who remain in Canada. All while Canadian youth face 14% unemployment rates and non-permanent residents outnumber unemployed Canadians. This insanity has to stop.

Oral Questions

Why are three of the most incompetent and destructive immigration ministers in Canadian history still in his cabinet?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we quite literally just passed a bill, despite the obstruction of the Conservatives, that permits us to reduce the number of asylum seekers in Canada, just as we reduced the temporary population of Canada for the first time ever last year.

I would repeat to this member that I work for the people of Canada. He does not work for the Leader of the Opposition. He should stand up and read his own question, instead of the questions coming from 24-year-olds in the Leader of the Opposition's office.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 153,000 student visa cases were flagged for fraud, with less than 3% probed, and 92% of fraudsters were waved through for shots at work permits, residency and asylum. The Auditor General has exposed an immigration system so broken it cannot enforce its own rules. However, instead of fixing it, the Liberals are going to issue even more permits. Even Liberals say the immigration minister has to go. It is well past time to clean house.

Why is the Prime Minister still keeping not one, not two, but three failed immigration ministers in his cabinet?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, despite the conversation today about the impacts of immigration on youth unemployment, I will remind opposition members that even though they enjoy the benefits of something like the Canada summer jobs program, and they go out and meet those students, they vote against those programs time and time again.

It is a bit fraudulent, I would say, to meet youth in their ridings and celebrate that opportunity while voting against that very program in the House of Commons.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

● (1445)

The Speaker: There are a lot of epithets going around today, and I think we should maybe refrain from some of them.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Beauce.

*Oral Questions***REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the regions of Quebec have run out of patience. The Liberal government's inaction is costing them dearly. That is not according to me; it is according to mayors, business people and organizations in the Chaudière-Appalaches region who are here in Ottawa to sound the alarm. The Prime Minister promised to get rid of U.S. tariffs on steel and softwood lumber. He failed. He plunged the immigration system into total chaos. That is another failure. Now, jobs are being lost in every one of our regions.

How many more jobs will we have to lose before the Prime Minister keeps his promises to businesses in Beauce?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague referred to several cases related to sectors in Beauce that have been affected by U.S. tariffs. Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions will work with the member. That said, I would like him and his caucus to do more to condemn the U.S. tariffs, because the silence on that side speaks volumes.

Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, business representatives from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean are here in Ottawa because they cannot wait any longer. The Prime Minister was supposed to reach an agreement on aluminum tariffs with the Trump administration. One year later, there is nothing, nada. Meanwhile, 57,000 jobs were lost in Quebec in February. Workers in the aluminum industry are paying the price. Contracts are disappearing, uncertainty is setting in and the regions are suffering.

Why is the Prime Minister abandoning our workers and businesses in the regions?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will also have the opportunity to meet the same people my colleague will be meeting later today. I had the opportunity to work with him last week. Why? It is because we want to help workers in the aluminum industry. We know they are being hit with unjustified tariffs from the Trump administration. We are here to protect them. We are also in talks with several businesses in the region to provide support. We are having discussions and making decisions regarding major upcoming investments at Rio Tinto. We are there for Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

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[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Philip Earle (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on March 12, the Prime Minister was in Yellowknife to announce a historic plan to defend, build and transform the north, backed by more than \$40 billion in investment. This is a question I wrote myself. It is very important.

Can the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations please update the House on why this new plan is so critical to keeping the north moving forward?

Hon. Rebecca Alty (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for decades, communities across the Northwest

Territories have been clear: The Mackenzie Valley Highway is essential for their future. This project would finally connect remote communities, lower the cost of goods, unlock critical minerals and create real opportunities for local businesses. We are also advancing the Taltson hydroelectric project and the Arctic economic and security corridor with indigenous partners.

With more than \$40 billion in investments, we are building a stronger, more resilient and more connected north.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I spoke with a man in my riding who works at a local cabinet manufacturing shop. He works hard and pays his taxes, but his hours were cut because students with expired visas take his shifts for cash under the table. This is the direct result of a system the previous Liberal immigration minister let spiral out of control, where international students came without proper oversight and thousands overstayed their visits.

Will the Liberal Prime Minister admit that this mess started under his previous minister? Canadians, like my constituent, are now paying the price.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member alleges is hard to prove. What I will say is that what we can prove is that the investments we are making in workers, the investments we are making in major projects and the investments we are making in defence will lead to hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Do members know who is happy about that? It is the unions and the workers all across this country who are eagerly looking forward to building Canada strong under the Prime Minister.

● (1450)

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing today did not come from one mistake. It came from years of mismanagement by multiple Liberal immigration ministers. One opened the floodgates without oversight. Another failed to enforce the rules, and now the current minister is continuing with more permits, with millions of visas sitting expired or unchecked. Even Liberal MPs have said this minister is not up to the job.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Prime Minister this. Why are three of the most ineffective immigration ministers in Canadian history still sitting around the cabinet table while Canadians face the consequences of their failures?

*Oral Questions***AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many members on this side of the House have answered that question throughout this entire question period.

What I would say is that the number of repetitive questions from the Conservative benches are up. Do colleagues know what is down? The number of Conservative MPs sitting on that side of the House.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of disastrous Liberal policies, the immigration crisis is worse now than ever before. The Auditor General's latest findings revealed widespread fraud and dangerous gaps in the Liberals' oversight of foreign student work permits. In spite of this, the Liberals are pushing ahead with hundreds of thousands of new foreign work permits with no plan to remove the millions of existing expired foreign visa holders who remain in Canada. The Liberal Prime Minister needs to take responsibility for promoting the ministers who created this chaos.

Why are three of the most incompetent and destructive ministers in Canadian history still in his cabinet?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are not going to take advice on jobs and the economy from a leader who has never worked one day in it. On this side of the House, we are going to continue to build the strongest economy in the G7. At home, we have cut taxes for 22 million Canadians. Abroad, we are signing new trade deals. Diversifying markets will result in thousands of jobs and tens of billions of dollars in investment.

It is time for that leader and that party to stop the same questions, the same rhetoric, and help us build Canada strong.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, successive Liberal immigration ministers have destroyed our once-respected immigration system. Yesterday, the Auditor General revealed that the Liberals only reviewed 2.6% of 153,000 suspected cases of foreign student work permit fraud. The Liberals have allowed hundreds of IRGC agents into the country. Yesterday, the immigration minister practised the art of deflection. It seems that when it comes to the safety of Canadians, the Liberal ministers play a game of “Who, me? Yes, you! Not me! Then who?”

Why are some of the most incompetent and destructive ministers in Canadian history still in cabinet?

Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of young people, young people in this country are ready to work, and we are making sure that the opportunities are there for them. Through Canada summer jobs, we have tens of thousands of young people who are getting a job for the first time, and they are getting experience right in their communities. We are investing \$635 million in student work placements, so that post-secondary students can build their careers and jobs right here in this country.

That is what we are focused on. We are focused on youth who can gain the skills for the future to build Canada strong.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about some auto facts. A decade ago before the Liberals took office, Canadian auto producers produced two million vehicles a year. After a decade of Liberal incompetence, that went down to 1.2 million. Now it gets worse, unfortunately, because since the new Prime Minister has taken office, auto exports are down a further 54%. It is a decimation. We have lost the Brampton plant. We have lost Paccar. We have lost the BrightDrop facility. We have lost the third shift at Oshawa.

This is all since the Liberals announced their so-called new auto policy. When will they realized it is garbage and move to our tariff-free auto pact?

The Speaker: In the interest of fairness, when that word was used before by another member, I expressed disappointment, and I will do the same, because I want to be consistent. I just do not think that elevates us in the eyes of the public.

The hon. Minister of Industry.

● (1455)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about facts. The proposal by the Conservatives is too little, too late. Why? They did not even consult workers when doing it. They have no measures for workers in their auto proposals, and actually, Unifor, which represents workers, is against it. Our auto proposal is actually supported by the Conservative Premier of Ontario. Premier—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I will give the member a few extra seconds, because it was very loud on the left, like it can be very loud at the back on the right. It is a good way for the Chair to learn the names of ridings when members do that.

I will give the hon. minister a little more time.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Speaker, everyone is in favour of our auto strategy: the Conservative Premier of Ontario, Premier Ford, industry, unions, consumers, everyone, so why do they not get with the program and get on our side?

Oral Questions

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is actually shocking how uninformed the industry minister is when it comes to the auto strategy. They announced their auto strategy, and auto exports, since they announced it, are down 32%. This is a decimation. The reason this is happening is that there are tariffs on our autos at about 15%. The Liberals have been completely incapable of removing the tariffs. They have no plan to remove the tariffs. All they do is talk about something that might happen.

We have a plan that has been endorsed by the president of GM's Oshawa assembly plant and the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association. Why do they not get on board with the tariff-free auto pact?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, whatever that was, what the Conservatives forgot when thinking of our auto industry is actually 200,000 workers. Why? It is because they forgot about auto parts. Canada has been leading when it comes to auto parts. We have the three biggest companies in the world: Linamar, Martinrea and Magna. They forgot to protect the GM engine and transmission workers in Cambridge. They forgot the Ford engine auto workers in Windsor. They forgot the Honda engine workers in Alliston. They forgot. I could go on.

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have thrown in the towel on Canada's auto sector. Since 2015, auto production is down by half, exports are down by 53% and over 5,000 auto jobs are gone. The Conservatives' auto pact would restore tariff-free access to the U.S., doubling auto production here at home.

Instead of giving up on our auto sector, will the Liberals stand with their auto workers and support our motion to boost production here in Canada?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know nostalgia is not a strategy. We cannot go back to 1965, to a tariff-free auto pact.

What has Unifor said about the Conservatives' so-called plan? It said this plan cannot achieve its intended objectives, it is mathematically incorrect, and it may prevent potential future growth in our automotive industry. Unlike them, we actually sit down with the workers and the unions and consult them on the plans and strategies that we lead and move forward on implementing. We have offered liquidity support and financing for them to pivot, adjusted the availability standard for EVs, and much more.

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is what the president of Unifor Local 222 said, "Finally, a...plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers." Under the Liberal plan, production is down and exports are down, but job losses are up.

The Conservative plan would double auto production here in Canada. The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association supports our plan. The local unions support our plan. The auto worker on the assembly line supports our plan. Will the Liberals?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Re-

gions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has gone on every production line in the auto sector, and we have the support of workers. I know the Brampton facility is really important to my colleague, but what did the head of Unifor Canada, Lana Payne, say? She said the Conservatives' auto proposal is putting the Stellantis Brampton plant in jeopardy and also GM Ingersoll's future in jeopardy.

Why are they against the auto workers in Brampton and Ingersoll?

• (1500)

Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's auto sector has been gutted. Production was cut in half since 2015. Thousands of jobs are gone and exports have collapsed. Now, with U.S. tariffs hammering our workers, the Prime Minister has done nothing to stop them. Instead, he has accepted them as permanent while using Canadian tax dollars to subsidize foreign-built vehicles. That is not a plan. That is surrender.

The Conservatives have put forward a tariff-free auto pact to double production, restore our supply chains and bring jobs back to Canada. Will the Prime Minister stand up for Canadian workers and support our plan, or will he continue with the managed decline of the auto sector, just like the—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation.

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives want to close their eyes and hope that the tariffs just go away like it is 50 years ago. That is not a plan. That is a fantasy. Even The Globe and Mail said that the Conservatives' plan is straight from the 1960s. I am sorry, but nostalgia is not a plan.

We are investing in our auto workers. In fact, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario is investing in the parts manufacturers. I visited Kumi in Bradford and A. Berger Precision in Brampton West, which are Conservative ridings. Their voters support our plan. Why do the Conservatives not open their eyes, stop fantasizing and support our plan?

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, I know that parliamentarians across the alliance and countries on both sides of the Atlantic are looking to Canada for leadership in new cutting-edge defence technologies and innovation. It is critical that we rearm, rebuild and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces while building up Canadian industry.

Can the Minister of National Defence update the House on the critical investments we are making in Canada's defence industry?

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with Canada's first-ever defence industrial strategy, we are making major investments to build up Canada's domestic defence industry. Last week alone, we announced a \$900-million investment to support drone development and quantum technologies, a \$200-million investment in space launch capabilities in Atlantic Canada, a \$300-million contract for new modular assault rifles, and over \$1.4 billion for domestic ammunition production in Ontario and Quebec.

That is a plan. We are delivering. It is security, sovereignty and jobs.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General dropped another scathing report on the modernization of the pay system. This pay system is now costing taxpayers over \$4.2 billion, but the government fails to learn from the Phoenix fiasco, which is costing millions of dollars more for taxpayers every single year. The government has had an entire decade. When will it fix the system and stop wasting taxpayers' money?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, quite to the contrary, what the Auditor General has mentioned is that Canadians will get value for their money and that we are moving cautiously.

By the way, I want to thank the Auditor General for her report. We are accepting the three recommendation she has made to make sure that we get this right, because public servants deserve to have their exact pay, on time. That is exactly what we are moving forward on with this new pay system.

Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Well, Mr. Speaker, public servants are actually scared to retire, because they do not trust the pay system, and it is no wonder. There are over 230,000 transactions that are backlogged, and many of those are more than a year old. The government has had 10 years, and now it wants to fast-track the old system to the new system. When will they fix the system and give public servants confidence in both their paycheques and their retirement?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Did something happen? I do not know. I did not see anything.

Oral Questions

The hon. minister.

• (1505)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I missed something there, but I want to thank the member for her important question.

Public servants deserve to have their exact pay and on time. As far as the backlog is concerned, I am happy to report that we have reduced the backlog by 50% over the course of the last two years. We have learned from the mistakes over Phoenix that we need to move step by step in a cautious and a prudent way to make sure we get this transition right. We will get this transition right.

William Stevenson (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, "I'll always be worried [the government will] come looking for something...I can never trust the information I get from them". These are the words of a public servant who is afraid to retire because of a broken pay system the Liberal government refuses to fix. There are 133,000 employees in the same situation.

The Auditor General has confirmed that billions have been spent with no clear plan to fix the backlog, meaning that the new system would start with the same flawed data.

How can Canadians trust the government to fix the mess it has had a decade to address?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank the Auditor General for her report. We accept her recommendations. We are working on the three she has put forward, one of which is, of course, to make sure we reduce the backlog in a timely way, which is exactly what we are doing. We have reduced it by 50% over the course of the last two years.

As we are transitioning to a new pay system, we are making sure we are going step by step, in incremental pieces, so that we get this transition right.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as digital capabilities evolve, so do crimes and threats to our national security. For decades, law enforcement agencies across the country have asked for updated tools to combat crimes like extortion, child exploitation, auto theft and organized crime.

Can the Minister of Public Safety elaborate on the importance of the lawful access measures in Bill C-22 to keep Canadians safe?

Oral Questions

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me thank the member for Markham—Unionville for his hard work and advocacy.

As members are aware, law enforcement agencies across Canada have been asking for additional tools, the most important one being lawful access in order to ensure the safety and security of Canadians. Through Bill C-22, they would have the tools they need to combat childhood sexual exploitation, extortion, human trafficking, money laundering and more. I urge all members in the House to support Bill C-22 and ensure that law enforcement have the tools they need to keep Canadians safe.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the recreational fishing industry is facing a review of the salmon allocation policy that could destroy the industry and strip away Canada's historic principle of common property resource access.

The recreational fishing industry supports over 9,000 jobs, generates \$600 million in direct income and contributes over \$1.2 billion in GDP in British Columbia.

Will the minister commit to protecting historical access to common property resources for recreational fishing, or will the Liberals let yet another vital industry, coastal communities and a way of life on Vancouver Island die?

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the policy the member referenced was put in place in 1999, so of course we took six years, starting in 2018, to review the terms. There has been one year of consultations, which finished at the end of January. No decision has been made.

* * *

HOUSING

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the middle of a national housing crisis, the Liberals have quietly pulled funding for the Right Fit program, a program that directly connects wheelchair users with accessible housing. With just days' notice, funding is being cut as of April 1, leaving some of the most vulnerable Canadians, people with disabilities, without support, without housing options and without answers.

At a time when accessible housing is already in critically short supply, how can the housing minister justify abandoning wheelchair users in such a cruel manner and cutting the very programs designed to help them find a place to live?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are obviously very concerned about those who are homeless right now or utilizing the programs we put in place: Reaching Home and the unsheltered homelessness and encampments initiative. The unsheltered homelessness and encampments initiative was a two-year program. We have communicated very clearly the transition over to Reaching Home, which will continue for several more years.

We want to make sure we are providing the services. We are putting \$1 billion into supportive and transitional housing as well and working with provinces to make sure we can support people who need that housing the most.

* * *

● (1510)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the illegal war waged by Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu in the Middle East is inflicting devastating consequences on civilians, especially children. The humanitarian and environmental tolls are immense, and the economic fallout is global. It is driving up gas and fertilizer prices, disrupting critical supplies, like helium used in MRIs, and threatening pharmaceutical supply chains. Canadians who are already struggling with the cost of living will feel these impacts.

Will the Prime Minister ensure that Canada is not complicit with our arms exports in the killings of civilians and take a clear stance against this horrific war?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for raising this very important point. Canada is deeply concerned about the humanitarian toll the war is taking, and we are concerned about the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which is threatening global energy security and economic stability.

As we have emphasized, Canada's focus is on humanitarianism, de-escalation and ensuring the unimpeded flow of energy and supplies through the Strait of Hormuz. We urge all parties to de-escalate the conflict, and we will continue to work with the G7 and like-minded countries.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture and Food for the Province of British Columbia, and the Hon. Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure for the Province of British Columbia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the end of the member for Calgary Midnapore's question, just recently, she screamed "shut up" at another member across the aisle. I have to say it is disheartening. I know we get excited and there is heckling that goes on, but to use such unparliamentary language, especially when asking a question, seems really disrespectful in this place.

The Speaker: I did not hear it. I saw some commotion, but I did not hear it. Members can understand why. There is a lot of heckling going on and a lot of provocation. I would urge all members to tone that down, because it can produce reactions.

Again, I did not hear what transpired.

Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on that point of order, I will note that the member from Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas is repeatedly saying odious, disrespectful things to members on this side.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, when you fail to intervene, we have to stand up for ourselves. I would appreciate it if you would bring that member to order when he is acting the way he does on a repetitive, daily basis.

The Speaker: At this end, it is difficult to hear exactly what is being said way back in the corner, but I will concur that the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas is disruptive in question period. I will not argue with the member on that. I did not hear what was being said. I keep my ears open and I endeavour to react to such disturbances. They are coming from both sides, but I take the member's point about the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas.

The hon. member for Waterloo.

• (1515)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask for you to review some of the exchanges that have taken place during question period today. As per the Standing Orders, you will recognize that unparliamentary language, when it becomes personal, is not welcome in this chamber.

I can understand it when we are referring to legislation and to policies, but when we are referring to hon. members with certain terminology, which I am not going to repeat, I think that really should receive a ruling. There was a line of questioning today going after certain ministers, labelling them with certain adjectives and adverbs that are just not suitable or appropriate as per the Standing Orders.

I would just ask that you rewatch the excellent question period that we just had and let us know if it was suitable or not.

The Speaker: I do not need to rewatch it, because I heard some of those adjectives. I will ponder on what the member is saying.

Yes, we have a duty to uphold a minimum level of decorum. Sometimes, certain adjectives, as I have said before, really contain a provocation, which creates a reaction. That is unparliamentary,

Business of Supply

because anything that creates disruption is unparliamentary, regardless of whether a word is on a list in the big book or not.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—TARIFF-FREE AUTO PACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise in my place today to participate in the debate on our opposition motion, which calls on the federal government to support the Conservative plan to double automotive production through a tariff-free auto pact. This bold new policy offers a fresh take on a similar policy, embodied by the old auto pact rules that resulted in Canada's auto manufacturing growing from 700,000 units a year to three million by 1999.

This Conservative plan makes our goal clear. We seek to double auto production to two million vehicles a year, which are the same levels we had before the Liberal government took office 10 years ago. The viewers at home heard that right. Since the Liberals took office in 2015, auto production in Canada has been halved. In 2016, Canada built 2.3 million vehicles. Last year, that auto production was only 1.2 million. In only one year since the Prime Minister took office, Canada has lost 7.8% of its auto production. As output falls, jobs vanish.

In 2015, Canada's passenger vehicle and light truck assembly plants employed 32,700 people. By 2024, that number had dropped to 23,732. In the last year alone, since the Prime Minister took office, Canadians have watched in utter disbelief as 5,000 great-paying auto jobs disappeared and moved to the United States.

Under the federal Liberal government, Canada's auto industry has been in decline for 10 years and it is slipping away, with potentially irreparable damage being done to Canada's economy if no immediate federal action is taken.

We are seeing this decline in the Niagara region as the local GM powertrain facility in St. Catharines faces great uncertainty because it produces only one line of engines in a facility that is almost two million square feet in size. I am GM proud. I drive a GM vehicle, whose very engine was made in St. Catharines by Canadian GM workers. GM has been in business in St. Catharines since 1929. That is close to 100 years. I also worked at our local GM plant as a student during my university years. At that time, GM in St. Catharines had three plants, employing close to 10,000 workers with great-paying jobs.

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Today, our local GM footprint has been reduced to just one plant and a much smaller workforce of Unifor Local 199 members. There are roughly 450 active workers at the plant, with 200 laid off. As a Niagara area MP and as the member of Parliament for Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, I have a responsibility to represent the current and former GM workers who reside in the communities in my riding.

Last April, the Prime Minister ran a campaign promising an el-bows-up approach to Canada-U.S. trade relations. He promised to protect the auto sector. He committed to tabling a plan that would persuade the Americans to remove tariffs on Canadian goods. He promised to get tariffs removed by July 21, 2025, but this was all an illusion, as 246 days after July 21, 2025, American tariffs remain and Canada's auto manufacturers have been forced to pay Donald Trump close to \$2 billion. One year since the Liberals' election promises were made, they have been broken, while Canadian auto production continues its decline and Canadian auto job losses are piling up.

Rather than doing what he said he was going to do, the Liberal Prime Minister has decided to accept that American tariffs are permanent and he has declared a deep rupture with our largest trading partner, neighbour and ally. Worse, he has introduced a new EV policy and rebate that use Canadian tax dollars to subsidize the purchase of foreign-made automobiles. He is also allowing the import of 49,000 Chinese EV spy cars into this country after declaring a new world order with countries like China, the nation he said was our biggest security threat during the last federal election.

Canadian auto workers deserve stronger federal leadership. The last thing they want is imported Chinese EVs taking their jobs away even faster, or the federal government doubling down on a fantasy EV industry that does not exist without the demand, affordability or sufficient charging infrastructure in place. That is why our Conservative leader is stepping up to take initiative and demonstrate leadership.

● (1520)

While the Liberals have decided to accept that American tariffs are permanent and declare a deep rupture with our largest trading partner, Conservatives are proposing policy ideas to make it easier to build and buy Canadian by:

...removing the GST on all Canadian-made vehicles, ending counterproductive Liberal EV mandates and [subsidies], and harmonizing tailpipe emissions reductions with our North American partners;

...bringing home production...by implementing a rule where for every car produced in Canada, the same manufacturer would get to sell a car in Canada, duty-free, from a CUSMA partner, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, similar to the 1965 Canada-US Auto Pact; [and]

...protecting North American supply chains by maintaining the minimum 75% North American content and existing CUSMA rules on origin....

Conservatives believe it is possible to get a North American free trade agreement for the auto sector. The Liberals have given up and think that somehow, when it has never happened before, European and Asian EV sales will materialize and make up for the decline that will happen because of the U.S. tariffs. What the Liberal government is proposing is a fallacy. The Liberals' plan includes exporting EVs to Europe. Simply put, more vehicles were stolen in

Canada last year, including the the justice minister's vehicle, than were exported to countries in Europe.

We have a plan to get tariff-free access to the United States. It would boost auto production. It is supported by Unifor Local 222, which said, "Finally, a common sense plan" to restore auto production. Why can the Liberal government not get on board with us and support our common-sense proposals?

Our policy approach would restore manufacturing balance for both Canada and the U.S., thus making a duty-free agreement not only possible, but also beneficial for both countries. For Canada, that would mean increased production of 500,000 to 800,000 units to get North American duty-free access. In addition to this, removal of the GST, a 5% pricing cut, adds up to \$30,000 new sales a year, which increases demand and production by the same amount. We forecast that the current production will rise from 1.2 million to two million within a decade.

Just today, I met with Unifor representatives who told me that buying Canadian, along with sell here, build here policies, are very important to them. That is what this policy encourages. It is a common-sense plan to protect the livelihoods of thousands of hard-working Ontario auto workers. The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association saw the benefit of our policy proposal when it stated, "North American integration has underpinned Canada's auto industry for over 60 years". This plan recognizes that reality.

Conservatives will not sit idly by as our proud Canadian auto industry is hollowed out and lost due to Liberal inaction. We are stepping up, demonstrating federal leadership and offering real solutions to save the jobs of our great Canadian auto workers. They deserve it.

● (1525)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting how the Conservatives came up with this plan, which I would ultimately argue, is not realistic.

The Liberal plan talks about putting into action literally \$3 billion to accelerate investment in Canada's auto manufacturing industry. I have listened to the Conservatives, and I pose this question: Does the Conservative Party of Canada support that initiative? Does it support levelling the field by having countertariffs on auto imports coming from the U.S.A.?

Business of Supply

Tony Baldinelli: Mr. Speaker, what we do not support is the Liberals' failed EV policy, which they are implementing. They fail to realize that 90% of the autos that are produced in this country are shipped to the United States. The success of the auto industry in Canada was based on the regulatory harmony that existed with our largest trading partner and customer for Canadian-made autos, the United States.

The fantasy and the fallacy that the Liberals continue to promote about producing EVs will simply not work. Do members know that, just this year alone, GM had an EV writeoff of \$7.6 billion, Honda wrote off \$15.7 billion, Ford wrote off \$19.5 billion and Stellantis wrote off \$27 billion? That is almost \$70 billion. The EV policy they are promoting is only going to hurt Canadian auto workers.

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his passionate concern about the auto sector. We have seen, at Stellantis in Brampton, 3,000 workers laid off. I would like to ask the member a question about how he thinks our tariff-free auto pact would improve things and bring the jobs that we are waiting for and that our auto sector is waiting for. Also, could he emphasize how Liberal policies have failed the auto sector?

Tony Baldinelli: Mr. Speaker, there is the notion that Stellantis's failure is partly to be blamed on the government and its failed EV policies. Again, Stellantis has written off \$27 billion because of this fallacy of an EV mandate that the Liberals have put in place instead of recognizing that the market should determine what the sales levels in autos should be. Why not go back?

We met with Unifor today, and the members I met with are talking about buy Canadian, and sell here, build here policies, which we need to promote and encourage. That is what our auto pact plan would do. It would say that, if someone wants to sell a vehicle here, they have to build it here, and that would return jobs to Canadian auto workers all throughout southern Ontario.

• (1530)

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I will not be voting for the motion before us today, but I do agree with the hon. member that we need to find ways to ensure that Canadian industries are put first and that we focus on Canada. I would like to ask the hon. member if he has looked at the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board. Of the \$80 billion in our pension plan investments, there is no consideration at all for investing in Canada. There is no priority for Canadian investments. In fact, most of those investments go to other countries, particularly the United States.

Tony Baldinelli: Mr. Speaker, through our policy on this Canadian auto pact, we are talking about a policy to buy Canadian, sell here and build here. It only makes sense. We want to encourage those who want to produce, such as the big three automakers.

General Motors has been in my community since 1929. They have invested and grown with this community. They have been in this community for almost 100 years. I want to ensure, through the policy we are promoting, that General Motors can be in our community for another 100 years, employing Canadians and providing good-paying jobs.

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to rise today to debate the opposition day motion in relation a really important subject, the Canadian auto industry.

I will be sharing my time this afternoon with the hon. member for Mississauga—Lakeshore.

As I was saying, I think it is important that we have this conversation. I welcome it, and the government certainly welcomes it, because we have been deeply focused on what comes next and how we can support the workers, industry and communities that are impacted by the auto sector.

I know a lot of the debate in the chamber today will be about communities in Ontario, southwestern Ontario in particular, and perhaps communities in Quebec, but the auto industry touches all elements of our country. I think about my own communities in Kings—Hants, where Michelin manufactures component parts of vehicles. I believe it employs close to 3,500 workers in Nova Scotia. The supply chain for the auto sector exists all across this country, but it, of course, is heavily concentrated in Ontario and Quebec.

I am going to start by highlighting a few things. I was surprised that the opposition took this amount of time to give, to call them compelling would be too generous but, some thoughts on the auto industry. I will point to elements that I think are not bad public policy, and elements that I think are so unrealistic they are not worth the paper they are written on. It is surprising that it took the Conservatives this long to be able to get to this point. It has been noted in debate, and it was noted in question period, that the Conservatives seemingly did not do much engagement with unionized labour in this country about their vision and how their plan would connect and support workers, or not support workers.

We heard the Minister of Industry during question period talk about how there is deep concern within Unifor and some of the major unionized workforce in the country that the Conservative plan would actually inadvertently impact and hurt workers in what is already a difficult and delicate time. The government is working to be able to address that.

I thought one of the most compelling things the Minister of Industry said in question period was that there is nothing in the opposition day motion, or the proposed plan, about the auto parts sector. Assembly is important and that matters, but as the minister highlighted, Linamar, Magna and Martin are three major auto parts producers in the country. There is no mention in the Conservative strategy about what we are doing to support that element of the supply chain, which also has extremely important jobs.

Business of Supply

I do want to take a moment, and if Canadians at home have not necessarily heard from the government already on this, they deserve to hear exactly what the five pillars are, which the government launched well over a month ago now. The government has actually put in place a Canadian auto strategy, recognizing the moment that we are in, recognizing that we have to both protect Canadian jobs and protect and incentivize the industrial build-out. Those would certainly be some areas of principle in which I think we could find agreement with the opposition.

I want to start by saying that the first pillar is exactly that. It is to boost domestic manufacturing. That is somewhat tied to the strategic response fund. It is \$3 billion to incentivize and draw investment into the country. There is a number of tax incentives. Also, what the Conservatives have not mentioned today in debate is the remission order. The way in which the government is using the remission order for companies that are continuing to produce in Canada, signalling future investment and continuing the cross-border collaboration that has existed for quite some time, is that the remission order is functioning, in some way, on the principles of what they are talking about vis-à-vis the 1965 auto pact, which not enough people in this debate today have highlighted.

The auto pact was built in an environment where there was no foreign importation of vehicles whatsoever. It was a true closed-loop system. That no longer exists. There are 500,000 foreign-produced vehicles imported into Canada every single year. We can close our eyes and pretend it is 1965. It feels like it was a golden era. We should continue to make the case, and we should continue to work through CUSMA and our North American trading partners, to continue to promote an auto industry that has been mutually beneficial for communities in all three countries, frankly, Canada, Mexico and the United States.

● (1535)

Therefore, yes, in that way we agree, but the idea that we are going to have a tit-for-tat auto policy is probably even against the provisions of the existing trade agreement we are in.

It is a great idea in principle to remove the GST on Canadian-built vehicles. However, we are going to have something to answer for vis-a-vis the conversation right now with the United States around that: about whether this could be seen as reciprocity in terms of some of the measures the U.S. has put in place and whether it could actually exacerbate the problem as we try to make a case to the U.S. administration that the tariffs it has unjustly imposed on the Canadian industry are counterintuitive not only to the benefit of American communities but also to Canadian communities and to the close integration we have enjoyed. There is no level of nuance from the opposition benches about whether removing that GST would even be compliant.

The government of course has said we should boost domestic manufacturing and focus on reworking environmental policy, while at the same time putting incentives to encourage the uptake of plug-in hybrids and electric vehicles.

The hon. member who spoke before me talked about keeping the auto industry in his communities. I know how important that is, but he must recognize that globally right now, EV sales are doubling year over year. There is a massive uptake in countries like Norway,

a Scandinavian country with a similar climate to Canada's. Almost 99% of new vehicles are EVs. The global industry is going in this direction, and we have a decision to make about whether or not we are going to get serious about trying to meet that need.

I represent a rural constituency. For my constituents, battery electric vehicles are probably quite unrealistic for many of them in the short term. Plug-in hybrids are a much more reasonable pathway. They make sense because they can lower gas bills. In an environment where we are seeing the fallout from the war in the Middle East right now, that is important. Obviously they have some environmental benefit as well, and they are also convenient for consumers.

This is the direction in which we are going. The government is walking a line through its remission order to say to companies selling and importing cars into Canada that if they choose to import a higher volume than their historical average, they are going to face the remission penalty and the countertariffs that Canada has put in place on the United States.

That is functioning as an incentive to continue production and enhance production where companies are selling brands of vehicles that are doing well in this country. In that North American context, there are principles within the quasi-Conservative plan that are already being met by the remission order, principles that the government has laid out. I have heard nothing from the opposition benches to at least acknowledge that point.

I think it is also interesting that we heard the last member talk about spy cars. The geopolitics of the world are such right now that when I was in the United Kingdom recently, I saw Chinese EVs on the road. When I was in Europe, what did I see? I saw Chinese EVs on the road. I was just in the Caribbean with my wife, and the EVs are there. I guess the hon. member is making the assertion that our allied countries within NATO and within the G7, like London and Europe, are letting spy cars drive around their communities. Is that the assertion the Conservative Party makes?

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to taking the member's question. Maybe the hon. member can rise in his place and tell me if he thinks that London, Europe and our other allies have no measures to be able to do it. We actually have a solution. It is QNX in this country. We have an ability to manage this as it relates to the 49,000 EVs from China on the import.

Having been on the front lines of that negotiation, I can say that it is a small, managed amount. It is working to lead to a joint venture investment. Companies are already investing in the member's home province. I guess he should rise and tell us if he believes that a joint venture format with a majority Canadian-owned pathway is bad for the country. We have seen other examples where it has worked. At the end of the day, that is the pathway that we think we can continue to work on within the North American context.

At the same time, we have to be able to look at what other opportunities are available. The member should go have a chat with all his prairie colleagues on the other side, because I guess he is suggesting that we ought to not do anything on agriculture for our farmers in this country. How about the seafood harvesters from Atlantic Canada? Should we just tell them that they ought to not have market access to the largest consumer market in the world? The opposition day motion would say that.

I think the Conservatives from Saskatchewan should have something to say to their colleagues who are suggesting that this would be bad public policy. The Premier of Saskatchewan does not agree, the Premier of Alberta does not agree and farmers across this country do not agree.

• (1540)

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do know a bit about the automotive industry. I was part of the automotive industry when it North Americanized. I was in charge of Dow automotive's 58 plants across the globe.

I have heard a lot of criticism from the Liberal benches today about our plan to create automotive job growth here in Canada, but it has been crickets about any plan on their side to create growth. Could they elaborate?

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I certainly recognize the hon. member's private sector experience before joining this place, and that is an attribute for the House.

There is a pathway to be able to encourage investment in this country. There is a focus on being able to build out electric vehicles in the country to support workers. Again, respectfully, that is something I did not see in the Conservative position. There is nothing about what we are doing to support Canadian workers who are being impacted in this moment in the unjust manner, I hope she would agree, that we are seeing from the U.S. administration.

With all the member's private sector experience, she must be concerned that the GST removal would infuriate and further complicate the North American supply chain. Maybe at some point today she can address that in the House.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today effectively represents federalism as we know it. The Conservatives are showing us their concern for the auto sector and for the oil and gas sector. However, apart from the Bloc Québécois, no one in the House ever takes advantage of an opposition day to talk about economic sectors that Quebec has a stake in. The economic sectors most affected by tariffs right now are aluminum and softwood lumber, both of which are very important to Quebec.

Business of Supply

What I am seeing from the Conservatives is an attempt to remove the only incentive of value to Quebec society, namely the EV incentive, to create a one-size-fits-all measure that works for Ontario's auto sector. I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about the Conservatives' insensitivity to Quebec's economic reality.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I agree with some of my hon. colleague's comments. However, with all due respect, I disagree with the assertion that, with the exception of the Bloc Québécois, no other members are fighting for Quebec. We have 44 Liberal members from Quebec who are always fighting for the interests of the province of Quebec within the federation, every day, every week and every month.

I agree on the importance of the softwood lumber sector. It is very important in Nova Scotia and in my riding. I also recognize the importance of the aluminum sector. We have a strategy and initiatives to help workers in Quebec and across Canada who are affected by U.S. tariffs, and I have full confidence in the work that our colleagues here in the House of Commons are doing regarding issues facing Quebec.

• (1545)

[*English*]

Chi Nguyen (Spadina—Harbourfront, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my riding has a lot of multi-unit residential buildings, and I am wondering if my colleague could talk a bit about how we are looking toward the future and to future-proofing the auto sector by thinking about what we need in terms of moving toward electrification.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague represents a very urban riding in Spadina, in the Toronto area, and I represent a rural constituency. The lived realities for Canadians are going to be different.

The good news is that the government is putting forward \$1.5 billion to help support additional charging infrastructure across the country. In my constituency, that is probably going to be more focused on plug-in hybrids and the types of applicability there. For the member's constituents, who may not be driving longer distances to work or around the city, battery electric vehicles are probably going to be the type of vehicle that is going to be the future, that is going to be smart in terms of consumer perspective, and will also be the type of infrastructure that I know she will be advocating for her constituents, to build out the network in her constituency in Toronto.

Charles Sousa (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the future of Canada's automotive industry and how the government is working to protect the industry and Canadian workers.

Business of Supply

Canada's automotive sector has long been and remains a cornerstone of our economy. It has defined communities, strengthened our middle class and anchored Canada as a trusted partner in global manufacturing, while supporting hundreds of thousands of additional jobs across supply chains right across the country, including in my riding of Mississauga—Lakeshore.

I am proud to represent many hard-working members of Unifor Local 707 from the Ford assembly complex. Safeguarding local economies like mine is exactly why the Government of Canada has reacted quickly in the face of unjustified U.S. tariffs on vehicles.

Moreover, we have demonstrated that we are here to protect Canadian workers. When Stellantis and GM announced that they were moving some of their production to the United States, we immediately took action to hold both companies accountable. The Government of Canada has made clear that these decisions are unacceptable and that Canada expects the company to honour the commitments it made to Canada, Ontario and the union.

However, it appears that the Conservatives could not care less about working with labour unions. Their leader's proposal was developed without input from auto workers, and it lacks a single measure to support auto workers. How can Conservatives claim to protect Canadian workers when they do not even listen to them? Unifor has been clear that the Conservatives' so-called policy would jeopardize long-term stability and the future of the Brampton and Ingersoll assembly plants. Members heard that right. The Conservatives want us to adopt a policy that would discourage manufacturers from allocating new work to these Ontario plants.

Unlike the Conservatives, our government worked hand-in-hand with labour unions, with industry experts and with other levels of government to develop an auto strategy that is focused on the future of our auto industry, not one that is stuck in the past. Canadians were clear last April that we need to work urgently to pursue new trade deals, diversify our economy, protect industry and stand up to unjust and illegal tariffs. To that end, on February 5, 2026, we announced Canada's new automotive strategy to secure domestic manufacturing, support innovation, and position Canada to become a leader in electric vehicle production.

The strategy includes a commitment to allocate \$3 billion from the strategic response fund and another \$100 million from the regional tariff response initiative to help the industry adapt, grow and diversify. We will also establish a comprehensive trade regime to drive the competitiveness of the auto sector. This will be achieved in part by strengthening Canada's automotive duty remissions framework to more strategically reinforce domestic production and attract new investment.

Some people may know that I am familiar with Ontario's economy. Throughout my career, I have been privileged to meet Ontarians from every corner of the province. I have worked with many proud Windsorites who were champions for Windsor's auto sector, including Ford's engine manufacturing plants. What does Windsor get in exchange for two Conservative MPs? It gets an auto proposal that does not even recognize engine manufacturing. GM workers in Cambridge, Magna workers in Aurora, Honda workers in Alliston and Martinrea workers in Vaughan are all parts manufacturers, all left behind by their Conservative MPs.

I agree with Unifor Local 200's leadership, who said that the Leader of the Opposition did not bother to do his homework.

We all recognize that the automotive sector has been built on nation-to-nation collaboration. I was in D.C. recently, and I heard from both Democrats and Republicans that the North American auto industry succeeds when our integrated supply chains are strong and when we compete globally. Canada has maintained a long and successful history of partnership with the U.S. and Mexico, as well as with Japan, to establish its automotive manufacturing footprint, but these are not conventional times. Canada must seize this generational opportunity to transform our auto sector from one that is reliant on a single trading partner to one that is a global leader in the vehicles of the future.

• (1550)

Recently, Canada has signed new agreements with Japan, Germany and South Korea to bolster auto manufacturing in Canada, including electric vehicles and a battery supply chain, and Canada has what the world wants. From China and the Indo-Pacific to the G7, Canada has entered a new era of global auto partnerships. This means new markets, new business and new jobs for Canadians, all grounded in building our economy and delivering affordable options for Canadian consumers.

Canada is well positioned to attract new investments and diversify export markets by leveraging its free trade agreements, which span 51 countries and provide access to more than 1.5 billion consumers. Priority will be given to attracting new entrants that are leaders in EV manufacturing and connected vehicle technologies to strengthen the sector's resilience. Through the strategic response fund, we are supporting car companies to export more Canadian-made cars to non-U.S. markets like Europe and the Middle East. We are also securing key investments that will drive new opportunities in Canadian auto manufacturing and create new resilient jobs in the auto and battery sector.

Business of Supply

Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, this side of the House does not ignore foreign threats to dismantle Canadian auto manufacturing. During a rupture in the global trading system, Canadians know that nostalgia is not a strategy. While the Leader of the Opposition is banking on wishes and prayers to get Washington to reverse tariffs, we are focused on real action to build a better future to secure and grow the industry that supports 500,000 Canadian jobs.

The actions we take now will have a lasting impact on Canada's auto industry. By safeguarding the industry and incentivizing vehicle manufacturers to build here, we are helping to enhance our productivity and transform Canada's automotive industry to compete and win in a world where the future of autos is electric, connected and globally diversified.

I want to reiterate that the Conservative proposal was developed without input from auto workers, lacks a single measure to support auto workers and would disincentivize new work going to the Brampton and Ingersoll plants. That is not smart policy-making. It is political posturing. Our government will continue to focus on investing in those who invest in Canada and building Canada strong with Canadian auto workers.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, forgive me if I do not take advice from the former finance minister of Ontario. For a decade before his current job, he watched Ontario's auto sector decline, so it has been two decades of decline with this member.

Here is my question to the hon. member: Part of their supposed strategy is exports to non-U.S. destinations. I have seen no evidence from the government that this is a realistic objective. In fact, we export nearly zero, a de minimis number of cars, to non-U.S. and non-Mexican destinations. Where is the evidence that customers around the world are going to wake up and decide to import Canadian cars? I do not see any evidence of that. Does he have anything that he can show us on that?

● (1555)

Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, the member reminds us that when I was finance minister, we bailed out and supported the auto industry in Windsor. If it were not for Ontario's participation, against the wishes of the Conservatives, they would have faltered. We stood by the Canadian auto workers, we stood by the industry and we safeguarded those jobs and those companies. We will continue to do so.

Foreign direct investment was at its peak when I was there to try to attract that investment. The members opposite worked against those auto workers, and they continue to do so now with a plan that does not make any sense for the benefit of those workers,

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments because it has been pointed out that the core of the Tory plan, the Conservative plan, is to go back to the sixties. That was when we had American Motors, Chrysler, GM and Ford. Today, the biggest manufacturers of cars here in Canada are actually Honda and Toyota. If it were up to the Conservative Party, they would not exist in Canada today.

I am wondering if my friend could just provide his thoughts on how important it is that we modernize and we look at ways we can

grow our industry, which does not necessarily mean going back to the 1960s.

Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, it is important that Canada stays at the forefront of industry and innovation. It is important that we continue to attract investment because we are trusted partners. It is important that we look at the auto sector in a broader scope. It is important that we look to the future of auto. We do not pick winners and losers. They are picking losers. We need to ensure that those competitors who are attracted to Canada recognize that we are an opportunity to provide services to the rest of the world. Canada is broadening its reach with other trading partners because of that very fact. The auto sector will thrive and succeed if we work collaboratively for their benefit and if we look and point to the issues that will prevent and provide future benefit in the long term, not yesterday's viewpoint.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, conversations about the auto industry are a bit triggering in Quebec. I would like to remind my colleague about what happened during the 2008 financial crisis. The federal government paid out \$10 billion, and we know that about \$6 billion of that became a direct subsidy to the auto industry. I would like my colleague to comment further on that.

Earlier, I talked about the double standard. The Conservatives want to talk about industrial sectors in the rest of Canada, such as the oil and auto sectors, but they do not want to talk about sectors that are concentrated in Quebec, such as aluminum and softwood lumber, which are currently the most-tariffed sectors.

Does my colleague agree that there is a double standard when it comes to Quebec's economic sectors?

[English]

Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I agree that every sector of our economy from coast to coast to coast matters. Canada united and supporting every industry throughout the country is important, which includes, of course, those very same companies in Quebec. When the auto sector took a dive in 2008, the Ontario government and the federal government at the time stepped in to provide that support. Had it not been for that, the rest of the country would have faltered too. We needed to support the industry, just as we need to support aluminum, forestry, aerospace and industries all across, including oil and gas, where we are one of the largest. We will continue to do so.

Business of Supply

In fact, one of the things I was trying to do at the time was work with every province with a capital co-operative securities regulatory system to enable all those companies to compete more effectively without the pressures of other parts of Canada's interference. We need to work collaboratively. We support every sector, Quebec included.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be back home here in Canada. I just got back from touring some of the great U.S. states and metropolises where our American partners buy our goods and services and where we trade for the benefit of both our peoples.

Before I left, I gave a speech in Toronto in which I laid out a detailed plan for restoring tariff-free free trade with our largest international market. My goal is one shared by all Conservatives: a Canada that is affordable and strong, where we are the master of our own house.

• (1600)

[English]

I have to say it is good to be home after a 12-day journey across the United States, visiting some of the great metropolises and states south of the border, pitching Canada, fighting for tariff-free trade, arguing on behalf of our workers and restoring our long-standing partnership with our greatest trade partner.

That journey took me to Detroit, where I championed auto workers, coming back with a clear proposal for a tariff-free auto pact. Then it was on to Houston, where I championed our energy sector. Then I went on to meet with Governor Abbott in the great capital of Austin, where I found a wonderful friend of Canada who wants to buy even more of our energy if we can get it out of the ground and down. Of course, I was very pleased to speak to Americans to fight for tariff-free trade and to defend Canadian sovereignty on the biggest podcast in the world with the great Joe Rogan. Then, of course, it was on to New York, where I championed our overall economy with some of the greatest leaders in finance.

In all of those places, I am happy to report that I found friends among Americans, people who want to reopen trade across tariff-free borders along the longest undefended border in the history of the world. I found that the American people love Canada and know that trade with us is in their national interest. They understand that buying Canadian goods lowers Americans' cost of living and feeds their supply chains. It adds paycheques to their pockets while enriching us both.

They understand that Canada has leverage, like being the second-biggest customer to the United States, having 10 of the 12 NATO-defined national defence critical minerals and having the biggest land mass, biggest seas and biggest airspace in the entire hemisphere, all essential to American security. Americans understand that it is in our interest as a continent for our two separate countries, while they maintain their sovereignty, to work collaboratively to make us both richer, stronger and safer.

I shall say that I kept the Prime Minister well informed of all these developments while I was abroad. I look forward to meeting with him to report on my findings, to compare notes and to offer

recommendations on how Canada can become stronger at home and more affordable at home, so that we have the leverage abroad to achieve tariff-free trade with our American partners. Though I made a point of not criticizing the Prime Minister on foreign soil, I return here where it is precisely my constitutional obligation to do just that, not out of any partisan interest but out of an interest in pursuing the truth.

Now, after a year of the Prime Minister's being in office on the promise that he would negotiate a win with the United States, it is a good time to take an inventory of where we are. A year into the Liberal Prime Minister's term, after he won on his famous promise to negotiate a win, much has been said but not much has been done. There have been many fine speeches and signing ceremonies of so-called MOUs, which are, in effect, unenforceable documents that commit bureaucrats to form committees and hold international meetings to discuss future plans that may or may not one day be materialized. There have been handshakes and press conferences, announcements of grand goals and of things that will happen somewhere, someplace down the road, but nothing tangible.

As Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage", and the Prime Minister has been great at the stagecraft, but what about the statecraft? He promised he would give us the fastest-growing economy in the G7. We now have the only shrinking economy in the G7. He promised affordable food. We have the most food inflation in the G7. He promised that we would have a solid economy. We now have the worst housing costs and the highest household debt in the G7, and the second-highest unemployment in that group. He said he would negotiate a win with the President. Here we are today, a year later, with no win and no deal. Tariffs on aluminum and steel have doubled, and on Canadian lumber they have tripled.

He promised that he would build projects with record speed, yet his Major Projects Office, which the House rushed into existence in five days back in June because the Prime Minister said it was an emergency, has still not approved a single project of any kind almost a year later. Not a single pipeline has been approved. When it comes to building homes, he promised he would double homebuilding. His own housing agency projects that will drop by 15%. There has been no serious tax reform other than to rename the carbon tax to the so-called clean fuel standard, which applies to more goods and will rise to the same level. Of course, there remain interprovincial trade barriers, despite the fact the Prime Minister promised that we would have one unified Canadian economy by Canada Day of last year.

Business of Supply

Speaking of free trade, he has not concluded a single free trade agreement since taking office, trying only to take credit for a small deal that his predecessor, Justin Trudeau, signed with Indonesia, an agreement that will amount to about three hours of Canada's GDP.

• (1605)

[*Translation*]

It has now been a year since this Liberal Prime Minister took office. Reality has collided with illusion. The deficit has doubled, and our economy is the only one in the G7 to have contracted. We have the worst food inflation, the highest housing costs, the worst household debt and the second-worst unemployment rate in the G7, plus a 15% decline in housing construction. Not a single pipeline has been approved. No projects have been approved by his new office, which wields exceptional and unprecedented powers. Despite his promise to negotiate a victory and reach an agreement by July 21, 2025, there is still no victory or agreement, and U.S. tariffs have doubled on Canadian products and tripled on softwood lumber.

[*English*]

For all the illusions about the Prime Minister's negotiating skills and statecraft, what really do we have to show a year after? What we are increasingly seeing is that American tariffs have doubled on Canadian steel and aluminum and tripled on Canadian lumber since the Prime Minister promised he would get rid of them. Credentials are not competence. Stagecraft is not statecraft. Illusions are not reality.

Speaking of trade with the United States, Canadians know a lot more about my approach than they do about the Prime Minister's. I want everyone to stop and think about this for a second. I laid out a very detailed plan of both my demands, eliminating all tariffs on Canadian goods, and the leverage I would use to get those demands. I would like to give the House of Commons a pop quiz. What do we really know about the Prime Minister's plan to get tariffs lifted with the U.S.? What do we really know? We know nothing. Is he even determined to get those tariffs lifted? In fact, Liberal ministers have suggested it might now be impossible to do that. Is it still his negotiating bottom line to have those tariffs removed, and if so, what is he planning to offer in exchange for getting them lifted? We do not know.

Does his proposed rupture with the U.S. mean he does not want a renewed CUSMA? We do not know. If he does intend to renew CUSMA, does he intend to try to get it renewed exactly as it is, with small changes, or a complete overhaul? Has anybody heard him answer that question? I am not aware of him telling anyone that. When was the last serious negotiation? We know the Mexicans are negotiating. They are at the table. Has he or anyone in his cabinet actually been at the negotiating table in the last four months?

I do not mean friendly handshakes, introductions and an exchange of jokes and pleasantries with the minister responsible for Canada-U.S. affairs, who is a man with a great, gregarious personality indeed. I mean actual negotiations. Are they even happening? Has anyone in the press actually asked the Prime Minister if we are even negotiating, given that we are literally days away from the renewal date of our single biggest trade agreement? Nobody knows. He said, "Who cares?"

Indeed, I think Canadians care.

Does he accept that U.S. tariffs on aluminum, steel, autos and lumber are permanent? We do not know. We have no idea when the talks will start or when they will end. We have heard him use some very interesting rhetoric, colourful rhetoric, such as that he wants to have a rupture with our single biggest customer, on whom 2.3 million Canadian jobs depend. If he is going to rupture 2.3 million jobs, how is he going to replace them? How will those workers pay their bills? How will we replace those jobs?

These are the types of questions that slogans like "rupture", "elbows up" and "Canada strong" do not answer. While the Prime Minister gives wonderful speeches that make for very interesting listening, and we can admire him as a wordsmith, those speeches do not pay mortgages or put food on the table for 2.3 million people.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister cannot seem to make up his mind about how things are going. On the one hand, he says the reason we have the only shrinking economy in the G7 is that the tariffs are so bad. On the other, he says there is no need to rush into solving this problem, because the deal is so good. Which is it? He cannot, on the one hand, say that he has gotten us an excellent deal on tariffs and then, on the other, say that the tariffs are so horrendous that it is the very reason why we have the worst economy in the G7. It cannot be both. He has to make up his mind.

Meanwhile, his ministers make patently ridiculous excuses about foreign matters to defend their domestic failures, like the housing minister claiming that the war in Iran had caused housing costs to double over the last decade. I will give members a spoiler alert. We do not import houses or land from Iran. We never have. The housing bubble inflated well before this war even started, which makes all of us wonder if the Liberal Prime Minister and his government are simply using these foreign problems as excuses for his very real domestic failures, given that everything was bad under his predecessor, Justin Trudeau, and has gotten much worse since he became Prime Minister, promising to fix it all.

We all have to ask: How long will the Prime Minister use the trade dispute and other foreign matters as a convenient all-purpose excuse for causing inflation, debt and joblessness here at home?

Business of Supply

What about his auto plan? Canada needs a strong auto sector. We need a strong auto sector that, according to the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, is responsible for 105,000 direct jobs and a total of 600,000 jobs when we include indirect ones at places like the 700 auto parts suppliers, the 400 connected autonomous and smart vehicle firms, and the 500 tool and die and mould companies that feed into the supply chain.

Since the Liberals took office, auto production in Canada has fallen by half. Since the Prime Minister was elected a year ago, promising he would protect the auto sector, it has fallen another 7.3%. The Prime Minister promised before the election that he would protect the sector. It was another illusion. He has since waved the white flag. He even considered signing a sectoral deal in the fall that would have made the tariffs permanent and shut down our sector altogether.

He seems to think that he can carry out a permanent rupture with the United States market in favour of other markets. That is a dangerous illusion. In fact, if we look at the numbers, it verges on a hallucination. The reality is that we sell about 95 times more automobiles to the United States than we sell to the rest of the world combined. That is the reality. We cannot simply imagine up new markets to sell cars that we do not make in places that will not buy them from us.

● (1610)

The reality is that this approach of relying on imaginary plans has led to the following layoffs: 175 at Paccar in Quebec, 49 at Magna in London, 3,000 at Brampton Stellantis, 300 at Paccar in Sainte-Thérèse, Quebec, 118 at Autoneum in London, 245 at TFT Global in Oshawa, and 700 at GM in Oshawa. Of course, there are the lockouts at the Brampton Stellantis plant I visited.

A permanent rupture with the United States would be the end of the Canadian auto sector, period. It might not be enjoyable or exciting to say it, and it might be more fun to scream “elbows up”, but the jobs that the people in those plants rely on are more important than the Prime Minister's endless slogans. A permanent rupture to their paycheques is not acceptable; nor is it possible to simply say we will replace the Detroit three automakers with Japanese automakers.

The Japanese ambassador made it clear that having Toyota and Honda invest in Canada depends on unfettered access to the U.S. market, so even the 75% of the automobiles we make in Canada through the Asian automakers would not survive a permanent wall of tariffs from the United States. We absolutely must regain access to the U.S. market. In essence, losing U.S. access would likely decimate the Japanese-led portion of Canada's auto industry, which is three-quarters of our production. This would lead to a sharp long-term contraction of national production and an economic fallout across Ontario. Canada's auto sector must stay part of the North American supply chain.

We need a plan for jobs, not a plan to rupture jobs. We need a Canada that builds up its auto sector so that we can be strong at home and have more leverage abroad. We, as the Conservatives, are the only ones who have that plan. After months of consultation, led by the chair and the two co-chairs of the Conservative economic council, the member for Calgary Centre, the member for Kapuskas-

ing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk and the great Rick Perkins, we have put together a plan that has the backing of the industry and the workers.

The Conservative plan would make it more affordable to buy Canadian vehicles by removing the GST on all Canadian-made automobiles. We would pay for it by getting rid of the \$2.3-billion Liberal subsidy for foreign-made electric vehicles. We would cut taxes on vehicles made in Canada. The Liberals want to use tax dollars for vehicles made abroad. People who want a job in this country know what plan is going to work.

We would bring home production through performance by implementing a rule where for every car an automaker produces in Canada, it would have the right to import one tariff-free from a CUSMA partner. We would do that on a dollar-for-dollar basis, exactly as we used to do through the auto pact. This is important, because many people would ask if the President would ever accept it. This plan would increase American and Canadian production. American production would increase by about two million automobiles, or about a 17% increase in production, reversing its decline, and Canadian production would double, going up to two million vehicles every single year. It would ensure we build as many vehicles as we sell. This would be a much better deal for our American friends than they have right now and a significantly better deal for Canada. Because it aligns with the stated objective of the United States to produce more vehicles at home, it is one it would realistically sign.

We have developed an automotive security and technology policy by harmonizing our regulations to keep dangerous technology from Russia and China off our roads. We would stand firm against unfair trade practices by China and align the policies with those of the United States.

We would also get rid of the EV mandate the Prime Minister is trying to keep in place through the back channel of emissions standards that cannot be met by any other vehicle than an EV. We would ensure that the vehicles Canadians buy and that are on our streets are made in our country and ultimately affordable to the Canadian people.

This is a detailed plan to reverse the 10-year-long decline in automotive production that would allow North America to once again become the global powerhouse in producing automobiles. It would knock down the barriers and restore tariff-free trade across the border with our single biggest market by far anywhere in the world. This is a realistic plan, one that takes seriously the livelihoods of the hard-working people who rely on this sector for their jobs.

We are not interested in temporary slogans or political gratification. We are interested in protecting the jobs of our people and the strength of our country. We will be strong and affordable at home and have leverage abroad.

• (1615)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maybe one of the best things I can do is recite a quote. There are many quotes with regard to the Conservative plan, but the one that spoke to me came from industry analyst Tom Venetis, who said, “They don't seem very well thought out. It's an argument that I don't think he understands will not work.”

The leader of the Conservative Party insulted the auto industry workers by not having consultations and not working with them before he announced the plan. I am wondering if he will formally apologize for incorporating a faulty plan and for not consulting with the workers.

• (1620)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I have breaking news hot off the presses. The member wants to talk about workers. We have here the president of Oshawa Unifor Local 222, saying, “Finally, a commonsense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers. A plan that restores past production levels and secures a long-term future”.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: Before I give the floor to the member for Rivière-du-Nord, I have a reminder for members.

[English]

There are several members who rose to ask a question. As a reminder, members need to be in their seat and properly attired with a suit and tie in order to be recognized.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Rivière-du-Nord.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are discussing the auto pact. However, in this day and age, we are more concerned with the issue of air pollution to start, and with the fact that we are facing an oil shortage. We will eventually run out completely. We are currently experiencing supply issues for reasons we are all aware of.

Is it not time to acknowledge the situation, turn to green energy and focus on producing electric vehicles that are entirely manufactured here in Canada?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Bloc Québécois member says there is a fuel shortage. That is exactly what we are saying. That is why we want to remove the oil and gas production cap so we can provide the world with the most ethical and environmentally responsible oil and gas possible. We have to take advantage of this because it is our largest global export.

Exporting Canadian oil and gas would strengthen our dollar and make groceries and gas more affordable, including in Quebec. It would mean more revenue coming in from industry instead of from taxpayers, including in Quebec. It would mean more demand for

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machinery made in Quebec for the industry in Alberta because we have a Canada-wide economy. Lastly, we need to build up a strategic reserve of oil and other resources to give us more power and leverage in negotiations with allies around the world.

That will make everything affordable here at home. It will make us stronger. We will be masters in our own house.

[English]

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the industry minister has said some strange things, like we are going to build the cars the world wants and export them.

For question number one, I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition has any idea which markets the industry minister might be talking about that we would export these fantasy cars to.

For question number two, the Liberals talk about bringing investment into Canada with new manufacturing facilities. Can the Leader of the Opposition think of any auto manufacturer that would come and do new production in Canada while there are still 25% tariffs on all autos sent to the United States?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, all of the automakers have made it clear that one of the great advantages of building in Canada is having access to the biggest and most lucrative market on planet earth.

Some 90% of the automobiles we make go to the United States. In fact, more of the automobiles we make are bought by Americans than by Canadians. We sell 95 times more vehicles to the Americans than we sell to overseas markets. Suddenly replacing 90% or 95% of our production with imaginary markets that the Prime Minister dreams up in his illusions is a dangerous path that threatens the 600,000 direct and indirect jobs in our automotive sector.

Effectively, the Liberals are saying we are simply going to make electric vehicles for overseas markets. Other than, I think, one or two lines, we do not make those cars in Canada for final assembly. We do not do the final assembly, and we do not have those overseas markets.

By the way, the Prime Minister somehow thinks he is going to overturn Chinese production, which is massively subsidized to the point that they can sell at enormous artificial discounts. He is going to overturn that artificial Chinese advantage in markets where we do not sell, with cars we do not make. That is an illusion and a hallucination.

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• (1625)

[*Translation*]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the leader of the official opposition. Why propose an auto pact when our government has already put measures in place to protect the auto sector and jobs? Is he not making Parliament do twice the work when we are already making progress in this regard?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, we have seen the results of this Liberal government. Since it took office, we have lost half of our automobile production. Much of this loss occurred when the current Minister of Finance and National Revenue was the industry minister responsible for the sector. This is not a new government.

Since the current Liberal Prime Minister took office, we have lost another 7.3% of our production. Worse still, there could be massive losses ahead if the tariffs are not lifted. That is why I have a plan to eliminate the tariffs in both directions and to achieve true free trade in the auto sector. That will make us stronger and help us to build a larger industry.

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the only benefit Quebec can derive from the automotive industry is if there are more electric vehicles on our roads and if people use more electricity. That way, Quebecers get something out of it.

The Leader of the Opposition's indifference toward Quebec is well known. Just think of Don Cherry and the Order of Canada. The leader of the official opposition supported his nomination, despite all of Mr. Cherry's highly controversial statements about Quebec. Some of his own MPs even called him out on that.

Will any of his MPs call him out on this, to ensure that electric vehicles are always available in Quebec with a rebate?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, EVs will be available. Anyone who wants an electric car will be able to buy one. That is what the free market is all about.

I trust Quebecers. I want to give them a choice. The member and the Bloc Québécois want to force this down their throats. There are certain regions where EVs do not work, where people need their pick-up trucks. As a side note, Quebecers usually choose the Ford F-150. That is the reality. It is their choice.

Obviously, we believe in freedom and we believe that Quebecers are smart enough to make their own decisions. The Bloc Québécois wants to take away that choice and force their hand. We will let Quebecers decide.

[*English*]

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we heard a lot of things in the House today in this debate, and we did not actually hear too much of what the Liberals' plan is.

I have a quote, since we are speaking of quotes. The parliamentary secretary said he will continue to “wait it out”. That is a part of their plan and strategy. That does not go very well for the Hamilton auto parts sector.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague to highlight some points of an actual plan that will get workers back to work.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, what the parliamentary secretary says to workers who have lost their jobs is “wait it out.” What the Liberals say to the workers in Brampton who are locked out of their workplace is “wait it out.” What the Liberals say to the 8.3% of the market in Windsor that is unemployed is “wait it out.” One day, the Liberals say, this rupture will result in some sort of a repair with some other market that will one day lead to an imaginary job.

We do not think workers should have to wait it out. We think they should have tariff-free trade, they should have jobs and we should repatriate our production. Most important of all, we, as Conservatives, have a real plan to do it.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: 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 Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Employment; the hon. member for Saskatoon South, The Economy; the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, Pensions.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I posed the question to the leader of the official opposition, I read a quote. All of a sudden, as I finished my question and the Conservative leader was about to stand up, he was looking around for a quote. We saw a piece of paper going down the line to the leader of the Conservative Party so that he would actually have a quote.

Having said that—

The Deputy Speaker: There is a point of order from the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, it is customary when a member makes reference to a document in the House of Commons that the document be tabled. Do I have unanimous consent to table, “Finally, a commonsense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers. A plan that restores past production levels and secures a long-term future”?

Do I have the unanimous consent of the House to table this quote?

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table a document?

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Conservative Party can actually just bring the quote over and hand it to me, if he likes. It is an open offer. I appreciate that.

What I wanted to do is go quote for quote. I thank him. It is a pretty extensive piece of paper. I am going to read it out. The leader of the Conservative Party wants me to read it out. In fairness, I will do that.

This was the question. I was concerned that the Conservative policy announcement does not really carry very much water. I used an example, and then the leader of the Conservative Party responded with the quote he just handed me. Here is the example I used from industry analyst Tom Venetis. Related to the Conservative Party's announcement, he said, "They don't seem very well thought out. It's an argument that I don't think he understands will not work."

The leader of the Conservative Party then responded by quoting the president of the Oshawa Unifor Local 222, who said, "Finally, a commonsense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers. A plan that restores past production levels and secures a long-term future." That was handed to him, and I appreciate that he got the quote just in time.

Here is the the challenge—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to read more, but here is the challenge. He has to provide me with some more to show that the unions and the workers are, in fact, being consulted and represented.

I am going to go quote for quote. I did one quote and he responded. Now let me give another quote. This one is from Unifor president Lana Payne. What did Lana say? She said the CPC plan "may instead create the conditions on which auto sector—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan has a point of order.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, there may have been a problem with the translation when he was reading the previous quote, so I wonder if he could read it again to make sure that all members heard it in both official languages.

The Deputy Speaker: I am looking to all members, and I do not see anyone else saying there was a problem with the translation. I was paying attention, without interpretation, so I do not know.

I will let the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader continue.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I do not blame them. That is the only quote they have been using today.

Having said that, here is another quote, from the Unifor president, Lana Payne: "the CPC plan...may instead create the conditions on which auto sector investment and growth in Canada is constrained—permanently threatening the future of both Brampton and Ingersoll assembly plants." That is another quote.

Let us not stop there. There are actually many quotes. The Unifor auto council chair, John D'Agnolo, said, "The problem is that he

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went ahead and did not consult with Unifor, and it was very, very frustrating to see the things that he put in place knowing we would be in big trouble". He is talking about the leader of the Conservative Party. He also said, "He didn't recognize engines. There's a prime example. He didn't recognize imports. He didn't recognize exports of parts that we make, which is discouraging.... He didn't recognize the fact that the one-for-one would mean they wouldn't need to put a product in Brampton".

It is as if the Conservatives have given up on some of our important communities in Ontario when it comes to the auto industry. Those are three examples that I cite. If there are any eager Conservatives over there who have another quote that they want to share with me, they can come on over and share it, but just make sure it is a different quote from the one the leader of the Conservative Party provided me.

Let me provide a different quote in terms of the Liberal action plan, what the Government of Canada is doing. Allow me to quote a Progressive Conservative, as opposed to the far-right Conservative Party that we have on the other side of the House. This is someone who is fairly well known. I am sure he understands the automobile industry in Ontario.

An hon. member: Doug Ford.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: The member is correct, Mr. Speaker. It is Ontario Premier Doug Ford. What does he have to say about the plan that we have? He said, "I'm pleased to see the federal government take the important step of ending its mandate, helping our auto sector compete and protect auto jobs." He also said, "New federal funding for investments in auto and parts companies, job training and charging infrastructure will complement and enhance Ontario investments and supports." That is what the Progressive Conservative Premier of Ontario is saying.

I say shame on those MPs, in Ontario particularly, who are not standing up for the workers in the automobile industry, to the degree that they did not feel it was necessary for their very own leader to work and consult with the unions. At the very least, I would think that it would have been a natural starting point.

However, it does not end there. Again, continuing on with quotes, we can talk about the Unifor auto council chair, who said he was "ecstatic" over auto measures, saying they are "so important to our community". He also said, "It's important as time goes by and the market starts to turn.... We have to give Canadians the option, and it's important we always do that, and [referring to the federal government] they've done this through this policy".

There is Clean Energy Canada. Also, Oakville Mayor Rob Burton, chair of the auto mayors caucus, stated, "The new strategy is a significant step forward for Canada's auto sector. It shows that the voices of mayors and our Caucus are being heard in shaping national auto policy". Those are the types of responses that we have been receiving in regard to the plan that the government has actually put forward.

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• (1635)

What do we hear from the Conservatives? Today, I asked specific questions.

One of the initiatives by the government in terms of the auto plan is to accelerate investment in Canada's auto-manufacturing industry or that whole sector. We are talking about \$3 billion in order to accelerate that. We are providing and protecting jobs, recognizing that the national government does need to get engaged. We can talk about levelling the playing field. I asked questions about maintaining countertariffs on auto imports that come from the U.S.A. where it is necessary. On those two initiatives, when I asked members of the Conservative Party whether or not they support that, it was deafening in terms of their response as they sidestepped the issue.

These are two initiatives that are actually going to help our industry today, and what are the Conservatives doing? They are stepping back. It is the standard policy of the far-right Conservative Party today: Just get out of the way. We often hear them say that in their speeches. They just want to get out of the way and let the automobile industry take what ultimately comes upon it, as opposed to trying to protect that sector of our economy, a part of the economy in which we are focused on doing whatever we can.

It is interesting that the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek said that I said we are just going to wait, even though I just made two very clear pronouncements in terms of what the government is actually doing today, which is having a very real impact. However, he said that that was what I said, but it was taken out of context.

The leader of the Conservative Party today talked about overall trade here in Canada. One would think that he is jealous of the Prime Minister of Canada and that he does not really support what the Prime Minister is actually doing, when he talks about trade. Can the Conservatives tell me of another prime minister who, within one year, has visited so many countries to talk about trade, to enhance trade opportunities and to enhance export opportunities for our manufacturers here in Canada? Can they tell me of another prime minister who, in less than a year, has brought in billions of dollars of future investments for Canada? The Conservatives cannot do that.

Our Prime Minister has been diligent in making sure that we are getting as much as we can with the type of trade diversification that is absolutely critical to the future of Canada, to providing the jobs of the future and to protecting the industries that are here today. Yet, the Conservatives seem to be focused on saying that they are going to have no tariffs between Canada and the United States. Do they really think they know Donald Trump so well that they are just going to pull up to the table, shake hands and say, "We don't want any tariffs", when the President is putting on tariffs around the world? Oh, what a wonderland they live in to honestly believe that that could be the case, that we do not have to do anything and we will just wait until the President of the United States changes his mind and says that he will not apply tariffs and that we will go back to the 1960s.

It was Lester Pearson who brought forward the auto pact in the 1960s. He was a prime minister who did the right thing at the right time to ensure that Canada's industry would be protected. At that

time, we had American Motors, Chrysler, GM and Ford, and that was it. That was all that was there. The idea was to integrate completely, as much as possible, that particular industry, and that is what the auto pact did. It served its purpose. However, American Motors and Chrysler do not exist any more. Now it is Stellantis.

• (1640)

I am very familiar with the automobile industry. My father worked in it for 40 years. We have had dealerships, including an American Motors dealership, I must say. I am very familiar with the industry. I know the importance of these jobs.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member says we should stop losing jobs. Do my colleagues know that the worst year we had for the loss of manufacturing jobs was under Stephen Harper? The leader of the Conservative Party sat around that caucus. That was the worst loss we ever had in the manufacturing industry, so when they start talking about the loss of jobs, they need to take a look at who their leader was in the caucus during the Harper government years.

However, let us continue to look forward, as opposed to backwards with the 1965 auto pact, because it matters. Members can think of the communities of Oshawa, Brampton, Oakville, Cambridge, Woodstock, Ingersoll, Windsor, Alliston and St. Thomas. They are the communities in Ontario that are looking for a government that will provide leadership on the issue.

Thank goodness that, much like we had Lester Pearson during the sixties, we now have a Prime Minister who understands the economy and how the economy works. He is in a good position to be able to negotiate a trade agreement with the President of the United States. He is the right Prime Minister for the right time in Canada's history to ensure that we have an industry that is able to not only survive, but also prosper into the future. That is something, I believe, that is shown by the actions we have taken, whether looking for those trade opportunities in South Korea, Japan, China or other allied countries in Europe. It might take some real effort going forward to foster those relationships, to build and to court some of those manufacturing companies to come to Canada.

No one is saying it is going to be easy, but as a government, we are not, like the Conservatives, giving up on workers or giving up on bringing forward a plan. I can tell the House that, after listening to the speeches of the vast majority, more than 90%, of the Conservative caucus, we would think that they do not want an EV industry. That is the reality, because they are constantly being critical of the government for anything that we do to promote EV purchases, as an example. Show me one Conservative member who will actually put up their hand and say, yes, it is a good thing to be able to encourage Canadians to purchase an EV vehicle through a subsidy of some form.

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I have a news flash. The federal government is not the only government that has actually provided subsidies for EV vehicles. One of the provinces that has led the way is the province of Quebec. Quebec has provided opportunities and incentives for consumers to purchase EV vehicles. Quebec is not the only province. Colleagues can do their Google searches or whatever types of searches they want and they will find different political parties and different levels of government that have actually had incentives to try to provide encouragement for people to actually purchase EV vehicles.

The United States produces a lot of electric vehicles, but Canada cannot produce every model of car throughout the world. We cannot do that.

• (1645)

As much as I might like to see something of that nature take place, I think we need to recognize that Canada's automobile industry, what we currently have, has fantastic potential and there is room for growth. If anyone wants a good example of that, look at the Charger. It is an electric vehicle. Are you trying to minimize that now? Are you trying to minimize the Chrysler Stellantis plant by—

The Deputy Speaker: I would remind the parliamentary secretary to speak through the Speaker and not directly to the member.

I know there is a member on that side whom the parliamentary secretary enjoys having a back-and-forth with, but he should do it through the Chair. I will also remind that member that he will have a chance in questions and comments to share his views on the comments he has heard.

I invite the parliamentary secretary to conclude his remarks.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the point is that the Charger, which has an electric component to it, was recognized as the car of the year in North America and is produced right here in Canada. That amplifies the point that our workers in Canada are, in fact, the best in the world.

All we are asking for is a level playing field. At least we have a government that recognizes that and wants to see that. It is one of the reasons we have the whole issue of the tariffs and of having countertariffs in place where they are needed in order to protect our industry and level the playing field. When I ask the question of my Conservative friends opposite, they seem to be of the opinion that what the government is doing is not supporting the industry. I would ultimately argue that is wrong.

We need to look at ways to support it directly. Look at the auto plan that was presented by the Prime Minister back in February and the amount of support it has received. It is significant support. It will make a difference. As opposed to trying to sidestep the question, members should recognize it for what it is and support it. If they have something of value they want to add to it, by all means, they should make that suggestion, but I do not believe the answer is to go back to the 1960s. Times have changed. Workers understand that. We need to do what we can, in every way we can, to support our auto industry in Canada.

• (1650)

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear my colleague from Winnipeg North, early in his speech, confirm to the House and Canadians that the auto pact plan, presented by the Conservatives through the member for Dufferin—Caledon and the leader of the official opposition, holds water. Those were the words he spoke. We know the plan that the Liberals have been following does not hold water. We have seen more and more plant closures and increased unemployment in the auto industry.

Other than the comment of the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek about waiting to see what happens, does the member have any other plan for the auto industry here in Canada?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member has to either wait for Hansard or listen to the speech again. I said the Conservative plan does not hold water. That means there are a bunch of holes in the bucket, and if the bucket is dipped into water, the water goes out. It is kind of like the Conservative plan. At the end of the day, it just will not work.

The core of the plan says they are going to force Donald Trump to get rid of all the tariffs and to not worry. That is the core of their plan, and they genuinely believe it is not going to be an issue. Things have changed. We need to recognize that reality. That is why I would encourage my friends across the way to get on board and support the Liberal plan, which is, in fact, effective.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we all rise in this place to speak, we hope that we are going to be accurate. The member speaks a lot, but I think he hopes to be accurate as well.

He read into the record that the Conservative plan does not include, for example, engines. That is patently false. If he took the time to read the plan, he would know the plan talks about vehicles and vehicle equivalents, which includes engines, transmissions and chassis. For him to suggest that this is not true is inaccurate.

First, I wonder if he is embarrassed by reading something into the record that is inaccurate. Second, would he not agree that the most critical thing for the Canadian auto industry is tariff-free access into the American market? It is where 800,000 of the vehicles we produce go.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, accuracy is actually quite important. One of the things I constantly remind my colleagues across the way is that they need to take responsibility and not spread misinformation.

On the point that the member accused me of not being accurate on, that was a specific quote. It was actually a quote from the Unifor auto council chair. All I am doing is reading the quote, and I choose to believe what the workers are saying as opposed to what the leader of the Conservative Party is saying. If the member genuinely feels that way, he should take it up with the Unifor auto council chair.

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• (1655)

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are in a situation right now where the price of gas is skyrocketing because of conflicts. We are also in a situation that calls for a certain degree of environmental responsibility. Everything points toward facilitating, or even accelerating, the electrification of transportation. The federal EV purchase subsidy is a perfect example. When the government decided to eliminate this subsidy, EV sales dropped. Sales will rebound, which is good news.

However, the Conservatives are prepared to scrap the only measure that could benefit Quebec, because the more EVs that are on Quebec's roads, the more electricity we consume. The money spent on Quebec electricity does not go into the pockets of big oil companies; it goes into the pockets of Quebecers through Hydro-Québec.

Does my colleague agree that scrapping the EV tax incentive would be really bad for Quebec?

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it was not that long ago, a number of weeks ago, that there was an announcement in Winnipeg that New Flyer Industries would produce electric buses. I would argue that New Flyer Industries is one of if not the best bus manufacturer in the world, and it is located in Winnipeg. Providing that incentive, that financial support, to see electric buses being produced is something the government has supported. Equally, the Prime Minister has come forward by providing an incentive to encourage people to purchase EV vehicles here in Canada. I see that as a good thing, and I hope to see more provinces doing likewise.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, in the course of the debate today, there have been a number of good points made by members on all sides, honestly, but one of the things that continue to trouble me is that we are not actually putting Canada first in our investments.

I wonder if the hon. parliamentary secretary would consider raising within his caucus that it is time to reform the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Act so that our pension funds are invested in Canada and not as they are now, which is more in the United States than here.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, earlier today the member raised that same question, and it is an interesting question. What I do know is that Canadians very much value and want to make sure that their pensions are going to be there into the future, and I think that there might be some opportunities there. I will accept the challenge. I am not going to take a position on that particular issue. I know that the CPP board and our pension boards in general do an overwhelmingly positive job in providing pension monies for our retirees. It is an interesting idea, and I appreciate her raising it.

Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoy the banter back and forth with the hon. member. Every time I make a speech in the House, he has something interesting to say. It is not always on point or relevant, but it is generally good for comedy.

In all seriousness, we have had a lot of members stand up today to talk about the auto industry in their riding. I am probably the only one in the House who has two EV plants in their riding, both of

which are non-operational. Linamar built a billion-dollar facility in the city of Welland. It is a magnificent building that did not open. There is also AK, or Asahi Kasei. The government has put tens of millions of dollars into these two businesses. AK has now decided to not open on time, primarily because, as it describes it, it is like opening a nuclear plant to run for two days. It cannot be done. Therefore, it is delayed for several years because the market has collapsed.

I wonder what the hon. member has to say to the constituents and the workers in my riding who were promised thousands and thousands of jobs, which are just not going to materialize.

• (1700)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservative Party, we recognize that there is potential in developing an industry that produces more EV vehicles. I do believe that in the long run we are going to have more and more EV vehicles produced and manufactured here in Canada. It is only a question of time, and that is why it is important that the federal government, at times, work with different provincial governments to ensure this, whether it is through the infrastructure for having EV vehicles or by providing direct subsidies or incentives for consumers. We need to be responsible, thinking that ultimately we will see it; it is only a question of time. It could never be soon enough for me personally.

The Deputy Speaker: We have time for a short question.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since my colleague pointed out what said in French, I will repeat it in English. Yes, I am an electric car user. I bought it two and a half years ago. It was a used car, so it was half the price, with no subsidies and no obligation. It answered my needs and it was okay. It is a free market. This is how it works in the real world for people. However, what we have seen is that the government screwed up everything about the EV market because it shut down the subsidies just—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member because I did say a short question. I will let the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader respond.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I suspect that the used EV vehicle that the member opposite bought was probably bought brand new by using a Quebec subsidy or maybe even a federal subsidy, which was there two years ago. That increased the overall number of EV vehicles in Canada being used. That means there are going to be more used EV vehicles into the future.

Business of Supply

Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is such an honour to be in the House to serve the amazing residents of Essex, and quite frankly, the region and the country. I have a couple of quick notes before I get into this very important conversation.

I just want to thank the people who put on the National Prayer Breakfast today. In my speeches, I always thank my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This morning, everybody at the breakfast came together and truly gave all grace and glory back to him.

I want to say happy birthday to my daughter, Faith. It is coming up here very shortly, but we will not be here next week, so it is important that I say happy birthday, sweetheart. She is daddy's little girl who is not so little anymore.

My heart is with the two pilots, their family at Air Canada, and all the victims. It is ironic that the very people who get so many of us back and forth to Ottawa to do the people's work are the ones who were injured. My heart is equally with the firefighters.

Lastly, I just want to say hello to the students who got a virtual tour of the House of Commons. Thanks so much for coming on a virtual tour.

There is a reason that we have a great big windshield on a vehicle and a small rearview mirror. The small rearview mirror is so we never forget where we came from. It is vitally important to know where we came from. The reason for the big windshield in the front is not just to clean bugs off it. It is to know where we are going, and that is the plan. When people jump in their vehicles, they have a plan. They are going to the hockey rink, to the grocery store or perhaps to an Easter party.

I am so thankful to be able to stand in this place today. I will not yell, scream or get really crazy about this, because it is somewhat of a sombre moment. When I think about the assembly plant workers at Stellantis in Windsor, I also think about the tool and die makers, the mould makers, the tier twos and tier threes, and all of those who deserve nothing less than complete support and a plan to ensure that food is on their table.

I do not want to speak only about the workers. I want to talk about the businesses: the blood, sweat and tears, all the money invested, all the risks that they have taken, and all the chances to ensure that there is food on the table for those workers. It is why I am very proud to stand here, in the people's chair of Essex, to speak about the Conservatives' opposition motion to introduce a tariff-free auto pact.

I will be splitting my time, whatever is remaining, with the great member for Cambridge.

I had the great opportunity to be with the Leader of the Opposition last Friday. We started out in Windsor with an announcement, and then we crossed the border. It is the busiest international border crossing in North America. Quite frankly, it is a border that sees a vehicle's parts cross it six to seven times before the vehicle is actually assembled.

When we went across the border, our first stop was at General Motors' headquarters in Detroit. We had a great discussion, a very in-depth discussion. Basically, all the managers could say was they absolutely adored our plan, they think it is bang on, and they are

dead against tariffs as well. This was from the very senior managers of General Motors in downtown Detroit, right in the middle of the big three, in the heart of the big three. That is what they said.

We then went a bit outside of Detroit to Dearborn, Michigan, to a brand new, beautiful, gorgeous Ford Motor Company facility. They basically gave us the exact same message, in that they need our plan and they like our plan. They are going to invest in Canada, and they hope that our plan helps invest even more into Canada. It truly was an honour.

● (1705)

I am a co-chair of the Conservative auto caucus and have been for about six years now. I have had numerous opportunities, in the past and again this year, to visit the auto show in Toronto. It is an amazing auto show, by the way. I met with so many industry leaders about the beginning of our plan and what our thoughts were, to get their feedback and to understand more about what industry needs and what we can do communally to ensure that our auto sector is absolutely strong like it used to be, so that we are not down to 1.2 million vehicles built in Canada from the two million we used to build. Let us double that.

I have built some pretty strong relationships over six years. I will even go as far as to say that, and I am going to preempt the strike during questions, I have spent a lot of time speaking to labour as well, specifically with Unifor. As a matter of fact, I had them in my office this afternoon.

I want to point out a couple of folks here.

Somebody who has become a great friend of mine is Brian Kingston, and I also admire him because he works so tirelessly. He is the President of the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, and he said, "North American integration has underpinned Canada's auto industry for over 60 years. Diversification is not an option." Mr. Kingston goes on to say, "The policies outlined in the Conservative...plan recognize this reality and aim to make it more attractive to build cars in Canada."

Further, Mr. Jeff Gray from Unifor Local 222 came out and said, "Finally, a common sense plan to protect the livelihood of thousands of Ontario Auto sector workers. A plan that restores past production levels and secures a long-term future".

Those are not my words. They are from industry and labour.

I touched on tier twos and tier threes, and I will say that they truly are the backbone of the assembly plants. Without them, quite frankly, nothing gets assembled. I have visited so many mould shops and tool and die shops throughout the Windsor-Essex region, each with their own story and each with their own fastball that they can throw.

Business of Supply

Equally, I was down in Mexico about six weeks ago on a trade with other members of the House from both sides of the aisle. We had the opportunity to meet with the Senate of Mexico, with the senators, and in a private meeting I asked what we can do to support them, but equally, how they can support us. A senator said that it is ironic that we have what they need and they have what we need. I said that what is really ironic is that when I fly from Windsor to Ottawa, there is a Mexican plane sitting on the tarmac with parts from Mexico. My point is that it is so wildly integrated that all of us must jointly work together.

I know that my time is running short. I could talk for hours on this, but obviously I do not have the time.

We have a plan to make it more affordable to buy Canadian by removing the GST on all Canadian-made vehicles, to bring home production through performance by implementing a rule that for every car produced in Canada, the same manufacturer would get to sell a car in Canada duty-free, to protect North American supply chains by maintaining the minimum 75% North American content and existing CUSMA rules of origin, and to develop automotive security and technology by creating a harmonized North American cybersecurity and data standard.

It is an honour to stand on behalf of the hard-working folks from Essex and Windsor, and I will close with this: I am here today to say no more job losses, empty promises or sacrifices from our auto workers. That is why I support the Conservative plan for a tariff-free auto pact. Essex-Windsor auto workers are among the best in the world, and their jobs deserve to be protected.

• (1710)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of the hard workers that the member makes reference to and their respective families, part of the Liberal plan has a very tangible aspect to it. All of it is fantastic stuff, but there is one aspect that is really tangible, which was an accelerator fund, an investment into Canada's auto manufacturing sector that is being allocated \$3 billion. Other Conservative members have sidestepped that issue.

Very clearly, does the member support that aspect of the Liberal plan? Would he vote in favour of that \$3 billion in support to accelerate investment in our auto industry?

Chris Lewis: Mr. Speaker, what I have seen is the escalation of 49,000 Chinese vehicles being brought onto Canadian soil, 49,000 more vehicles that are not being built in Windsor. We can bring \$3 billion in for sure, but at the end of the day, why do we have 49,000 Chinese vehicles on our soil when we have the capacity, the know-how, the knowledge and the greatest skilled trades in the world to build them right here on Canadian soil?

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Unifor has been approaching a lot of members of Parliament, and its theme has been, "Buy Canadian, sell here and build here." That is our policy. Why does my colleague think the Liberals are fighting it?

Chris Lewis: Mr. Speaker, when the official opposition leader came to Windsor and made the announcement, I guess a week ago on Sunday, on the shop floor of a plant that actually produces the parts and the moulds for the auto industry, members of Unifor

proudly stood behind him. We are going to continue to do the talks with the union reps and with the workers themselves on the shop floor. The conversation is not over. It has only just begun.

• (1715)

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:15 p.m., and this being the final supply day in the period ending March 26, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the motion.

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

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, I think there should be unanimous consent, but in the absence of that, we would request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 87*)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|---|--|
| Aboultaif | Aitchison |
| Albas | Allison |
| Anderson | Anstey |
| Arnold | Au |
| Baber | Bailey |
| Baldinelli | Barlow |
| Barrett | Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt) |
| Berthold | Bexte |
| Bezan | Bonk |
| Borrelli | Bragdon |
| Brassard | Brock |
| Calkins | Caputo |
| Chambers | Chong |
| Cobena | Cody |
| Cooper | Dancho |
| Davidson | Davies (Niagara South) |
| Dawson | Deltell |
| DeRidder | Diotte |
| Doherty | Dowdall |
| Duncan | Epp |
| Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake) | Falk (Provencher) |
| Gallant | Généreux |
| Genuis | Gill (Calgary Skyview) |
| Gill (Brampton West) | Gill (Calgary McKnight) |
| Gill (Windsor West) | Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley) |
| Gladu | Godin |
| Goodridge | Gourde |
| Groleau | Guglielmin |
| Gunn | Hallan |
| Hardy | Ho |
| Hoback | Holman |
| Jackson | Jansen |

Business of Supply

Jivani
 Khanna
 Kirkland
 Konanz
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kuruc
 Lake
 Lawrence
 Lefebvre
 Lewis (Essex)
 Lloyd
 Mahal
 Malette (Kapusasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
 Martel
 McCauley
 McLean (Calgary Centre)
 Moore
 Morrison
 Muys
 Patzer
 Poilievre
 Reid
 Reynolds
 Roberts
 Rowe
 Scheer
 Seeback
 Small
 Strahl
 Thomas
 Tolmie
 Van Popta
 Viersen
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Zimmer— 135

Kelly
 Kibble
 Kmiec
 Kram
 Kronis
 Kusie
 Lantsman
 Lawton
 Leslie
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lobb
 Majumdar
 Mantle
 Mazier
 McKenzie
 Menegakis
 Morin
 Motz
 Nater
 Paul-Hus
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Richards
 Ross
 Ruff
 Schmale
 Shipley
 Steinley
 Strauss
 Tochor
 Uppal
 Vien
 Vis
 Warkentin
 Williamson

Fortier
 Fragiskatos
 Fry
 Gaheer
 Garon
 Gaudreau
 Gerretsen
 Gould
 Greaves
 Guilbeault
 Hajdu
 Harrison
 Hirtle
 Housefather
 Iacono
 Jacek
 Johns
 Joseph
 Kelloway
 Klassen
 Kwan
 Lambropoulos
 Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
 Larouche
 Lavack
 LeBlanc
 Lemire
 Long
 Ma
 MacDonald (Cardigan)
 Malette (Bay of Quinte)
 May
 McKelvie
 McKnight
 McPherson
 Mendès
 Miedema
 Mingarelli
 Myles
 Nathan
 Noormohamed
 Ntumba
 Olszewski
 Osborne
 Petitpas Taylor
 Powlowski
 Ramsay
 Robertson
 Romanado
 Sahota
 Sarai
 Savard-Tremblay
 Schiefke
 Sheehan
 Simard
 Solomon
 Ste-Marie
 Tesser Derksen
 Thompson
 Valdez
 Vandenbeld
 Watchorn
 Wilkinson
 Zahid
 Zuberi— 193

Fortin
 Fraser
 Fuhr
 Gainey
 Gasparro
 Gazan
 Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
 Grant
 Guay
 Gull-Masty
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Hogan
 Hussen
 Idlout
 Jeneroux
 Joly
 Kayabaga
 Khalid
 Koutrakis
 Lalonde
 Lamoureux
 Lapointe (Sudbury)
 Lattanzio
 Lavoie
 Leitão
 Lightbound
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 McGuinty
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
 Ménard
 Michel
 Miller
 Morrissey
 Naqvi
 Nguyen
 Normandin
 Oliphant
 O'Rourke
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Provost
 Rana
 Rochefort
 Royer
 Saini
 Sari
 Sawatzky
 Sgro
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sodhi
 Sousa
 St-Pierre
 Thériault
 Turnbull
 van Koeverden
 Villeneuve
 Weiler
 Yip
 Zerucelli

NAYS

Members

Acan
 Ali
 Anandasangaree
 Baker
 Barsalou-Duval
 Beaulieu
 Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
 Bittle
 Blanchette-Joncas
 Bonin
 Brière
 Carney
 Casey
 Champagne
 Chang
 Chatel
 Chenette
 Church
 Connors
 Coteau
 Dandurand
 Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
 d'Entremont
 Deschênes-Thériault
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Duguid
 Earle
 El-Khoury
 Eyolfson
 Fanjoy
 Fisher

Al Soud
 Alty
 Bains
 Bardeesy
 Battiste
 Beech
 Bendayan
 Blanchet
 Blois
 Boulrice
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Carr
 Chagger
 Champoux
 Chartrand
 Chen
 Chi
 Clark
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Danko
 DeBellefeuille
 Deschênes
 Desrochers
 Dhillon
 Duclos
 Dzerowicz
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fancy
 Fergus
 Fonseca

Anand
 Dalton
 Rood

PAIRED

Members

Block
 Hodgson
 Sidhu (Brampton East)

Business of Supply

Stubbs

Sudds— 8

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

• (1805)

[English]

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C), 2025-26

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

That the Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, be concurred in.

The Speaker: 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.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved for leave to introduce Bill C-23, An Act for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

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

[Translation]

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

The Speaker: 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.

Some hon. members: On division.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee of the whole.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Tom Kmiec in the chair)

(On clause 2)

[English]

Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Chair, can the President of the Treasury Board confirm that the bill is presented in its usual form?

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the form of this bill is the same as that passed in the previous supply period.

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1 agreed to)

[Translation]

The Chair: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 1, the short title, carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Business of Supply

(Bill agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Bill reported)

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: 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.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

The Speaker: 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 invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

That the House do concur in interim supply as follows:

That a sum not exceeding \$86,422,679,148 being composed of the following amounts, each item rounded up to the next dollar:

(1) three twelfths (\$29,073,487,176) of the total of the amounts of the items set forth in the Proposed Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027, except for those items below:

(2) twelve twelfths of the total of the amounts of Department of Finance Votes 5, L25, L30 and L35 and Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Vote 20, of the said estimates, \$5;

(3) eleven twelfths of the total of the amounts of Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Vote 5, Leaders' Debates Commission Vote 1, Treasury Board Secretariat Votes 5 and 50, of the said estimates, \$1,836,233,543;

(4) ten twelfths of the amount of Telefilm Canada Vote 1, of the said estimates, \$93,026,910;

(5) nine twelfths of the total of the amounts of Department of Indigenous Services Votes 5 and 10 and Department of Justice Vote 1, of the said estimates, \$15,746,169,976;

(6) eight twelfths of the total of the amounts of Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Vote 10 and Public Health Agency of Canada Vote 10, of the said estimates, \$5,369,743,750;

(7) seven twelfths of the total of the amounts of Canadian Air Transport Security Authority Vote 1 and Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Vote 1, of the said estimates, \$359,445,528;

(8) six twelfths of the total of the amounts of Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada Vote 1, Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Vote 1, Department of Employment and Social Development

Vote 5, Department of Health Vote 10, Public Health Agency of Canada Vote 1 and Statistics Canada Vote 1, of the said estimates, \$12,340,997,391;

(9) five twelfths of the total of the amounts of Canadian High Arctic Research Station Vote 1, Canadian Transportation Agency Vote 1, Department of Citizenship and Immigration Vote 10, Department of Health Vote 1, Department of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Vote 10, Department of Indigenous Services Vote 1, Department of Veterans Affairs Votes 1 and 5, Invest in Canada Hub Vote 1, Marine Atlantic Inc. Vote 1, Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer Vote 1, Privy Council Office Vote 1, Shared Services Canada Votes 1 and 5, and Veterans Review and Appeal Board Vote 1, of the said estimates, \$11,854,113,573;

(10) four twelfths of the total of the amounts of Canadian Space Agency Vote 10, Department of Canadian Heritage Vote 5, Department of Citizenship and Immigration Vote 1, Department of Finance Vote 1, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Vote 10, Department of Industry Votes 1 and 5, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Vote 5, Department of Public Works and Government Services Vote 1, House of Commons Vote 1, National Film Board Vote 1, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Vote 5, Parks Canada Agency Vote 1, Public Service Commission Vote 1, Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada Vote 1, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Votes 1 and 15, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Vote 5, The Jacques-Cartier and Champlain Bridges Inc. Vote 1, Treasury Board Secretariat Votes 1 and 20 and Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority Vote 1, of the said estimates, \$9,749,461,296;

be granted to His Majesty on account of the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027.

The Speaker: 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 invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that Bill C-24, An Act for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027, be read the first time and printed.

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

[*English*]

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

The Speaker: 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 invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Some hon. members: On division.

The Speaker: I therefore declare the motion carried. Accordingly, this bill stands referred to a committee of the whole.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Tom Kmiec in the chair)

(On clause 2)

*Business of Supply**[Translation]*

Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Chair, can the President of the Treasury Board confirm that the supply bill is in its usual form?

[English]

Hon. Shafqat Ali (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the form of this bill is the same as that passed in the previous supply period.

[Translation]

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.2 agreed to)

[English]

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.7 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.8 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.8 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.9 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1.9 agreed to)

[Translation]

The Chair: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 1, the short title, carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Points of Order

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Bill reported)

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: 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 invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Shafqat Ali moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

• (1815)

[*English*]

The Speaker: 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.

An hon. member: On division.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

AMENDMENTS TO BILL C-8

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising in response to the point of order raised yesterday by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons concerning certain amendments made by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to Bill C-8, concerning cybersecurity and telecommunications. In his intervention, the parliamentary secretary referred to three amendments that the committee had agreed to consider despite the committee chair ruling the amendments inadmissible, which it subsequently adopted.

Firstly, I would like to remind the House that appeals of committee chairs' rulings are simply part of the routine practice of this place. Standing Order 117 says so. It says, "The Chair of a standing, special or legislative committee shall maintain order in the committee—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. I will just ask the member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake to pause for a minute.

I would just invite hon. members who are still in the chamber and who may not be as interested in this point of order to perhaps

exit the chamber more quickly so we can continue with the proceedings of this place. Out of respect for our colleagues who are trying to make interventions, I will just ask those who are having side conversations to now exit, and we can carry on with deliberations.

I will invite the hon. member to continue her intervention.

Laila Goodridge: Mr. Speaker, I would argue that this is a very important point of order, and I would recommend that everyone stop to listen.

Standing Order 117 says, "The Chair of a standing, special or legislative committee shall maintain order in the committee, deciding all questions of order subject to an appeal to the committee".

Secondly, a committee chair's ruling on the admissibility of an amendment is not infallible. Mr. Speaker, in a ruling on November 3, 2025, at page 3,327 of the Debates, you yourself reached a different conclusion than the chair of the Standing Committee on Finance had concerning the need for royal recommendation for an amendment that the committee made to Bill C-4. The test for the Speaker's intervention in committee reports concerning bills does not rest simply on whether a committee chair's ruling was overturned, but rather on whether the committee, in adopting the impugned amendment, exceeded its authority.

The parliamentary secretary referred the Chair to paragraph 16.74 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, fourth edition, which provides that an amendment to a bill is out of order "if it is beyond the scope and principle of the bill." The parliamentary secretary, however, did not offer any argument or reasoning for the amendments being allegedly beyond the scope of the bill. Mr. Speaker, I think you should reject the government's argument on that basis alone, since it is asking you to overturn a committee decision without any true procedural justification. As Janse and LeBlanc wrote at paragraph 16.96, "The admissibility of those amendments, and of any other amendments made by a committee, may therefore be challenged on procedural grounds when the House resumes its consideration of the bill at report stage."

Indeed, as Speaker Milliken mentioned on March 14, 2008, at page 4182 of the Debates, "successive Speakers have been reluctant to intervene in the proceedings of committees except in highly exceptional circumstances." That is, in fact, a commonly understood principle in this House, but the parliamentary secretary failed to offer any justification meeting that threshold of exceptional circumstances. Indeed, the same former Speaker explained on November 27, 2002, at page 1950 of the Debates, "it is true as well that committees are permitted a greater latitude in the conduct of their proceedings than might be allowed in the House. It may not always be clear in a particular set of circumstances how best to proceed and so the ultimate decision is left to the committee itself."

Private Members' Business

However, should you disagree with me on the ending of your inquiry here, Mr. Speaker, allow me to offer submissions about how these Conservative amendments are actually within the scope of this bill. Let us get our bearings. First, footnote 164 on page 63 of Janse and LeBlanc refers to the scope of a bill as “meaning the schemes by which the principles of the bill are achieved.”

Paragraph 28.81 of Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, 25th edition, expands upon the concept. It states:

The scope of a bill represents the reasonable limits of its collective purposes, as defined by its existing clauses and schedules. In particular cases, difficult questions of judgment may arise. The scope of a bill, particularly of a bill with several purposes, may be wider than its long title, although the long title may help to determine the scope.

The same authority continues, explaining the United Kingdom's practice:

Standing Order No 65 gives a general authority to any committee on a bill to amend the bill as it sees fit (even if this entails amending the bill's long title in consequence), provided that the amendments are relevant to the subject-matter of the bill, that is to say, within the scope of the bill.

Bill C-8 is a broad bill, touching on a number of facets of the digital world. For our purposes, let us focus on part 1, containing amendments to the Telecommunications Act and making provisions for a variety of measures, including empowering the Governor in Council and the Minister of Industry, respectively, to make orders and give direction regarding the security of Canada's telecommunications system. What amendments CPC-2, CPC-5 and CPC-15 do collectively is require prior judicial authorization for certain of those orders, including for decisions of the cabinet or the minister to impose a gag order on Canadians.

• (1820)

I would submit that nothing about this changes or expands the scope of Bill C-8. Instead, they oppose conditions on executive decision-making, without changing the nature or scope of the decisions that might be made under the authorities proposed in the bill. In a ruling given on October 26, 2006, Mr. Speaker Milliken held at page 4308 of the Debates, that:

I cannot conclude that an amendment which provides for an appeal of a decision by the minister is contrary to the principle of the bill. As I see it, such an amendment places a condition on how decisions of the minister are exercised, but the principle of the bill remains intact.

Another precedent concerns a former bill, Bill C-483, which proposed to transfer decision-making authority over the temporary escorted absences of convicted murderers from penitentiary wardens, who are officials of the executive branch, to the quasi-judicial national Parole Board. The public safety committee reported that bill back to the House with amendments that would instead have had the decision-making responsibilities shared between institution heads and the Parole Board.

Mr. Speaker, your predecessor found the committee's amendments to have been in order, commenting on May 2, 2014, at page 4880 of the Debates, that:

I can see nothing in the bill as amended by the committee which would alter the aims and intent of the bill, namely the limiting of the power of institutional heads to grant escorted temporary absences and providing a role for the National Parole Board in the granting of such absences.

In the present case before you, Mr. Speaker, the government itself contemplates a rule for the federal court elsewhere in clause 2 of Bill C-8, namely, in its proposed section 15.9 of the Telecommunications Act, making provisions for the judicial review of the cabinet and ministers' orders. The amendments to Bill C-8, challenged by the parliamentary secretary, are like the 2006 precedent. This is the simple creation of a condition on how the decisions of a minister are exercised without changing the types of decisions that could be made and, like the 2014 precedent, simply adjusting to the responsibilities of the decision-makers who each already have assigned roles within the proposed statutory scheme.

To sum up, the parliamentary secretary's point of order should simply be dismissed for its failure to advance any procedural grounds for why the public safety committee's third report might be procedurally flawed. In the alternative, the impugned amendments are all, I submit, within the scope of the bill and have a nature consistent with committee amendments, which your predecessors have found to be within the scope of the bills concerned.

• (1825)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. member for her intervention. The Chair will take it under advisement.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

RESPECTING FAMILIES OF MURDERED AND BRUTALIZED PERSONS ACT

The House resumed from November 28, 2025, consideration of the motion that Bill C-235, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (increasing parole ineligibility), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-235 comes as a bit of a surprise. The Supreme Court of Canada told us just a few years ago that keeping people in prison for 40 years is unconstitutional. Prime Minister Stephen Harper was told that and today we are back here with a bill that deals with pretty much the same issue. I do not know what to say about it. I am afraid we are wasting our time.

In any case, the Bloc Québécois believes in rehabilitation. We do not believe that everyone will be rehabilitated, nor do we believe that it happens automatically, but we do believe that we must invest in rehabilitation. We believe that when someone commits a crime, no matter how serious, we must at least attempt to rehabilitate them before returning them to society. Keeping them in prison for 40 years and then releasing them will not better serve the interests of justice or public safety. We must invest in building rehabilitation systems rather than prison walls.

Private Members' Business

The Bloc Québécois also believes in an effective court system that is not bogged down by slow administration of justice, resulting in decisions and rulings that will eventually be overturned by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is not a small claims court. This was attempted in the Bissonnette case, as members may recall, and the Supreme Court ruled that cumulative prison sentences of more than 40 years are unacceptable and unconstitutional. It should be noted that, when someone is sentenced to life in prison, they are sentenced. When that person is released on parole, there will be conditions, of course, and they will not be completely free. If they do not comply with the conditions, that person will go back to jail. What the Supreme Court has said is that parole applications can be considered after 25 years. I do not know where our Conservative colleagues are going with this Harper-era throwback, but I feel that it is a bit of a waste of time.

We believe in rehabilitation, we believe in an effective court system and we also believe in the authority of the Supreme Court. We cannot keep asking the Supreme Court to review the same cases over and over again. It makes no sense, and it shows a lack of respect for the Supreme Court's authority. I think we need to take note of these decisions and act accordingly. I invite our Conservative colleagues to reread these decisions carefully and help us move forward more effectively.

We also believe in making efficient use of House of Commons infrastructure. We have a lot of legislation to pass. I have been a member of the justice committee for a few years now, if not more, and we never manage to get through all the matters that we need to review. We are currently working on Bill C-16, but there are other bills scheduled to come forward and we need to conduct a study on the judicial appointment process. We are going to be swamped, and we will certainly not have looked at everything by the end of this Parliament. What are we going to do about Bill C-235? We will devote who knows how many meetings, maybe two, three, five or even ten, to studying how we might best get this bill passed, even though we already know that the Supreme Court told us not long ago that such a measure would be unconstitutional. Once again, this is yet another misuse of House of Commons resources and of our judicial system. It is disrespectful to the authority of the Supreme Court, and it runs counter to the interests of society, which would greatly benefit from the effective rehabilitation of individuals who have committed crimes.

That was brief, but it sums up my thoughts. My colleagues have likely realized that we will be voting against Bill C-235. I know that my Conservative colleagues are working hard. I see the work they do on the justice committee. I do not always agree with them, but sometimes I do. Unfortunately, it seems I have been disagreeing with them more often lately. However, I cannot deny that they work hard. I urge them to channel that energy into moving important issues forward. There is so much in the Criminal Code that should be reviewed.

- (1830)

For goodness' sake, we need to acknowledge the situation, accept the Supreme Court's rulings and move forward. Let us focus on what needs to be addressed and what can be changed, rather than spinning our wheels.

[English]

Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this particular bill, Bill C-235, introduced by my colleague, the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford. This is a bill rooted in something very simple yet too often overlooked in our justice system, which is respect for victims and their families.

For far too many Canadians, justice does not end at sentencing. For the families of victims who have endured the unimaginable in the form of the abduction, sex assault and murder of a loved one, the trauma does not fade with time. In many cases, it is forced back into their lives again and again, through a system that compels them to relive their worst nightmare every day. Under current law, offenders convicted of first-degree murder are eligible for parole after 25 years.

What does that actually mean in practice? It means that after 25 years, families are drawn back into the system, often every two years thereafter, to attend parole hearings, hearings where they feel obligated to be present, hearings where they must prepare statements, hearings where they must again confront the individual responsible for the destruction of their family.

We know that in these most heinous cases, parole is almost never granted. We are not talking about individuals who are realistically going to be released. We are talking about individuals the likes of Paul Bernardo, like Clifford Olson, individuals who have used these hearings not as a step toward rehabilitation but as an opportunity to reassert control, to retraumatize families and to force them to relive unspeakable acts. That is the reality. That is why Bill C-235 matters.

The legislation proposes a targeted, reasonable and proportionate reform. It would allow judges, after hearing from a jury, to extend parole eligibility from 25 years up to 40 years, not in every case, not broadly, but only in the most egregious of circumstances, where three elements are present: the abduction, sex assault and murder of the same victim as part of the same event or series of events.

These are not ordinary crimes. These are the most depraved, calculated and devastating offences imaginable, and Canadians understand that. Families understand that. They understand that when someone commits all three of these acts against a single victim, the harm is not just irreparable. It is enduring. It is generational and often permanent, so when we talk about increasing parole ineligibility, we are not talking about punishment for the sake of punishment. We are talking about accountability.

Private Members' Business

Equally important, we are talking about peace, peace for families who should not have to structure their lives around parole hearings every two years, peace for parents who should not have to relive the loss of their child every two years, and peace for loved ones who should not be forced to hear again and again the details of crimes that shattered their world.

Bill C-235 strikes the right balance. It would not impose a mandatory extension. It would not remove judicial discretion. Instead, it would actually empower judges, after considering the character of the offender, the nature of the offence and, importantly, the recommendation from the jury, to determine whether a longer period of parole ineligibility is appropriate. That is a careful, measured approach. It respects the role of the courts and, most importantly, it respects the charter. It respects the voices of Canadians, through the jury system, who may wish to weigh in on what justice looks like in these most serious cases.

This is not about being extreme. This is about being fair: fair to victims, fair to families and fair to a public that expects our justice system to reflect the severity of the crimes being committed. We have heard from victims' families across the country. We have heard their frustrations, their exhaustion and their pain. They speak about a system that forces them into a never-ending cycle, one where they are just about to begin to rebuild their lives when they are pulled back into a process to reopen wounds that never truly heal. They speak about the emotional toll, the financial burden, the anxiety, the fear and the lack of closure.

● (1835)

Bill C-235 responds directly to all those concerns. It acknowledges that justice is not only about the offender. It is also about the lasting impact on those left behind. It takes a meaningful step to reduce that burden. We also know that this bill is limited in scope. Fewer than 10 cases per year would meet this threshold. These individuals are already serving life sentences, and in most cases they will never be released. The financial impact on Correctional Service Canada would be minimal, but the impact on families and on victims would be significant.

This is a small change in law, but a profound change in lived experience. It is consistent with the principle that Conservatives have always stood for: holding offenders accountable, while showing compassion and respect for victims. We believe that when crimes reach this level of brutality, the justice system must respond accordingly. We believe that protecting victims from further harm is not optional; it is actually essential. We believe that anything we can do to hold offenders more accountable for these heinous crimes is a step in the right direction.

There have been cases across the country that have shaken communities, cases that have devastated families and remind us, time after time, why this legislation is so important, and cases where the brutality of the crime defies comprehension and where families are left not only grieving but navigating a system that seems to prioritize process over humanity. While each case is unique, the pattern is the same: unimaginable loss followed by years, sometimes decades, of forced engagement with the criminal responsible.

Bill C-235 offers a different path, a path that still respects due process and judicial discretion and a path that better reflects the re-

ality faced by victims' families. I also want to note that this is not a new idea. Previous versions of the bill have received strong support in the past. In fact, in a previous Parliament, members of the Liberal Party supported the legislation. This should never be a partisan issue. This is about doing what is right. This is about listening to victims, and this is about making a targeted, thoughtful improvement to our justice system.

At its core, Bill C-235 asks a simple question: When someone commits the most horrific combination of crimes, abduction, sexual assault and murder, should families be forced to relive that trauma every two years after 25 years have been served, or can we, as legislators, take a measured step to provide them with some degree of peace?

I believe that answer is abundantly clear, and I believe Canadians expect us to act. Let us stand with victims. Let us stand with families, and let us pass Bill C-235.

● (1840)

James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for bringing forward Bill C-235, the respecting families of murdered and brutalized persons act, which would amend the Criminal Code.

The bill is about putting victims' rights first. It would do that through amendments to the Criminal Code, which, as was already articulated very well by our shadow minister for justice, the member for Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, would increase the parole ineligibility that a jury can recommend to a judge for people convicted of committing the most heinous of crimes, to anywhere from 25 years up to 40 years. The discretionary powers would be given to the judge, who could also take into consideration the offender's character, the nature of the crime and the jury's recommendation to impose the same 25 to 40 years of parole ineligibility at the time of sentencing.

It is important we talk about the fact that this bill is not about increasing stiffer penalties for these sadistic murderers. We are talking about the most depraved of society. We are talking about those who kidnap, rape and kill the most vulnerable, such as children, women and often the elderly. Those who commit some of the most heinous acts are those we are targeting through this bill.

Private Members' Business

The bill is about saving the families of the victims from having to go through the agony of attending these unnecessary and traumatic parole hearings. We have to remember that somebody who is serving a life sentence of up to 25 years can start applying for parole at year 23. Often, these individuals, who have been incarcerated for committing the most despicable acts of abduction, sexual assault and murder, use this as a way to feed their own depravity by having the families come in, seeing them face to face and having them live through the trauma of what happened. The bill would give the jury and judges the power to make the decision, as defined by the charter and as respected under our common law, to determine whether to give 25 to 40 years of parole ineligibility.

I originally drafted this bill back in 2013, when it was tabled as Bill C-478 in the 41st Parliament. Later that year, in 2013, I was promoted to parliamentary secretary, so I was not allowed to carry forward the bill. It was dropped and was then picked up by one of our former colleagues, Colin Mayes, a former British Columbia member of Parliament, as Bill C-587. It passed second reading and was supported by the Liberals, the NDP and some independents, along with the Conservatives, on September 24, 2014.

In 2016, I reintroduced the bill as Bill C-266 after the election, and it passed second reading on May 16, 2019. Again, the Conservatives and the Liberals supported it. That bill made it through committee and came out in 2019, but of course in 2019 we had another election, so it was lost.

In 2021, it was retabled as Bill C-267 by the member for Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry and was also presented simultaneously at that time in the Senate by then senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu, as Bill S-224.

In the 44th Parliament, in 2022, I retabled this bill as Bill C-296, but it was way down on the Order Paper and of course never made it through. In this Parliament, here in the first draw, I am glad to see that my friend from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford has picked up this bill and is running forward with it, with some very personal experiences on this as well from people in his riding who have been impacted.

• (1845)

I want to talk about the nexus of why I did this. Back in 2009 and 2010, we were hearing about the terrible abduction, rape and murder of Tori Stafford. In 2010, Terri-Lynne McClintic was arrested and prosecuted. Then Michael Rafferty, her partner in crime for this horrendous and disgusting act, was sentenced in 2012.

During this time, while I think all of our hearts were breaking listening to this story as it played out on the airwaves, Clifford Olson was dying from cancer in prison. I heard Sharon Rosenfeldt talk on the radio about how the murderer, who killed a number of children, impacted them. When he was getting ready for parole board hearings, he would send letters to the families of the victims and describe in detail how he tortured, raped and killed their children.

It is because of that sadistic behaviour, the tormenting of families and the use of parole board hearings to feed his own sick appetite, that it became clear that we had to do something to protect the families. I knew full well that both Michael Rafferty and Terry-Lynne

McClintic were going to be eligible for parole sometime around 2033 because they killed Tori Stafford.

I believe that all Canadians would consider it unacceptable that families have to go through this ongoing saga of parole board hearings every couple of years and that these monsters who stole their loved ones and killed them sadistically continue to have the opportunity to retraumatize the families.

There have been a number of legal arguments about increasing parole ineligibility, consecutive sentencing and the like. I can say that this bill was fashioned after Bill C-48 in the 40th Parliament, the protecting Canadians by ending sentence discounts for multiple murders act, as well as Bill S-6 from the 40th Parliament, which also provided parole ineligibility at the discretion of the courts, and that is charter compliant.

I want to read into the record some of the quotes that we have heard over the years.

Susan Ashley, whose sister Linda Bright was murdered in 1978 by Donald Armstrong, said, about the parole board hearings in the past, “My heart breaks having to live through this again. My heart breaks having to watch my Mom and Dad drag up their thoughts and pain from that deep place inside them where they tuck their hurt away”.

She did an interview in the London Free Press back in 2012. Susan stated, referring to Donald Armstrong, “He cannot be fixed. And to put him in the community, it's a public risk to any woman that he can have access to. My family and myself, we really don't want to see another family victimized like we were. It's a terrible thing to have to endure, it's a lifetime of pain and suffering.”

Linda's mother, Margaret, said during her victim impact statement, “This is not fair. We should not have to relive our tragedy. When I remember my daughter, let me remember her as a little girl. Don't make me think about the other awful time in 1978.... Let me tell you this has been the most difficult thing I've had to do in the last 20 years”.

Gary Rosenfeldt, Sharon Rosenfeldt's husband, who was a stepfather to Daryn Johnsrude, said publicly, after going through a number of parole hearings against Clifford Olsen in 1997, 2006 and 2010, when there was still the faint hope clause: “What's really horrendous about this...is this is only the beginning. We're going to have to do this every two years as long as Olson lives. And this is a very painful experience for myself, my family.”

Private Members' Business

Darlene Prioriello was abducted, raped, mutilated and murdered by David James Dobson back in 1982. Darlene's sister, Terri, said this about having to go through these unnecessary, repetitive and painful parole board hearings: "Families have already been victimized once. They shouldn't have to be victimized every two years. Having to face a loved one's killer and to read what he did to her and how her death has affected our lives is something nobody should ever have to do once, never mind twice." In the Toronto Star, in talking about her mother reading her victim impact statement, she said, "I listened to her read it and it was like she was burying Dolly all over again. It was so upsetting for Mom. She cried. Families shouldn't have to go through this all over again."

Yvonne Harvey of the Canadian Parents of Murdered Children said, "Although I have not personally faced the ordeal of a parole hearing, I have spoken to many individuals who have. I am certain that the primary intent of this bill, to spare the families of victims from having to attend unnecessary parole hearings, would be most welcomed."

● (1850)

I ask that all members of the House allow this bill to get to committee so that we can stop the revictimization of families by these monsters who are convicted and will never qualify for parole.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will invite the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford to give his right of reply.

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am humbled to stand here and represent the great people of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford on Vancouver Island, and I continue to listen to and bring their voices forward here to Ottawa as their member of Parliament.

One of the biggest issues I hear about is the impact of crime on our community from people who are just trying to focus on the high cost of living and on raising their families in a safe community. People regularly talk to me about justice for victims as well as compassion and support for those impacted by crime. One way I am able to address this is through my private member's bill, Bill C-235, an act respecting families of murdered and brutalized persons.

This is an act that would focus on justice for victims and compassion for families of victims of the most heinous of crimes, where a victim is abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered in the same incident, very similar to that of Kimberly Proctor from Langford on Vancouver Island, a community I represent. Kimberly was horrifyingly abducted, raped and murdered in 2010. I give my deepest respect to her family, whom I know are watching today.

I would like to also express my sincere appreciation to all of my colleagues who have sponsored and spoken to my private member's bill, including the member for Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations and my colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for initiating this private member's bill over 10 years ago.

The most important factor that I would like to focus on today and that I would like all members of the House to consider is that this bill is about both justice for victims and compassion for their families and loved ones. By giving judges the option of parole ineligibility of up to 40 years, this bill would be, as we have heard, char-

ter-compliant and would spare the families and loved ones of victims from the retraumatization of unnecessary parole hearings, potentially, every two years.

I have personally sat with families as they recount the horrific process that comes with victim impact statements and the lengthy parole hearing process. The notifications that lead up to the hearings themselves are devastating. Disturbingly, it is well documented that criminals get off on recounting the heinous detail of their crimes solely for the purpose of revictimizing families.

Parole hearings are sometimes as little as 15 years after sentencing, based on time served and early parole factors. Presently in these cases, only the murder portion goes to sentencing, knowing that the other crimes will not affect the current maximum parole ineligibility of 25 years, leaving the victim, family and loved ones without justice for the abduction and sexual assault portions of these horrendous crimes.

Another important part worth noting is that criminals in these most heinous crimes will likely never receive parole. I was unable to find any such cases. These are criminals whom we know have no chance of ever being rehabilitated, but that does not stop the families, of course, from feeling obligated to submit victim impact statements and attend parole hearings, as it is the only way they can give a voice to those who can no longer speak, their family members, the victims silenced forever who can no longer speak for themselves.

Through debate, we have heard some minor suggestions for improvements discussed, including a more robust appeal mechanism, which is something we could examine in committee and indeed work with legislative counsel to potentially draft as an amendment. Another suggestion was to ensure that the bill would not be retroactive. However, I can confirm that new sentencing legislation is never retroactive. We also heard suggestions to ensure that judges provide clear and exceptional grounds to accompany such sentences. Once again, I am willing to re-examine and strengthen any judicial requirements to justify sentences.

I would like to conclude our second reading of this bill with a few points. Firstly, I would like to remind all members of the House that this bill, previously passed through to committee, received broad, cross-party support and was set to return to the House before Parliament was prorogued in 2021. Secondly, I am open in committee to exploring and making necessary amendments, if required, to strengthen the bill, some of which I have addressed here today. Lastly, which I think is the most important part, I am asking all members to support my bill on behalf of the families I have heard from about the stresses, pressures and devastating impact of ongoing parole hearings and being revictimized by these most heinous criminals.

Therefore, I challenge members from across the House to join me and give broad support to Bill C-235 by voting yes tomorrow and sending it before the justice committee. More importantly, I challenge them to show Canadians that we have listened.

This bill is about justice for victims. It is about sparing loved ones from the parole hearing process that forces them to relive the worst moment of their lives over and over. By supporting this bill, we can show Canadians that we are prepared to stand with victims' families and loved ones while respecting the memory of those they have lost.

• (1855)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The question is on the motion.

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

Jeff Kibble: Mr. Speaker, I request that we pass this bill on division.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I therefore declare the motion carried on division. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

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

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

EMPLOYMENT

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the latest job numbers show that jobs are, figuratively, falling off a cliff, with 108,000 full-time jobs lost in one month and 47,000, almost 50,000, youth jobs lost in the same period. Under this Prime Minister, we are losing jobs at speeds not seen in a generation, and that is quite literally true. Outside of the COVID period, the last time we had a single drop in jobs in one

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month comparable to this was way back during the great recession. We are now a year into this Prime Minister's tenure in office and have had well over 10 years of Liberal government. We continually hear these promises about how good things are about to get, yet job numbers are falling off a cliff.

Some of the news coverage of these terrible job numbers was to say what a surprise it was, apparently, that we lost over 100,000 full-time jobs in a month. I can tell members that I was not surprised, because in the year I have been in this role as the shadow minister for employment for our caucus, I have been speaking with young people, employers, training institutions and other organizations. I can say that there is deep, abiding concern about the employment situation and about the policies of government that relate to it. There may have been surprise in some quarters about the fact that we lost over 100,000 full-time jobs last month, but this was not a surprise to me or, I think, to many people who have been talking to Canadians and hearing about these issues closely.

We heard a myriad of excuses from across the way for these terrible job numbers. We heard the minister for AI say that it was because of the war in Iran. Maybe he got that answer from AI, but the fact of the matter is that these job numbers come from a period that was before the war in Iran even started. Putting aside the absurdity of that speculation, it is chronologically impossible. We had another minister say that this is all because of the trade war, yet we have the second-highest unemployment in the G7. The Prime Minister promised a deal by last summer. He has not delivered on that. Moreover, Canada has a more acute unemployment crisis than many other countries, and it is particularly acute for young people.

We had different excuses from different ministers. The Prime Minister actually said that these numbers were not so bad. He said to compare our performance to that of the U.S. Well, okay, their unemployment rate is 4.4%, and our unemployment rate is more than two full percentage points higher, so we have substantially higher unemployment in Canada.

The critical point to make about our engagement on this issue of jobs is that last fall, Conservatives put forward our Conservative youth jobs plan, with specific policies to unleash our economy, to fix immigration, to fix training and to build homes where the jobs are. It emphasized the need for a stronger economy, how failures of immigration have exacerbated competition for entry-level jobs, how there are mismatches in our training system that need to be remedied, and how we need to support labour mobility to help people take opportunities in areas of lower unemployment. We proposed these constructive solutions, and the Liberals have failed to adopt them. In fact, in many ways, they are moving in the opposite direction.

Given the Liberals' catastrophic failures on this file, why will they not adopt the constructive ideas we have put forward?

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• (1900)

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would note that in the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan's nearly four-minute opener, we barely heard about the impact of the trade war on Canada's economic situation. In fact, what we heard was a fair amount of heavy sarcasm about the state of challenge that has been placed on Canada and on Canadians in the past 14 months as a result of a very serious trade war that continues to change and shift our industries and our workforces in ways that I think no one would have predicted a year or a year and a half ago.

I want to assure him of some of the things that I think we should be thinking about in terms of where we sit in our Canadian economy right now. Canada is poised to have the second-fastest growth in the G7. We have been rated as number two in the world for confidence in foreign direct investment. In fact, FDI in Canada has been at its highest level in 18 years. The Economist ranked Canada number two in the G20 for doing business over the next five years.

I point these out because they are evidence of a serious plan, a tough plan, a plan that is making serious changes and bringing the Canadian economy and our workforce through a period of great transition that we did not ask for, but we are going to win.

I want to assure my colleague across the way that the plan we put forward in budget 2025, which is effectively our economic and jobs plan as a government, is heavily invested in providing employment support, skills training and federal, provincial and territorial partnerships that are going to help create jobs and prosperity across Canada. These are measures that will not only help workers and their families thrive, but help Canada build the strongest economy in the G7.

It is no secret that these tariffs have hit our economy hard, and we know that some regions and sectors are facing significant labour market pressures. Steel and softwood lumber are two of the hardest-hit, so we need to work together as a country to meet many of these pressures head-on.

Labour market agreements are, quite simply, the most responsive tools we have to help workers move into new jobs and seize new opportunities. Through these agreements, provinces and territories deliver flexible, locally tailored training and employment supports, ensuring that services meet the unique needs of the labour markets. Each year, these agreements reach around 800,000 Canadians, providing employment services, skills development and training. All of this is supported by a \$2.9-billion federal investment annually, demonstrating the scale and importance of this work to Canada's labour market.

However, more is needed to help Canadian workers who are affected by U.S. tariffs and global market shifts. As we laid out in our budget, our government is increasing its investments in Canadian workers with an additional \$570 million over three years in targeted funding through these LMAs to support workers affected by these serious trade disruptions, including \$70 million to support up to 10,000 workers in the steel industry with training and employment supports; \$50 million for upskilling, re-skilling and employment

supports for over 6,000 workers in the softwood lumber industry; and \$450 million for a re-skilling package to retrain up to 50,000 workers affected by tariffs and global market shifts.

Through these investments, affected Canadian workers will gain the necessary skills to find new jobs and be more productive in existing jobs. At the same time, we are going to continue with investments into our sectoral workforce innovation fund, into apprenticeships, into trades and into improving education across the country with other investments that we have made to support student financial aid. This is part of our economic plan for jobs—

• (1905)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, as a response to the question that was asked, that was breathtakingly absurd. Is the government not aware of the job numbers? We had a four-minute response that pretends to ignore the existence of the massive drop in full-time employment. Over 100,000 full-time jobs were lost in the last month alone, yet the parliamentary secretary wants us to believe that we are about to have never had it so good and that we are poised to do all these things, which I would very much like to see happen, but the government has not approved a single major project. It continues to support job-killing measures across the board. There are some things we cannot control, but there are some things that we can. Blaming a war in the Middle East that started after these job numbers were recorded is clearly absurd.

When it comes to the budget, the Liberals' budget cut off vocational colleges from student grants completely. Why in the world are they continuing to attack training and undermine job growth in this country?

Leslie Church: Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct my colleague across the way. I said no such thing. I take these concerns very seriously, as does our government: investing in jobs and investing in the growth that is going to propel new jobs in this country in the years to come, to bring in foreign direct investment, to diversify our trade, to build major projects, to invest in housing and to make life more affordable. These are all ingredients in a serious economic plan working for the people of Canada.

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I also want to tackle what my colleague has raised about youth. I want to share the example of the Canada summer jobs program. Budget 2025 committed nearly \$600 million over two years to support job opportunities for youth, including 100,000 jobs this upcoming summer for Canadian youth. We have also earmarked more than \$300 million for our youth employment and skills strategy program. These are programs that work. They give youth that first foot on the ladder into the workforce. They are important to continue and important to grow, and that is exactly what we are doing.

THE ECONOMY

Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after one year with the Prime Minister, things have only gotten worse for Canadians.

Canada is now the food inflation capital of the G7, with food prices skyrocketing 7.3% and food bank lineups of 2 million visitors per month. At the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre, we serve 23,000 to 24,000 people a month. That is up 6,000 to 7,000 per month since 2019.

Unemployment in this country has now hit 6.7%, with 84,000 more Canadians losing their full-time job last month. Youth unemployment is big now, skyrocketing to 14%, the worst level since the great recession. Canadians are increasingly reliant on part-time work to afford their basic necessities day to day. The federal deficit has doubled. Debt-to-GDP is now rising again. Families have to pay \$3,300 a year of the interest just to service the national debt.

The dream of home ownership has never been more out of reach in this country. CMHC is predicting housing construction to decline 18.1%, well below the 10-year average. The government's own housing agency has said it will add only 5,200 homes this year. It promised 500,000 new homes every year. At the same time, Canadians are carrying record household debt, \$2.6 trillion, mostly from mortgages just to keep a roof over their head. The Prime Minister promised to build at a scale we had not seen in generations. He promised this less than a year ago, yet one year later, Canadians are now finding it even harder to make ends meet.

Food inflation is now rising twice as fast as it was before the Prime Minister took office a year ago. Food prices, as I mentioned, have skyrocketed 7.3% year over year, leading to Canada having the worst food price increases in the G7. Canadian families are projected to pay nearly \$1,000 more in food costs alone this year.

Meanwhile, the cost of food purchase for restaurants alone was up 12.3% in the same period, and for takeout and fast food it was up 14%. That means it is no surprise that nearly half the restaurants are operating at a loss or are barely breaking even. With 7,000 closing last year, about 4,000 are projected to close this year.

Canada, by the way, is the only country in the G7 with a shrinking economy, contracting 0.2% in the last quarter alone of 2025. That has a real impact on jobs, with over 100,000 full-time jobs lost in February alone, the largest single-month decline since the great recession, outside the pandemic.

Canadians are really struggling, and all we hear from the government is how great we have it. It will be interesting to hear the response of the government with these dismal numbers we have received in the last 12 months.

• (1910)

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's priority is reducing pressures on costs and creating new opportunities for Canadians. I would note to my colleague that, as mentioned in the previous response, Canada right now is set to have the second-fastest growth in the G7. Foreign direct investment into the Canadian economy is at an 18-year high. These are proof points that the serious economic plan that we have put forward for Canadians is working. It is under way, and it is taking effect. This includes supporting Canadians with the cost of groceries and everyday essentials, which have stretched many Canadians' wallets.

This past January, the Prime Minister announced the new Canada groceries and essentials benefit, which will become available this spring. This benefit will help more than 12 million low- and middle-income Canadians to afford day-to-day essentials. It builds on the existing GST credit but will be more generous.

First, we will be providing a one-time payment equivalent to a 50% increase in the value of the GST credit this spring, and then we will increase the benefit by 25% for five years, starting this July. The difference will be considerable for Canadians struggling with putting food on the table. Before this new benefit, a person living alone who is eligible for the GST credit would have received a maximum of \$543. That same person now will get approximately \$950 in total this year from the 50% one-time payment and the 25% increase thereafter, thanks to the changes that we have announced. For a couple with two children, the amount will increase from approximately \$1,086 annually to \$1,890. These amounts will increase each year in line with the rising cost of living.

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We are not stopping there. Last September, we launched a new strategic response fund to help sectors impacted by tariffs. We are committing up to \$500 million from this fund to help businesses address the costs of supply chain disruptions without passing those costs on to Canadians at the checkout line. We will provide another \$150 million under the regional tariff response initiative, specifically to help the small and medium-sized businesses that my colleague opposite was speaking about in the food sector, and we will allow growers to fully write off the cost of new greenhouses immediately to free up the capital they need to expand production. This will ultimately help lower food prices for Canadians.

At a time when global supply chain disruptions are driving up prices, the government is lending Canadians a hand. I appreciate many of my colleague's examples, but I would also point him to the fact that in his home province of Saskatchewan, parents are now paying \$10-a-day child care, saving close to \$7,000 per child per year through early learning and child care. Saskatchewan has received close to \$60 million in federal funding to expand access to school food programs, helping more kids in more schools access nutritious meals, saving families up to \$800 a year. In 2025, we have committed close to \$20 million through the national housing strategy to support housing initiatives in Saskatchewan. These are measures that go hand in hand with making life more affordable for Canadians right across the country and with growing our economy.

• (1915)

Kevin Waugh: Mr. Speaker, when Canadians thrive, they do not need to rely on government handouts. Our province is like that. It does not enjoy the fact that the government is handing out billions of dollars throughout the country just to help Canadians. I know what people in my province want. They want jobs, and unfortunately, this country lost 100,000 jobs in the first two months of 2026. Let us think about the 100,000 jobs that have been lost in the last 60 days.

Canada has the only shrinking economy, the second-highest unemployment, the highest household debt and the highest food inflation in the entire G7. Let those numbers sink in. The Liberal Prime Minister cannot just blame global factors when the other members of the G7 are in fact dealing with the same issues.

Canadians cannot afford this failure any longer.

Leslie Church: Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I am a bit confounded by this particular line of argument from both of the members opposite this evening, somehow comparing Canada to European countries in particular, and to Japan, in terms of just comparing the level of integration that we have as a Canadian economy with the United States and calling it comparable to that of European members of the G7.

I think the members opposite should stand up and face facts and talk about the trade war that we have been in for the past year with a little more precision and clarity about the impact that has had on our economy. It is the reason Canadians have given the mandate they have given to the Prime Minister to transform the Canadian economy, to diversify our trade, to build major projects and to grow our economy and our industries, so that we are as strong, resilient and sovereign at home as we can be.

[*Translation*]

PENSIONS

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is important for me to rise in the House and speak about the Cúram software because there have been outrageous cost overruns.

I will remind members of the facts. In the beginning, the project was expected to cost \$1.75 billion, but it is now costing \$6.6 billion. That is a cost overrun of more than \$5 billion, which is almost ten times the cost of SAAQclac. In that case, Quebec took its responsibility seriously and had a judge conduct an independent inquiry. Recommendations were made to ensure that these sorts of IT errors would not happen again.

Ottawa seems to be ignoring this reality. We asked questions in the House and we were told by ministers that we should be happy about Cúram and that the Bloc Québécois was just fearmongering. However, obviously, the money being wasted in this financial scandal belongs to Quebecers and Canadians.

Two weeks ago, we were given a technical briefing. It seemed as though the Liberals no longer had any good answers to give the House. The government decided to provide a technical briefing to try to manage the crisis. The technical briefing told us little that we did not already know. That is one of the problems.

They did the same thing with journalists. The journalists reported—so this is public—that Ottawa knew the first estimate was not reliable and costs were going to explode. Is that responsible management? Absolutely not. Government officials said that IT projects always involve cost overruns. Why is that? If we all managed our own finances that way, it would be catastrophic.

Government officials cannot even identify the new functionalities or the short-term program operating costs. Apparently, the post-2031 operating costs have not even been evaluated. That is an additional \$660 million per year. That is an annual cost overrun equivalent to a whole SAAQclac, and it was not planned for.

The federal government needs to do the responsible thing and give us the real numbers. The initial estimate, \$1.75 billion, was only for the tranche 1 costs. The government says there is no problem and it really did not have that information. According to a 2023 briefing note to the Minister of Citizens' Services at the time, the December 2020 cost estimate was \$2.2 billion for the benefits delivery modernization program, which included old age security, employment insurance and the Canada pension plan.

This contradicts the idea that the government did not know the figures, but an assessment was conducted. The Auditor General's report later on yielded new figures in 2022. At that point, the estimate was more in the range of \$3 billion to \$4 billion. The Auditor General's report was particularly noteworthy because it also indicated that the government knew the Cúram program was problematic, given that there were precedents, notably in Ontario. The Ontario government had used this platform for its Social Assistance Management System software in 2009.

This project was the subject of an audit carried out by the Auditor General of Ontario in 2015. Her report stated that IBM had missed deadlines for converting the data while also introducing errors and that IBM had not provided adequate expertise. It stated that the ministry said it had relied on the IBM project manager to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of Cúram consultants' work, that the consultants were overseen by an IBM consultant, and that Cúram consultants worked inefficiently before the launch.

The same mistakes are being repeated. My question is: When will there be an independent public inquiry? We are looking at a figure of \$6.6 billion, and we know it is going to keep going up.

● (1920)

Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue for his question. I also want to thank him for attending the technical briefing recently held for members of Parliament.

[English]

This debate gives us yet another opportunity to share with Canadians our commitment to ensuring that they may continue to receive the critical federal benefits to which they are entitled. We have been investing in benefits delivery modernization because Canadians deserve functional and responsive services that are dependable and modern. Any interruption to old age security, employment insurance or the Canada pension plan could significantly affect recipients' abilities to meet their daily needs, such as buying food, paying rent and just getting by. To guard against this problem, ESDC has spent more than \$1 billion in maintenance over the last 10 years. The older and more obsolete these systems get, the more costly it becomes to run them and the more fragile they become. It is simply not sustainable.

This undertaking currently is massive and requires significant investments. Between 2017 and 2025, the BDM project has cost \$1.8 billion. The program will bring together old age security, employment insurance and Canada pension plan payments onto the BDM platform, in a phased and prudent manner, by 2030. It will also bolster cybersecurity and bring together a number of call centres onto a single, modernized, accessible platform by October 2027.

As with any technology project of this scale, many of the costs that needed to be considered could not be fully known at the start. Over time, the estimates have become more refined as we better understand the complexity of unravelling decades-old systems, the challenge of protecting against modern security threats and the impact of unanticipated global inflation across markets and supply

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chains. Despite this, over the life of the program, total benefits to Canadians will amount to more than \$1.6 trillion, while funding expended on the BDM platform is less than 1% of the total payout of these programs.

To operate the core technology, ESDC selected the Cúram social program management platform. Cúram has been chosen because it is a platform designed specifically for managing large and complex social programs. It is a proven product that comes equipped with built-in functions that other generic platforms would have to custom build and test, which would have increased the time, cost and risk to deliver. As of 2023, Cúram has been successfully implemented by 970 government social programs across 12 countries, serving 187 million clients worldwide. Before choosing Cúram, the BDM program studied its deployments in other jurisdictions and examined the past experiences of these deployments to design a solution tailored to the federal context, not to replicate an existing model. Our number one priority is maintaining the delivery of benefits with no interruptions, so we are making this transformation carefully and in phases. Everything is fully tested before release.

To date, the new Cúram system has made close to 90 million payments to more than 7.7 million clients, distributing nearly \$85 billion in benefits accurately and on time.

Managing EI benefits is the next step. The first stage occurred in November 2025, and all EI benefits will be transitioned to the new platform by 2028. The BDM project is a major project and necessary, and it is helping us reimagine the way services get delivered to Canadians.

● (1925)

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for her tone of voice. It makes a refreshing change from a lot of ministers, including the Prime Minister.

Obviously, we forgot to mention during this debate that errors have occurred in 85,000 cases, that some seniors have not received their benefits on time, and that many people are still waiting a year later. That is irresponsible on the part of this government. It has assured us that some cases have been resolved but that 69,000 cases are outstanding. The problems persist, and people are suffering.

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Let us talk about the context surrounding IT contracts. This is not the first case of its kind. Allow me to remind the House that the ArriveCAN contract started out costing \$80,000 but climbed to \$60 million. Phoenix went from costing \$309 million to over \$5 billion, and it is already on the way out. It is headed for the trash heap and being replaced by Phoenix 2.0: Dayforce. This pay system was expected to cost a few million dollars, but the price tag has since climbed to \$4.2 billion, not including the cost of transitioning to the new system. A year ago, the contract was supposed to cost \$350 million; today, the amount is about \$560 million.

The question remains: When can we expect an independent public inquiry? Everything is exploding.

[*English*]

Leslie Church: Mr. Speaker, let me address the member opposite's concerns, particularly about costs. He was looking for answers. He may not like them, but here they are.

The fact of the matter is that spending on the project has not surged. The recently completed move of old age security onto the Cúram platform was delivered as planned and under budget. Let me say that again: It was delivered as planned and under budget. Specifically, the completed OAS project cost \$633 million, below the initial estimated \$674-million project cost from 2023.

What has increased is the estimate of the total cost to complete this once-in-a-generation transformation. What we are talking about is the full transformation of benefits for all of OAS, employment insurance and CPP, including modernizing all of ESDC's call centres. It is not the amount spent. That is \$1.8 billion as of this past December.

This transformation is being undertaken in a responsible, transparent manner, with concern for all those involved. So far, 7.7 million seniors have received their benefits on time and accurately. We are making progress with those who have had issues. Many of them are in paper form. We are correcting those errors. We are working with them.

We trust that this is going to be a system that is suitable for the next generation of Canadians.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The motion to adjourn the House is now 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 7:28 p.m.)

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