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# House of Commons Debates

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Wednesday, October 7, 2020

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1405)

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the signing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

### ALFRED-PELLAN

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, many guardian angels in Alfred-Pellan made a big difference during the first wave. They faced our new reality with courage, determination and resilience in order to support the most vulnerable among us.

Today I wish to recognize the many hours of food preparation involved in delivering our meals on wheels programs in organizations like the Service bénévole d'entraide de Vimont-Auteuil, Bonjour Aujourd'hui et Après and the Popote roulante de Saint-Noël-Chabanel. The Centre d'entraide du Marigot Affordable has been offering affordable catering services to support our seniors, and the Relais du quartier Saint-Vincent-de-Paul and the Maison de la Famille de Saint-François have set up emergency food banks. Laval has begun a challenge known as “28 days to flatten the curve”.

Finally, I want to thank all the organizations in Alfred-Pellan that are staying the course and continue to support our community. They are doing tremendous work and I cannot thank them enough. Congratulations.

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[*English*]

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to deliver this statement from Williams Lake, British Columbia, my hometown and the home of the Williams Lake Stampede, the greatest show on dirt.

Over the last five years, the Liberals have shown through their disastrous policies that they do not respect or understand rural or western Canadians. The Speech from the Throne did not address increasing rural crime or the opioid crisis and did nothing to address the growing unity crisis grappling western Canada.

Small businesses are the backbone of our country and have been all but forgotten by the government. Communities in my riding depend on the economic benefits of major events, like the Williams Lake Stampede, Billy Barker Days, the Vanderhoof International Airshow and the BC Northern Exhibition. Due to COVID, all were shut down in 2020.

Because of this, businesses and great community supporters like C+ Rodeos, Central Display, Judy Russell's Enchainement Dance Centre, Blake Productions and thousands more have all suffered incredible losses this year. Sadly, they were all left behind by the government. They deserve better.

We may be down, but in true Cariboo spirit, we will get back up, dust ourselves off, saddle up and ride again. Yee-haw.

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### COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Etobicoke North is a caring, strong community and we are here for one another. I thank the tireless front-line health care workers of our own William Osler Health System for their life-saving work and Rexdale Community Health Centre for its important community health care during COVID-19.

I thank our tremendous community organizations like Albion Neighbourhood Services that provided youth services; the Sikh Spiritual Centre Toronto that provided packed meals to families; the International Muslim Organization and the Lions Club that provided food and essential supplies; and Trust 15 that continued inspiring and mentoring our amazing youth. I thank our churches, mandirs, volunteers and our wonderful families. I am grateful for the care, love and the way they lift us up.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not over and it will take all of us working together to keep our very special community safe.

*Statements by Members*

• (1410)

[Translation]

**MINTA SAINT-BRUNO**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, an organization in the parish of Saint-Bruno funded a development project in the village of Minta in Cameroon. For half a century, this organization, which named itself after the village, has invested in humanitarian aid projects designed to improve the living conditions in disadvantaged communities around the world.

Since 1970, Minta has carried out over 233 projects in 43 countries on four different continents. However, the 50th anniversary celebrations, including the big solidarity walk scheduled for May, had to be cancelled. Not to worry, though. We intend to hold an even bigger celebration. What is more, despite the restrictions related to the current health crisis, a beautiful globe-shaped sculpture was unveiled in front of the Saint-Bruno church on September 14.

International solidarity is always very important and that is particularly true during a pandemic. We must therefore not hesitate to support remarkable organizations like Minta Saint-Bruno, which has made Quebec and our region known throughout the world, helps build lasting ties and makes a difference in the lives of people throughout the world.

Happy 50th anniversary to Minta Saint-Bruno.

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[English]

**ÉDUC'ALCOOL**

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the eve of its 30th anniversary to recognize Éduc'alcool's great work. Taking action against excessive drinking, it started small, helping other organizations repair the damage caused by alcohol abuse.

Over time, as it grew, it took on the challenge of prevention. Its slogan "*La modération a bien meilleur goût*" and clever marketing approach have been incredibly successful, and it is renowned for its educational programs and common-sense approach. Éduc'alcool is a beloved and respected voice on the harms of excessive drinking and alcohol policy.

This October, Éduc'alcool is launching a Quebec-wide contest called "*En octobre, on compte ses verres*". I encourage everyone across Quebec to take part and count their drinks in October. Moderation is always in good taste.

Éduc'alcool deserves our recognition for making Quebecers more accountable and aware of the harm posed by excessive drinking. I thank it for all it does.

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**BOB CLARK**

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in 1960, a young farm boy who had just started teaching was recruited to run for politics.

At age 23, Bob Clark became the youngest elected official in the commonwealth. He went on to serve as minister of youth, minister of education and eventually leader of Alberta's official opposition.

After politics, he served as Alberta's ethics commissioner and, more recently, as chair of Olds College Board of Governors. As a lifelong sports builder, particularly with the Olds Grizzlys hockey team, Bob was inducted into the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame. These are but a few highlights of his storied career.

In the early 1970s, Bob encouraged me to become engaged in politics. As I travelled alongside Bob, I was able to observe what a politician should be: a compassionate listener and a problem-solver dedicated to public service. I cherished him as a mentor and as a friend.

Bob passed away on July 10 with his loving wife Norma and children, Dean and Donna, by his side. We will all miss him dearly.

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**NORTHERN ONTARIO**

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, small and medium-sized businesses in northern Ontario remain hard hit by COVID-19. FedNor's regional relief and recovery fund, RRRF, has been a lifeline, protecting more than 3,300 jobs in northern Ontario alone.

On October 2, an extra \$22.3 million was announced for FedNor, including \$6 million for Community Futures development corporations. This is in addition to the \$43.8 million that were already announced this spring.

I want to thank the minister for all her help in supporting local jobs in northern Ontario. Our message to local businesses is clear: We are here for them and we will get through this together. We are working with them to support good, local jobs and to help our economy come back stronger.

[Translation]

These businesses are the backbone of our economy and an important source of local jobs. We are providing small and medium-sized businesses with the means and the tools they need to recover and prosper.

\* \* \*

[English]

**WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY**

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this month is Women's History Month and I rise to remind the House of how much work is still needed for women's equality and that our rights still remain under threat.

For example, the Leader of the Opposition says that he got into politics to defend the rights of Canadians, yet he pleaded for the votes of social Conservatives who worked to remove a woman's right to chose. He supports the member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington who compared the arguments for a woman's right to chose to the argument in support of slavery.

We can compare that to our Prime Minister who appointed Canada's first gender-balanced cabinet. He also stated, "It is not for a room full of predominantly male legislators to take away those rights from women."

I know the Leader of the Opposition says that he is Canada's next handyman, but he clearly does not understand how to build a more equitable Canada. On this side of the House, our Prime Minister, our Liberal members are leaders. We stand up and speak out against those who seek to roll back women's rights.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

#### MARIETTA LOLA DOREEN ROBERTS

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, to many, Marietta Lola Doreen Roberts was a politician, a lawyer and a judge in Ontario. She was the first woman elected as a member of the provincial parliament in my riding.

To me, Marietta was the next-door neighbour to my family farm in Sparta, Ontario. The relationship between the Roberts and the Martyn families have extended through multiple generations. To my Aunt Marjory, Marietta was a childhood friend and loyal confidant. Marjory would reflect upon Marietta as being one who was devoted to her family. Marietta had cultivated numerous friends and treated individuals with fairness in her personal and professional life.

For over 65 years, Marietta was an aunt to my family, an aunt who remembered birthdays and celebrated with us every Christmas Eve. To me, Marietta was proof that if one was from Sparta, one could do anything. Steve Peters, former speaker of the Ontario legislature, once said to me that there must be something in the water.

I send my heartfelt condolences to the Roberts family. Marietta has left a great legacy to her community and to all Canadians.

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#### PHARMACARE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, COVID-19 has demonstrated to Canadians that the provincial and Canadian governments have worked exceptionally well together in protecting our health care system and providing the health care services Canadians expect.

Over the last couple of years, I have tabled many petitions signed by the residents of Winnipeg North, calling upon the federal government to introduce and bring forward a national pharmacare program. We have seen in the throne speech a plan for a truly national pharmacare program, from coast to coast to coast, for the provinces that are willing to work with the government to make a difference and deliver what Canadians in all regions of our country want. They want a truly national pharmacare program.

#### Statements by Members

#### SUKKOT

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, beginning last Friday, Jewish Canadians across the country have been celebrating Sukkot.

During this time, we celebrate the gathering of the harvest and commemorate the 40 years the ancient Israelites wandered the desert after leaving Egypt. For eight days, Jews will gather in a sukkah, which is a hut that represents the temporary shelters used on the way out of Egypt. It is here where meals and prayers are shared throughout Sukkot to celebrate this joyous and festive occasion.

During this celebration, a bundle of different plants, known as the four kinds, is waved in different directions. They symbolize Jewish unity, demonstrating how the differing levels of knowledge and observance within the Jewish faith are united.

Today, I wish the Jewish community across Canada celebrating Sukkot a Chag Sameach.

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#### GOVERNMENT POLICIES

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Alberta announced that it will establish the centre of excellence for plastics diversion and recycling by 2030 as part of its plan to get Albertans back to work. The plan could lead to a possible \$1.4 billion in economic opportunity, and contribute to the creation of over 13,000 jobs while decreasing the impact of plastic waste.

With all the Liberals' talk about the economy and environment going hand in hand, we would have thought that this would have been a welcome plan. However, less than 24 hours later, they have made it clear they intend to get in Alberta's way yet again by declaring plastics as toxic and banning single-use items under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Plastic will now be considered just as toxic as other substances such as mercury and asbestos. Now, in the middle of a pandemic, workers in the plastic manufacturing industry might also find themselves out of a job.

It is clear the Liberals do not have a single use for Albertans. Why do Liberals not understand that it is their policies that are actually toxic?

*Oral Questions***INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, October 11 marks the International Day of the Girl Child. It is a day to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world.

According to the United Nations, there are more than 1.1 billion girls under the age of 18. They are poised to become the largest generation of female leaders, entrepreneurs and change-makers the world has ever seen. However, there is a problem. COVID-19 has not just exposed inequalities girls were already facing. This pandemic has made them worse. Decades of progress in gender equality will disappear before our eyes if we do not act now.

To start, Canada must invest 1% of its COVID-19 response to global solutions that protect the rights of girls around the world. We must fight for gender equality abroad by promoting human rights, security, access to education and protection of health while ensuring that women and girls have a seat at all the decision-making tables.

\* \* \*

• (1420)

[*Translation*]**ALEXIS LAFRENIÈRE**

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as a lifelong fan of the Rimouski Océanic, I am very proud to point out to my colleagues that a star player from our club, Alexis Lafrenière, was drafted first overall in the NHL draft yesterday.

Alexis was drafted by the New York Rangers, and after dominating the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, I know that he will thrill the crowds in Madison Square Garden just as he did in the Colisée de Rimouski. Alexis is the eighth Quebecker in 50 years to earn this honour, joining greats like Mario Lemieux and Guy Lafleur.

The Rimouski Océanic has a long tradition of excellence, boasting two other first-round picks, Sidney Crosby and Vincent Lecavalier. The Rimouski Océanic is the pride of a region, and Alexis is the pride of a nation.

Alexis Lafrenière will undoubtedly prove himself to be a true hockey legend.

Congratulations, Alexis!

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[*English*]**ETHICS**

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the list of laws broken by these Liberals and Liberal insiders gets longer by the day. News continues to break about more Liberals involved with organized crime, fraud, assault and, in this place, ethics laws. For years now they have broken ethics laws, been caught and then tried to cover it up.

The WE scandal is no different. When multiple committees were dialing in on the corruption around the cabinet table, the Prime Minister shut down Parliament and locked the doors on those committees. In the middle of a pandemic, the Prime Minister put his cover-up before the needs of Canadians.

Now that Parliament has resumed, it is clear their vote to block the WE documents at committee demonstrates that they are intent on covering up their corruption. Canadian confidence in public institutions continues to be degraded by the Liberal government. Canadians want the truth and they deserve answers.

It is time for Liberal members to make a choice. Will they bring the truth to light, or will they be complicit in corruption and cover-ups that damage our democracy?

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[*Translation*]**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, now more than ever, we have a role to play on the world stage. China has been arbitrarily detaining members of the Muslim Uighur community for years now, and the reports of internment, forced labour, sterilization and other human rights violations are very troublesome. That is not all.

[*English*]

Even as the repression of the Muslim Uighur community continues, Chinese authorities are ramping up their assault on the freedoms of those living in Hong Kong. The new national security legislation is resulting in the arrest and detention of democracy rights activists. That is why Canada was the first country in the world to suspend its extradition treaty with Hong Kong.

We are taking a leadership role with our allies. We remain firmly committed to the immediate release of the two arbitrarily detained Canadians, but that does not mean we have not stood up to China, because Canada will always stand up for what is right.

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**ORAL QUESTIONS**[*Translation*]**HEALTH**

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for two decades, the government has counted on the Global Public Health Intelligence Network to predict pandemics. In 2018, the Liberal government changed its mission. It decided to put more faith in official information from countries like China. As a result, Canada was not prepared for COVID-19.

Why did the Prime Minister shut down our country's first line of defence?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the years, Canada has continued to play an important role not only here at home but also around the world in fighting infectious diseases and working with our global partners. We have continued to do that.

We learned so much from the 2003 SARS outbreak in Toronto. We put those lessons into practice when this pandemic emerged in Canada.

Back in early January, Dr. Tam had already set up meetings with her provincial counterparts. We have continued to work with the experts to fight the pandemic here in Canada.

• (1425)

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is not true. The Prime Minister shut down our pandemic warning system. He placed a higher priority on official information from the Chinese government than on information from Canadian analysts. Canada used to have a state-of-the-art pandemic warning system, but now it does not.

Why does the Prime Minister think communiqués from Beijing are better than information from our own professionals?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is simply not so. We have extraordinary experts across Canada who are constantly making recommendations to us. We are also working within a multilateral system that recognizes the work done by our allies in the world and by the World Health Organization.

We will continue to rely on the best possible data to do everything we can to protect Canadians. That is what we have been doing since the beginning of this pandemic and that is what we will continue to do for the duration of the pandemic. Unlike the other parties, we will be there to support Canadians every step of the way, always based on science.

[English]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, he prioritized information from Beijing over information from Canadian intelligence officials. Experts had been warning since 2018 that the government was keeping them from reporting international health situations, leaving Canadians at risk. The last warning that went out without government interference was in May 2019. Seven months later, doctors in Wuhan began raising alarms about a pandemic.

Why did the Prime Minister shut down the country's first line of defence against COVID-19?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, we see the Conservatives playing up alarmist political points to score cheap political points. That is simply not the way it worked. We worked from the beginning of January, when Dr. Tam engaged with her counterparts across the country to highlight the concerns and the threat of this potential virus. We had intelligence briefings through the month of January on this issue, and we continued to work based on the best advice of our top scientists and

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medical officials in Canada, but also top scientists and officials from around the world, including at the WHO.

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is alarming is the story in the newspaper today that said senior Health Canada officials said information about health outbreaks was being dumbed down by the government.

Scientists have said that the government placed a higher priority on open-source information from China than on information gathered by Canadian intelligence officials. Before the pandemic warning system was shut down by the Prime Minister, it was leading the world in identifying outbreaks.

Why did the Prime Minister put the health of Canadians at risk when he shut down the pandemic warning system?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think all Canadians, and especially scientists, across the country will know that we will not take lessons from Conservatives when it comes to supporting science and scientists in this country.

For 10 years under Stephen Harper, the Conservatives slashed science budgets, and they slashed and limited the abilities of scientists to do their work. On the contrary, we invested historic amounts in supporting scientists across the country, ensuring that science is at the forefront of decisions we take. We will continue to put forward the responsible and powerful decisions made by our scientists as the things that we move forward on as a country.

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### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Senator Salma Ataullahjan is running to be the president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Senator Ataullahjan would be the first Canadian, and would also be the first Muslim Canadian, to be put forward by Canada for a prestigious position like this.

Will the Prime Minister join me today in formally endorsing Senator Ataullahjan's candidacy for president of the IPU?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from Conservatives when it comes to gender equality or diversity. We recognize Senator Salma Ataullahjan's important work on human rights issues. The Minister of Foreign Affairs had a great conversation with her about her candidacy last week—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

• (1430)

**The Speaker:** I am going to interrupt the hon. Prime Minister.

I am having a hard time hearing. There are not a lot of people, with COVID, and we are doing this virtually as well, but the noise is starting to get up and people are more than making up for the small numbers.

*Oral Questions*

Now that everything is quiet, I will sit down and let the right hon. Prime Minister continue.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs had a great conversation with Senator Salma Ataullahjan last week about her candidacy, and we will be speaking with her again.

As has long been the case, the government does not support candidates for roles in inter-parliamentary organizations like the IPU. That is for members in the House and parliaments of the world to decide, and we wish the Senator well in her campaign.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's relationship with the first peoples is a nation-to-nation relationship. Therefore it is for the premiers to manage.

The tragedy in Joliette is rooted in the social problems experienced by indigenous communities. That is the source of the prejudice and racism.

Has the Prime Minister spoken to Joyce Echaquan's husband, to Chief Paul-Émile Ottawa and to Chief Constant Awashish to commit to addressing the social problems that are a direct legacy of the shameful Indian Act, one of the worst examples of systemic racism in the history of Canada?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we would like to extend our condolences to the family of Joyce Echaquan and the entire community, which has suffered a terrible loss.

People across the country were shocked by this video. Frankly, the indigenous people I spoke to said they were shocked but not surprised. This is the reality lived by far too many racialized or indigenous people.

For that reason, on this side of the House, we recognize that systemic racism does exist. That is why we will continue to work with all communities to eliminate systemic racism.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, clearly we recognize it as well. However, the Prime Minister should have said it to Ms. Echaquan's spouse or the Atikamekw chiefs, not Parliament.

Does he realize that the government of the Quebec nation contacted the family and the community, met with the Atikamekw chiefs, ordered a public inquiry and promised to implement the recommendations of the Viens report?

Does the Prime Minister realize that despite his words and sometimes his tears, he has not lived up to his claims about his relationship with indigenous people, and that it is Quebec who is acting as a friend of indigenous nations?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would first like to commend the leader of the Bloc Québécois because I believe I heard him admit that systemic racism exists. I think it was time. It is important for us to be there to fight against systemic racism every day.

I can say that the Minister of Foreign Affairs attended Joyce Echaquan's funeral yesterday. The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and the Minister of Indigenous Services have been in contact with the community and the family. We will continue to work hand in hand to fight systemic racism and move further along the path of reconciliation with Canada's indigenous people.

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**HEALTH**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are obviously in the midst of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. People are concerned. They are worried about the future. In order to help allay those concerns, will the Prime Minister commit today to guaranteeing that, when a vaccine is ready, it will be available to everyone for free?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of this pandemic, our government has been doing everything it can to support Canadians and to reassure them during these tough times that are causing intense anxiety. We have been there to support the provinces with their health care systems. We have been there to support workers, families and small businesses. We will continue to be there.

With respect to the vaccine, we have set up a panel of experts to make recommendations on the best way to ensure that the vaccine is distributed free of charge and that is exactly what we will do.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I want to be very clear on this question. People are worried. They are deeply concerned, and something that would help Canadians right now is a clear commitment, because it was unclear yesterday.

I will ask one more time, very clearly. Once a vaccine is ready, will the Prime Minister commit, clearly, that the vaccine will be freely available to all Canadians, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we deeply cherish our universal health care system, and that means that things like life-saving vaccines are free for Canadians.

Indeed, we put forward a committee of independent experts to help counsel the government on the best way to ensure that the vaccines are distributed fairly, equitably and in the right priority so that Canadians can be as safe as possible as the vaccines are discovered. I can, however, highlight the extraordinary work of our procurement minister, who has ensured that we have great access to vaccines from around the world as they become available.



*Oral Questions*

• (1435)

[Translation]

**AEROSPACE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that the federal government's innovation superclusters initiative has very little chance of meeting its targets. My mother often told me that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Canada's aerospace industry is in decline. Thousands of existing jobs are in jeopardy.

How does the government explain the fact that it is shooting this flagship Quebec industry down in mid-flight?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we all recognize that this pandemic is hitting some sectors harder than others, for example, the tourism industry, the aerospace and airline industries and the oil industry.

We are there to help workers across the country in every industry weather this crisis. We did that with the CERB and the Canada emergency wage subsidy. We will continue to work with innovative companies in our aerospace industry to move forward and protect them.

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if our aerospace industry loses any more feathers, Canada's credibility and influence around the world will also suffer. Canada's aerospace industry is Magellan Aerospace in Winnipeg, Pratt & Whitney in Longueuil and CAE in Bagotville. The aerospace industry provides jobs and promotes the economic development of many of Quebec's regions, not just Montreal.

Why is the federal government focusing all of its efforts on the superclusters initiative, which is in a tailspin?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are investing across the country to help the innovative industries that will prepare us for the future and create the jobs of tomorrow. That is why we are investing so much in the aerospace industry and the superclusters, because we believe in innovation and in the future that Canadians are building every day. We will continue to be there to support workers in industries across the country as we have always done. We will continue to do that.

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[English]

**HEALTH**

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister shut down Canada's early warning system on the pandemic, and he says that he was briefed at the end of January, he was relying on WHO data that countries around the world admit was opaque and less than transparent, to be generous, from China. Then they fumbled around for weeks talking about how masks were not effective and that there was no human transmission. We were flying blind. Now, going into Thanksgiving weekend, the Prime Minister is asking people to cancel their Thanksgiving dinners because of his failure.

Very simply put, will the Prime Minister apologize to Canadians for this massive failure?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives try to score cheap, partisan points, we remain focused on Canadians.

This is an unprecedented pandemic that hit hard in countries around the world, and we pulled together across orders of government, even mostly across party lines, to deliver for Canadians the health measures that would keep them protected, but also the economic supports, things like the Canada emergency response benefit and things like the wage subsidy that made a huge difference in Canadians' being able to be confident in their present and their future.

We will continue to have Canadians' backs.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the inconvenient truth for the Prime Minister is the fact that it has only been since Parliament resumed, after he shuttered it, that Canadians have seen action on things like rapid tests. We still do not have answers on when they are actually going to get here, though. That answer was so trite and so glib, because if he actually cared about Canadians, he would have access to rapid tests, he would be trying to fix things like shutting down the early warning system and he would be doing the right thing and taking accountability for his lack of action and his failure to protect Canadians.

This is my simple question: How many rapid tests are Canadians going to get and when?

• (1440)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one point on which I vehemently disagree with the member for Calgary Nose Hill is that I believe every single parliamentarian in this place cares deeply about Canadians. No matter how much I disagree with the member for Calgary Nose Hill on a number of things, I know she cares about Canadians, and I think she should expect that all of us care about Canadians deeply, because we have come together in this time of pandemic to deliver for Canadians. Health Canada has stepped up, Canadians have stepped up, the provinces have stepped up, and yes, the federal government continues to step up.

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**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when veteran Sean Bruyca dared speak truth to power by pointing out how veterans would receive less in the Liberals' so-called pension for life scheme, he was publicly attacked by the former minister of veterans affairs, who wrote, "individuals like Sean Bruyca" are stating "mistruths about Pension for Life...to suit their own agenda."

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Bruyca sued the minister for defamation, seeking \$25,000 in damages. The Liberals then used the full weight of the government to defend the minister against a veteran who, it turned out, was right, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees.

I am asking for the Prime Minister to justify this to Canadians.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member well knows, an agreement was reached in this case, and as part of that agreement we will not be commenting on it further.

However, I will highlight that service delivery and support to veterans and families have been a priority since the very beginning. Since 2016, we have invested nearly \$10.5 billion in new money for our veterans and their families. This funding was invested in new centres of excellence on chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, and includes financial compensation and more, which stands in stark contrast to the Conservative approach, including from the now Leader of the Opposition, which was to close offices, fire staff and gut Veterans Affairs.

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when it came to defending a case against a convicted terrorist, Omar Khadr, the Prime Minister had no problem rolling over and giving into Khadr with a \$10.5-million payday, but for those who served and defended this country, like Bruyca, and let us add Admiral Mark Norman to this, after attacking their integrity and honour, the Prime Minister and his minister spent millions in legal fees defending themselves.

Since the Prime Minister could not kick Bruyca out of cabinet or caucus like he did to Jane, Celina and the former AG, who all spoke truth to his power, will he at least apologize to Bruyca, and while he is at it Admiral Norman, for the assault on their reputations?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again we see the extent to which the Conservatives like to wrap themselves in the flag while they actually have a record of nickel-and-diming our veterans by cutting their services, by cutting off opportunities for their families and by shuttering nine Veterans Affairs offices right across the country at a time when veterans needed proper help.

These are the things we have worked on over the past number of years, investing \$10.5 billion in our veterans, when the Conservatives did nothing for them for 10 long years.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### ETHICS

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last night, Toronto police arrested a businessman who was operating an illegal casino in his home. The police seized a machine gun and \$1 million. That businessman's name is Wei Wei.

Interestingly, Wei Wei is a loyal and generous Liberal Party of Canada donor. Among other things, he donated \$1,200 in 2014 and attended an exclusive cocktail party in 2016 with the Prime Minister himself, whom he met with at least twice.

My question is simple: Does the Prime Minister know Wei Wei?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our federal system has some of the strictest rules governing political donors. The Liberal Party's rules are even stricter. Our fundraising activities are all public, and we invite journalists to attend. Maybe the other parties should do likewise and open up their fundraising activities to journalists so Canadians can find out who they are getting their money from, rather than do it in secret like the Bloc, the Conservative Party and the other parties.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, he could take a lesson from the Bloc Québécois. He has a lot to learn in this particular area.

On May 16, 2016, the Prime Minister held a lucrative cocktail fundraiser with wealthy, prominent members of Toronto's Chinese community. Oddly enough, just a few days later, the Trudeau Foundation received \$1 million. That is not all. A few weeks later, the Chinese bank Wealth One was granted its Canadian charter and, at the same time, the Prime Minister's riding received 80%, that is, \$70,000 in funding. Mr. Wei Wei attended the exclusive dinner on May 16, 2016, so the Prime Minister does know him.

Did he promise him anything?

• (1445)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all political parties in this country follow the rules of Elections Canada, and the Liberal Party has always followed the rules when carrying out fundraising. We decided to go even further by being completely open regarding our fundraising activities and inviting the media to attend. I would encourage all parties in the House to do the same, to stop holding fundraising events behind closed doors and to be open about who is donating to political parties.

\* \* \*

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan have already said that Huawei cannot be part of their 5G system. The United Kingdom announced that it had found a security flaw in Huawei's 5G system. Our Prime Minister is afraid to stand up to China. He prefers the status quo, which puts our security at risk.

When will the Prime Minister make a final decision about Huawei?

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, informed security decisions are made by our intelligence services and security experts, and not for political reasons. With respect to our policies, we have always stood up against China on bringing home our two Michaels, condemning the treatment of the Uighurs, offering assistance to Hong Kong, being firm on respect for international rights and everything we must work on together as a multinational world that recognizes the values and rights we all have.

[*English*]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our allies have realized that Huawei cannot be part of their 5G future. The government promised a decision before the last election. This week, Great Britain announced that it found critical weaknesses in Huawei's 5G infrastructure. Last week, it was Germany tightening restrictions on Huawei. Once again, under the Prime Minister, Canada is not back; it is hanging back and letting all our allies get the job done.

Will the Prime Minister finally rise today, get tough and ban Huawei from Canadian 5G networks?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada will always put the security of its citizens and of its infrastructure first and foremost. We have done that every step of the way.

We deeply respect the work of our experts and intelligence services and are working with them to make the right decision. We will listen to their recommendations and move forward. We watch carefully what our allies are doing, and at the same time, we have consistently stood up for Canadian interests and values on the world stage, including against China.

\* \* \*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister likes to talk about his feminist credentials, but today he failed to support the campaign by a Canadian woman to lead the IPU.

In July, when women's groups from across Canada asked the public safety minister to have a public inquiry on the largest mass killing in Canadian history, he ignored them. He only gave in when the entire province of Nova Scotia revolted.

It sometimes takes this Prime Minister two times to do the right thing, so I will ask him again: Will the Prime Minister support the candidacy of Senator Ataullahjan for the non-partisan presidency of the IPU?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will take no lessons on gender or diversity from the Conservative Party of Canada. As has long been the case, the government does not support candidates for roles in interparliamentary organizations like the IPU. That is for members in this House and parliaments of the world to decide, but we wish Senator Ataullahjan all the best in her candidacy.

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, speaking of the horrible rampage in Nova Scotia, there were terrible warning signs with incidents of domestic violence ahead of that terrible attack. This is why dozens of women's organizations from coast to coast have asked for a public inquiry. Canadians want to know how many warning signs there were so we can avoid tragedies in the future. Will the Prime Minister commit today in this House to get that inquiry back on track for Nova Scotia and for Canadian women?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are committed to getting to the bottom of what happened in Nova Scotia in that terrible tragedy, including looking at and exploring all the different angles related to domestic violence. I am very pleased to hear the Conservatives express concern on gender-based violence. We have many initiatives we are putting forward to counter gender-based violence. We look forward to seeing their support on some very fundamental issues that they have not always been so great on supporting in the past. I look forward to that in the future.

\* \* \*

● (1450)

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, tens of thousands of business owners are hanging off a cliff, forced into deep debt. The Liberals' flawed commercial rent assistance program has failed them and the communities they serve. Before they roll out another failed plan, will the Liberals confirm that this time the help will be tenant driven, set to the same loss-in-business standards as the wage subsidy and backdated, so that those who were left out by the Liberals the last time can get the help they so desperately need to keep afloat this time?

### Oral Questions

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning of the pandemic, we promised to be there for Canadians, and we were. We supported all Canadians with the Canada emergency response benefit; then we moved forward to support workers and small businesses with the wage subsidy. We also created the Canada emergency business account, but we saw that Canadian business owners and workers were still struggling so we worked with the provinces to create the commercial rent assistance program, which has helped over 120,000 small business owners across the country. We recognize that there are better ways to do that, and that is why we are working very hard on being able to announce shortly more support for business owners through their fixed costs in an easier way than that.

\* \* \*

### VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the veterans minister seems to be okay telling 45,000 veterans in this country that they can wait another two and a half years to see their disability applications completed. Last week, the PBO provided a plan to get this done in one year and make sure this never happens again to our veterans. Instead of focusing on helping them, the Liberals spent over \$200,000 in legal fees defending a Liberal minister and attacking a veteran. When will the government stand up for veterans and make sure that it is spending the money on the people who stood up to protect us in this country?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, service delivery and support to veterans and their families has always been our priority. Since 2016, we have invested nearly \$10.5 billion in new money for our veterans and their families. This funding was invested in new centres of excellence on chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, increased financial compensation and more. We are the government that recognizes the sacred covenant we owe to our veterans, and that is why we have improved and invested in supports for them. There is still much more to do, but we have helped our veterans and we will continue to.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### HOUSING

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding, Saint-Laurent, and throughout Quebec, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of having a safe and affordable place to call home.

This is a tough time for many Quebeckers, but we have made progress with the launch of the national housing strategy. Yesterday, we announced an agreement with Quebec on major investments in social and community housing.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what this agreement means for Quebec families?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Saint-Laurent for her important question and her hard work in her riding.

We are proud to have negotiated a bilateral agreement with Quebec as part of the national housing strategy. This 10-year, near-

ly \$3.7-billion agreement will help protect, renew and expand housing in Quebec.

We will continue to work with the provinces and territories, including Quebec, to put an end to chronic homelessness. We must do better for those who need housing, and we will do better across the country.

\* \* \*

[English]

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I asked the government about ties between senior Liberals like Joe Peschisolido and Raymond Chan and individuals charged in a gangland shooting with the Chinese Community Party. Now, we have learned that the architect of a heavily armed, illegal casino operation in Markham has twice had face time with this Prime Minister and, surprise, he also has ties to the CCP.

Canadians deserve to know. Is the Prime Minister's proximity to the Chinese Communist Party elites in Canada affecting his ability to protect Canadian interests?

• (1455)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have always followed all the rules around fundraising and we will continue. We actually went above and beyond that in making sure that all of our fundraisers are done in public spaces, that we invite the media to them and publish a list of people who attended. We encourage the Conservative Party of Canada to do exactly the same.

When will the Conservatives stop raising money in secret and instead be open with their fundraisers, invite the media to attend their fundraisers and actually demonstrate that they can have confidence in Canadians as they ask Canadians to have confidence in them?

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister should hope that Canadians do not judge him by the company that he keeps. He is just the latest Liberal with worrisome ties to the Chinese Communist Party: Chan, Peschisolido, Barton, McCallum.

These latest bad actors operating their illegal casino in Markham, just like the ones arrested this weekend in B.C., are helping arrest protesters in Hong Kong, but do not worry, they have donated millions of dollars to the Trudeau Foundation.

Why should Canadians trust this defective Liberal government complete with its made-in-China sticker?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have addressed that question, but, again, it points out that the Conservatives are focused on trying to score political points at a time when Canadians expect people to come together and work for them in this COVID crisis.

We will continue to focus on supporting Canadians in this second wave. We will be there for families, workers and small businesses. We will be there to support industries across this country as they are dealing with this unprecedented pandemic.

We made a commitment to Canadians that we would have their backs, and that is exactly what we are doing. Regardless of what the Conservatives want to focus on, we will stay focused on Canadians in this pandemic.

**The Speaker:** I want to remind hon. members that the way it works is that a member asks a question and then gets a response. Members cannot keep asking questions. It makes it difficult for everyone to hear the response and the future questions, and I am sure we will get those assigned as we go on.

The hon. member for Carleton.

\* \* \*

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, who would bet their own money on Gateway Casinos? Well, it turns out nobody. Of course, the company was just downgraded to junk status and its parent company lost 95% of its value on the stock market before being delisted altogether. In fact, financial experts in Toronto say that the company vastly overvalues its assets, but there is someone who would invest other people's money in it. The casino just got the jackpot of \$200 million from this government. Would the financial genius over there who invested \$200 million of our tax dollars in this failing casino firm please stand up?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives play silly political games, we recognize the extraordinary situation that Canadians are facing. We are a few days away from Thanksgiving and people are worried about whether or not they are going to see their loved ones, how they are going to make it through this pandemic, whether or not we are going to be able to gather for Christmas. As a country and as the government, we remain focused on that. We are working with partners across the country, the premiers, the provinces and territories and continue to work with all orders of government as we deliver for Canadians through this pandemic. Let the Conservatives play games. We are focused on Canadians.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, "you've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, know when to walk away, and know when" to swindle a naive Prime Minister of \$200 million of other people's money. That is exactly what Gateway Casinos has just done. It cannot get money from anyone. In fact, for 10 years its owner tried to sell the company, but nobody would buy. While we have new job losses of 2,000 people in the energy sector out west, 500 out east, one million Canadians without paycheques since the pandemic, why is the Prime Minister throwing away our money in this jackpot for casino insiders?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we recognize that Canadians across the country are hurting because of this pandemic. We created many different mechanisms to support them, whether it was the Canada emergency response benefit, the wage subsidy or the LEEFF program, which is the large employer enterprise funding. We have ensured that the money is delivered independently to organizations that qualify for it and it is a loan rather than any sort of grant of money. These are things that we have put to make sure that our economy comes roaring back. We will stay focused on the pandemic and on supporting Canadians through this pandemic.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government launched the national shipbuilding strategy 10 years ago to replace its outdated icebreakers, but it left the Davie shipyard out completely.

Now, 10 years later, it has realized its mistake. The icebreakers are only fit for the scrap heap. After snubbing the largest shipbuilder in Canada, the government has been unable to replace the icebreakers. It is searching abroad for a used ship when it could have built a new one in Lévis.

Will the government admit that it would have been easier to give the Davie shipyard its fair share of the contracts?

● (1500)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the national shipbuilding strategy was established many years ago, and our government was the one that included the Davie shipyard in this strategy.

Although the Davie shipyard has had some difficulties in recent years, we recognize that it does quality work, has always been extremely innovative and has excellent workers. We are very proud that we were able to include the Davie shipyard in our national strategy to build a naval fleet and ships for the Coast Guard.

We will continue to work with our excellent workers in the shipbuilding industry across Canada.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that brings to mind a Dalida song, but I will not sing it. I will spare your ears.

For the second time in recent weeks, because of its poor planning and childish insistence on excluding and snubbing the Davie shipyard, the government has bought a used ship from another country instead of investing here at home. The government chose to buy an icebreaker that will last 10 or 15 years at most, instead of buying a new one made here that would have cost about the same.

### Oral Questions

When will the government make choices that support our economy and invest in our people and our businesses?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from day one, we have invested in Canadian workers through a strategy to build the ships we need, and that strategy includes the Davie shipyard.

Many jobs have been created across the country. We are very proud of the work our marine industry workers do. We will keep looking for opportunities to invest so we can create more jobs and more value for our marine industries, including the Coast Guard, our ferries and our armed forces.

We will be there, and we will keep investing.

\* \* \*

[English]

### EMPLOYMENT

**Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Liberals are taking yet another step toward annihilating the gas and oil industry here in Canada. The Prime Minister wants to designate plastic as a toxic substance. In the plastic manufacturing industry currently, there are 5,000 jobs in Alberta, 23,000 jobs in Quebec and over 40,000 jobs in Ontario.

As Canada transitions away from single-use plastics, and while two million people have already lost their jobs in this country, what is the Prime Minister's plan with regard to mitigating job loss?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know first-hand the impact of harmful plastics in our environment. That is why we committed to moving forward in 2021 to ban harmful single-use plastics. That is what Canadians expect of this government and that is what we are going to do.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives continue to play political games and do not think it is important to protect the environment. We have made very clear that none of these bans on single-use plastics will affect any sort of medical supplies, which obviously are essential during this pandemic. We will continue to have a thriving industrial response as we move forward on plastics.

**Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while the Liberals play political games, jobs are being lost.

Canadians are being impacted. They are having a hard time being able to pay their bills and take care of their families. We are talking about two million jobs that have already been lost in this country. Now we are talking about tens of thousands more jobs.

My question is very simple. In the midst of an economic crisis, when will the Prime Minister put forward a plan to protect Canadian workers?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives say climate change is a problem, but they want to make it free to pollute and then hope for the best. They say they want to grow the economy and support the middle class, but they ran their campaign on a promise to cut billions of dollars in projects that are improving the lives of Canadians. They say they are against plastic pollution, but do not want to take any meaningful action to actually address it.

We know that to ensure jobs for the future, ensure a better future for our kids, we need to take action now in ways that support industries and move forward in the right way. That is exactly what this government is doing. Unfortunately, the Conservatives do not believe in that.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### JUSTICE

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, loved ones and friends of the victims of flight 752 gathered here in Ottawa and elsewhere in the country. It has been nine months since the incident. The victims' loved ones are still calling for justice for the 55 Canadians and 30 permanent residents who lost their lives.

Will the government listen to the families and impose Magnitsky sanctions on those responsible?

• (1505)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had the sad duty of sitting down with these families who lost loved ones in this tragedy.

As I said, we will always be there to support them while they await justice for their beloved family members, but also while they await compensation. Iran must take immediate measures to ensure a full and transparent investigation. The families must be compensated.

Iran shared the flight recorder report, but it only contained information that we already knew. We need answers and we will continue to work on getting those answers.

\* \* \*

### HEALTH

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc back home, in Quebec. With more than 80,000 confirmed cases and nearly 6,000 deaths so far, millions of Quebecers are currently in red zones. I am glad the Quebec government decided to adopt the federal COVID Alert app.

Could the Prime Minister provide the House with an update on the app and tell us how this tool can help Quebecers better protect themselves?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne for her question and for the work she does.

Throughout this pandemic, we have been there to protect the health of Quebecers. The COVID Alert app has been available in Quebec since last Friday, and I encourage everyone to download it. Over three million people across Canada are using it. The app is secure and protects people's privacy.

Let's do it for ourselves, our neighbours and our loved ones. Everyone should download the COVID Alert app today.

\* \* \*

[English]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Iran is one of the most oppressive regimes in the world, and increasingly so, with the imprisonment of human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, the execution of wrestler Navid Afkari, the brutal murder of Canadian Zahra Kazemi in 2003 and the 55 Canadians killed last January. When will the government realize the regime does not respond to engagement?

When will it list the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization, something that the House of Commons called for over two years ago and something the Prime Minister voted for?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our hearts go out to not just the 55 Canadians lost on Flight PS752 but also the 138 people in total who were heading to Canadian soil to connect with family, loved ones and friends.

We know there is much more to do, which is why we are continuing to work with the international community to hold Iran to account. We expect Iran to provide answers to important questions, such as why the missiles were launched in the first place and why the airspace was still open. We will continue to work with partners to ensure transparency, accountability and justice, including reparations to the families.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in a pandemic, Canadians need honest and specific answers.

Last week, I asked the Minister of Employment to explain why more than 154 workers from Mégantic—L'Érable, whose employer decided to use the work-sharing program, had only been paid 50% of their salary for five months. We heard some general comments, but no answers. Today, I am asking the Prime Minister.

Does he think it is right that Canadians who chose to return to work rather than receive the CERB are penalized and are not paid what the government owes them?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from the start of this pandemic, we have been there for Canadians, with the CERB, the wage subsidy and targeted measures to help those in need. I do not know the details of the situation my colleague referred to, but I will undertake to make inquiries and return with a good answer in the future.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

What message is being sent to Canadians who want to work when they are not getting answers and did not get any answers last week?

### Oral Questions

What message is being sent to the businesses in Thetford Mines and Trois-Rivières that answered the Prime Minister's call not to lay off their workers?

Unfortunately, the message they are getting is “stay home”. That is not good for their health, not good for the economy and bad for the country.

When will the Prime Minister give a clear, precise answer to all of these workers who are out half of their income because they trusted the Prime Minister when he called on them to return to work?

• (1510)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, CERB, the wage subsidy, the student benefit, the assistance for seniors and the various measures we implemented were all there to help Canadians during the pandemic, to help workers and small businesses, among others.

We will continue to be there for workers, businesses and our economy during the second wave. We know that one of the best ways to protect the economy and make sure it bounces back is to control the spread of the virus right now.

We are calling on everyone to help us control the spread, and we will continue to do so to help workers.

\* \* \*

### HOUSING

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home, especially during a global pandemic. This is a major priority for my riding, Ottawa South.

With flu season right around the corner, urgent help is needed to quickly create new affordable housing units.

Can the Prime Minister update the House on what our government is doing to help more Canadians find a place to call home?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Ottawa South for his question and for his hard work.

One thing we have learned from this crisis is that our economic recovery must include more affordable housing. That is why we are proud to announce a \$1-billion rapid housing initiative to help meet the housing needs of the most vulnerable Canadians. This initiative will create 3,000 new permanent affordable housing units across Canada and will help achieve our goal to eliminate chronic homelessness.

*Routine Proceedings***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, after another night of intensive bombing of Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, we are wondering how the federal government could have sold military technology to Turkey. Today, those technologies are being used against Armenian civilians. That goes against our obligations under the UN Arms Trade Treaty, as does the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia.

Now, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is off to Europe. We need more than photo ops. People are dying.

What pressure tactics will be used to restore peace in Nagorno-Karabakh?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the allegations that Canadian technology is being used in this conflict. The minister immediately asked public servants to look into those allegations.

We suspended the relevant export permits to Turkey in order to better assess the situation.

We are asking that measures be taken immediately to stabilize the situation on the ground. We are asking for a peaceful, negotiated solution to this conflict.

**The Speaker:** That is all the time we have for questions today.

[*English*]

Before continuing, and while I have everyone's attention, I would just remind everyone that it is their responsibility as MPs to wear the headsets that are provided by the House. That is something that everyone appreciates here in the House, but especially the interpreters.

[*Translation*]

That is very important for their health.

[*English*]

Please be considerate toward them, as well as to your colleagues in the House.

As well, on that note, members will please make sure that they are in a place, whether asking a question or anticipating receiving a question, that is well connected. Members should make sure that their connection is strong and works well. Again, they should think of their colleagues in the House and online, and the interpreters who are working so diligently in the back rooms there to make sure that we get the message across.

The other thing is that someone yelled “time”. I appreciate the help and that the member is trying to help me, but I do have a timer here. Just so that everyone knows, when they are asking or answering a question, if they watch and they see the speaker slowly leaning forward, the five seconds has started, and by the time he or she stands up, the five seconds are done.

While I am at it, we have only so many allowed in the chamber. We try to keep it to a certain number in order to make sure that COVID-19 does not spread any more than it has among MPs. Also, we have had an overflow: Some of the MPs have gone up into the gallery. I just want to encourage them not to shout, scream or clap

hands. It is hard enough to keep track of what is going on here on the floor, let alone up in the gallery, and we do not have the guards to throw them out, so we would appreciate it if they kept that to a minimum.

Now we will continue.

\* \* \*

● (1515)

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order on that matter. I know there was a bit of concern regarding MPs being on the government side in the public gallery, and there might have been comments coming from that section. I wonder if it might be best that, if there is an overflow, members consider going to their respective sides or, as you suggested, being quiet in the public gallery as it allows better focus on the chamber floor.

**The Speaker:** I will comment on that, if members will indulge me. I noticed a couple of whips, and one whip in particular, commenting to his people and trying to keep them quiet. It seemed to work, so there is co-operation on both sides and I want to thank everyone for that.

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**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*Translation*]

**INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS**

**Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, two reports of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas.

[*English*]

The first report concerns the fourth gathering of the ParlAmericas' Parliamentary Network on Climate Change that was held in Paramaribo, Suriname, in August 2019.

The second report concerns the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 25, held in Madrid, Spain, from December 1 to 3, 2019.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, there has been discussion among the parties, and this is supported by MPs from all parties, so if you seek it you should find unanimous consent for the following motion:

I move that, in the opinion of the House, the government should designate the month of September every year as National Recovery Awareness Month to recognize and support Canadians recovering from addiction, and to demonstrate that recovery from addiction is possible, attainable and sustainable.



[Translation]

**The Speaker:** This being a hybrid sitting of the House, for the sake of clarity, I will only ask those who are opposed to the motion to express their disagreement.

**Some hon. members:** No.

[English]

**The Speaker:** We do not have unanimous consent.

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## PETITIONS

### EQUALIZATION

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am up again on behalf of my constituents.

My first petition is again on equalization. Petitioners are drawing the attention of the Government of Canada and asking to immediately work with the Government of Alberta to address the equalization program's unfair treatment of Alberta and ensure a fair deal for Albertans within Confederation.

### IRAN

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is from petitioners in my riding. They are drawing the attention of the Government of Canada and asking it to immediately implement a Conservative motion, passed by Parliament in 2018, to list Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization, that fair compensation be paid to the families by the Iranian government, and that Canada repatriate the remains.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I stand here once again to present another petition from young people across my riding of South Okanagan—West Kootenay and from the adjacent riding, my neighbours in Kootenay—Columbia.

These young people are extremely concerned about the accelerating impacts of climate change and wonder whether they will be able to thrive in such an uncertain future. They point out that Canada's climate targets are completely inadequate and that continued subsidization of the oil sector is sending us in the wrong direction. They call for meaningful, legislated climate targets, an effective carbon tax, and redirecting fossil fuel subsidies into jobs and training for renewable energy systems, energy efficiency and low-carbon transportation.

● (1520)

### ABORTION

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, petitioners in my riding call on the government to address sex-selective abortion. Sex-selective abortion is antithetical to our commitment to equality between men and women. A 2019 Dart and Maru/Blue poll conducted for the National Post showed that 84% of Canadians believe that it should be illegal to have an abortion if the family does not want the child to be a certain sex.

International organizations including the World Health Organization, United Nations Women and United Nations Children's Fund

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have identified unequal sex ratios at birth as a growing problem. Canada's health care profession recognizes sex-selective abortion as a problem, as well. Therefore, the petitioners in my riding call on the Government of Canada and the House of Commons to pass a Criminal Code prohibition of sex-selective abortion.

### HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present this petition from Canadians across Canada, not necessarily in my riding. They are petitioning to bring to the government's attention that they have an increased concern regarding international trafficking of human organs. We know this is something that happens globally. It is a great opportunity for the Government of Canada to take a strong stance. We heard numerous times over question period that the government takes a strong stance on the world stage.

These petitioners want to make sure the Parliament of Canada will move quickly on proposed legislation to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to prohibit Canadians from travelling abroad to acquire human organs removed without consent, or as a result of a financial transaction, and to render inadmissible to Canada any and all permanent residents or foreign nationals who have participated in these acts.

[Translation]

### HEALTH

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition signed by Canadians who want to draw the attention of the House of Commons to their concern for the physical health of many Canadians because many Canadians use self-care options including over-the-counter products and because those Canadians want more information about the options and restrictions regarding self-care options. They are calling on Parliament to instruct the Standing Committee on Health to undertake a comprehensive study of the impact of uninsured self-care products and services and to evaluate the regulatory barriers which exist for those wishing to access them.

I am presenting this petition on behalf of these citizens.

\* \* \*

[English]

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***JUDGES ACT**

The House resumed from October 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Saint-Laurent.

Today I speak in support of Bill C-3, an act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code.

This bill has had the support of the House on two previous occasions, but despite all-party support has not yet become law. Listening to debate last Friday, it was obvious the bill continues to serve as an example of ongoing parliamentary collaboration and one which we should all take pride.

I want to start by recognizing and thanking the Hon. Rona Ambrose for her initiative on this critical issue. Her bill was the first legislation to be studied at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. The collaborative work we did at committee made the bill stronger, and I am happy to see that the government has incorporated amendments from that study into this bill.

At the time Ms. Ambrose introduced her private member's bill, several high-profile rulings had shown Canadians some judges did not understand sexual assault law and were relying on myths and stereotypes when issuing their rulings.

Members of the House will recall when former Alberta Federal Court Justice Robin Camp asked a sexual assault complainant why she could not "keep [her] knees together" during her alleged rape. Because of his comments, the Canadian Judicial Council launched a review into Justice Camp's conduct and concluded that he "acted in a manner that seriously undermined public confidence in the judiciary." Following the review, Justice Camp resigned.

Ultimately, Bill C-3 is about assuring Canadians that judges who are elevated to federally appointed positions have a desire to understand the myths and stereotypes that have been present in Canadian society for far too long. The federal government should appoint judges who acknowledge that learning is a lifelong process and value continuing education. This is a bill created to ensure that no other sexual assault complainant will be subject to condescending, humiliating and disrespectful conduct from a federally appointed judge.

Bill C-3 would amend the Judges Act to require that a candidate seeking appointment to a federally appointed judicial position attest to participating in training related to sexual assault law and its social context. The bill would also require the Canadian Judicial Council to ensure this training is developed after consultation with those knowledgeable in the field or other individuals or groups it considers appropriate, including sexual assault survivor organizations.

These amendments are designed to ensure that newly appointed superior court judges are fully apprised of the law in relation to sex-

ual assault and on social context. Moreover, the bill is possible because of the already outstanding work the National Judicial Institute, the body responsible for creating judicial education in our country, has done, with help through federal investment, in developing comprehensive continuing education for judges on sexual assault law and its social context.

Finally, the bill would amend the Criminal Code to require that judges provide written reasons or enter them into the record of the proceeding for decisions in sexual assault proceedings.

I have talked about the social context of sexual assault, and I would like to provide a clearer definition of social context.

Quite simply, social context means the immediate social or physical environment in which one lives affects how one sees the world. The experience of an affluent woman who has survived sexual violence will be different than the experience of a woman who is homeless. The experience of a white trans-woman will be different than the experience of a cisgender indigenous woman. The experience of a gay man from Toronto will be different than the experience of a straight woman living with a disability in Amherst, Nova Scotia. The experience of a judge trained in myths and stereotypes about sexual assault will be different than a judge who has never received such training.

Importantly, in the context of the debate on the bill, social context affects how different people view the criminal justice system and how the criminal justice system views them. This is why it is my hope that at committee the bill can be expanded to clearly articulate the need for training, not just on sexual assault law and social context but on the need for training on anti-racism.

This summer, our country came to understand that systemic racism existed in all our institutions. In 2017, at the beginning of the #MeToo Movement, our country came to understand that systemic sexism existed within all our institutions as well.

Jennifer Koshan, professor of law at the University of Calgary, made clear in her testimony at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women that "not only does the law change, but social context can change". This is why requiring that a candidate seeking appointment to a federally appointed judicial position attest to participating in training related to sexual assault law and its social context is so important.

• (1525)

Bill C-3 addresses a long-standing problem: the influence of myths and stereotypes in sexual assault law. As hard as it is today to imagine, prior to the reforms that began in 1983, a husband could not be convicted of sexually assaulting his wife. Sexual assault convictions required testimony from someone other than the victim. Victims had to raise a hue and cry before the assault and report it shortly afterward or they would not be believed. Victims' sexual reputation and prior sexual activity could be used to attack their credibility.

Reforms were enacted to address these and other evidentiary rules through the 1980s and 1990s. For instance, in response to concerns from survivors and women's organizations, amendments commonly referred to as the "rape shield" provisions, which govern the admissibility of the complainant's prior sexual activity, were first introduced in 1983 and then amended in 1992. These provisions are designed to protect survivors from the introduction of evidence of their sexual history, which had been used to infer that they were more likely to have consented to the sexual activity in question or were less worthy of belief. The provisions also place restrictions on the use of sexual history evidence for other purposes unless specific criteria are met.

Also in 1992, a clear definition of "consent" in the context of sexual activity was introduced in the Criminal Code and limitations on the accused's ability to raise a defence of mistaken belief in consent were enacted. The Supreme Court of Canada has provided guidance on the application of the sexual assault provisions, making it clear that consent must be affirmatively expressed through words or conduct and cannot be implied by submission, passivity or a failure to protest.

However, despite the robust legislation in place and the clear rulings from the highest court, myths and stereotypes about sexual assault survivors still creep into the courtroom and into judicial decisions. Identifying solutions to these ongoing challenges has been a priority for our government and, indeed, a matter of ongoing concern in Canada.

Our government introduced Bill C-51 in 2018. With its passage, the changes clarified a number of principles that were already covered in the law, notably, that an unconscious person cannot consent to sexual activity; an accused cannot rely on a mistaken belief in consent where that belief is based on a mistake in law, such as consent obtained through force; sexual history evidence must never be used to infer consent; and, finally, the admissibility of evidence of a victim's private communications made for a sexual purpose must be determined through the rape shield provisions.

In addition, Bill C-51 provided that victims could make submissions and be represented by counsel in sexual history evidence or rape shield proceedings and that the admissibility of victims' private records that were in the hands of the accused be determined through a process similar to that of the rape shield and third party records proceedings.

Our government has also modernized the judicial appointment process to bring greater diversity to the bench. During testimony in 2017 at the status of women committee, Professor Carissima Mathen said, "That's been a somewhat unheralded earthquake in the

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world of judicial appointments.... The innovations that have been done around judicial appointments...have been quite remarkable."

Canada's—

• (1530)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Unfortunately, the hon. member's time is up, but I am sure she will be able to add more during questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I very much enjoyed serving with the hon. member when we were on the status of women committee reviewing this bill and other issues, like violence against women and girls in Canada.

It is troubling how long it takes to make progress on this issue. I would ask the member to explain what is taking so long in completing measures to eliminate violence against women and girls.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I agree with the hon. member: It was a pleasure for us to work together at the status of women committee.

Sadly, this bill was held up in the Senate the first time around by a group of Conservative senators who did not want it passed. Despite the best efforts of the Hon. Rona Ambrose to try to change their minds, they refused to let the bill pass.

There is always more work to be done, and I look forward to working with the hon. member to ensure that we really do make strides when it comes to survivors of sexual assault and those who have survived gender-based violence.

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like my colleague to comment on the importance of passing this bill quickly, even if it is not the perfect solution, because we need to move forward.

Can we pass it quickly, since we agree on it?

[*English*]

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I completely agree with the hon. member. Both times this bill has come to the House all parties have agreed to move it quickly. It did get to the justice committee in the last session.

It is beyond time to get this bill passed. While we have more to do, I think it is very important that we work quickly on it.

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**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to first acknowledge the work of the former leader of the official opposition, Rona Ambrose, for bringing forward this most important bill. I would also like to thank the hon. member for Oakville North—Burlington for her incredible introduction to the important social context regarding systemic racism and systemic sexism as they relate to the judiciary.

I want to refer to the comments by the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, our deputy justice critic. He brought to my attention one of the shortfalls of this bill: understanding the only remedy within our legislative authority while respecting the separation of the legislature and the judiciary.

What are the member's comments on the fact that the vast majority of appointed judges are provincial? Have there been any discussions of ways we can encourage existing sitting judges to participate in this most important initiative?

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely correct. This is something we heard about when we studied the bill at the status of women committee. The majority of sexual assault cases are heard in provincial courts.

Having said that, I think that educating federally appointed judges goes a long way in setting an example for the provincial courts. In terms of amending our legislation, it falls well outside the purview of the federal government to require that education.

I believe the second part of the member's question was about judges who are currently sitting. I know that Justice Kent is very committed to ensuring that the education being put forward for both new judges and sitting judges is robust, recognizing that there needs to be a separation between ourselves and the judiciary.

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity today to speak in favour of Bill C-3, an act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code, an incredibly important bill that could help make Canada a safer place for women and girls in all corners of the country.

I would like to begin by thanking Rona Ambrose for bringing this issue to the forefront in the first place.

This is a bill that I feel extremely passionate about because I am a woman who grew up in what could be considered a rough neighbourhood. I spent the first 28 years of my life in the Chameran neighbourhood in my riding of Saint-Laurent, where I often saw violence take place before my eyes at the park across from where I lived.

*[Translation]*

As a little girl and later as a teenager and a young woman, I always felt like I was in danger coming home alone after dark.

I took public transit, and the closest bus stop was a five-minute walk from my house. Often I would run home as fast as I could, worried that someone could hurt me at any moment.

If we lived in a world without crime against women, where women were not victimized so much, I would not have felt so anxious on a daily basis at such a young age. So many girls and I are afraid to walk alone and take public transit at night.

*[English]*

Perhaps the craziest part about this is that we are taught from a young age to be careful and not talk to strangers, because they may kidnap us or harm us in some way. We are taught to protect ourselves from the outside world, when we know, or at least we learn if we take the time to study sexual assault data, that in over half of sexual assault cases, the perpetrators are people the victims know. They are family members, friends, significant others, neighbours and acquaintances. When it does happen at the hands of someone we know, we have no idea how to process it or what to do.

We have a culture where people get away with sexual assaults, a rape culture, either because the victims never report these crimes to begin with or because a very small percentage of the cases that are reported result in a conviction. According to the 2014 general social survey, an annual survey that monitors changes in Canadian society and provides information on specific policy issues of current or emerging interests, only 5% of sexual assaults were reported that year. It is important to look into the reasons that victims of sexual assault choose to remain silent, because ensuring that more people come forward is the only way to change the awful statistics around reporting and convicting sexual assault crimes.

• (1540)

*[Translation]*

One of the main reasons people choose not to testify is a lack of trust in the criminal justice system. They think the court will not believe their story, they feel ashamed or embarrassed, or they believe that there is not enough evidence to prove what happened to them. In some cases, because the attacker may be someone close to the victim, the victim fears or even feels sympathy for the attacker. Many victims have said that getting help from the authorities was just as traumatizing as the attack.

Let's not forget that more than half of the victims who choose to testify lose their case in court. For the 2016-17 fiscal year, only 42% of court decisions in cases of sexual assault involving adults resulted in a guilty verdict.

[English]

It is a vicious cycle. At least 95% of cases are not reported, meaning that more than 95% of perpetrators of this kind of violence never receive any consequence whatsoever, and so they continue. At the same time, because such a small number of cases are reported, around 5%, and of that small number, an even smaller number receive a guilty verdict, approximately 2%, women do not feel encouraged to come forward.

Sexual assault is a gendered crime. Women are almost four times more likely to be sexually assaulted than men. Statistics Canada has reported that 30% of women in Canada, compared with 8% of men, have been sexually assaulted at least once since the age of 15. That is 4.7 million women and 1.2 million men who have been victims of sexual assaults. The age group most likely to experience sexual assault is between the ages of 15 and 24 years old.

[Translation]

In three studies completed by Justice Canada with survivors of sexual assault, participants were asked to rate their level of confidence in the police, the court process, and the criminal justice system in general. Two-thirds stated that they were not confident in the system. Those living in the provinces were more confident in the police than those living in the territories.

We must do better. There is a serious problem when victims are afraid to report crimes committed against them, especially when the crimes have long-term effects. Victims of sexual assault can often experience physical, emotional, psychological and sexual repercussions that are different from those suffered by victims of other crimes.

[English]

Survivors should be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve, and through Bill C-3, our government commits to taking steps toward that goal. Bill C-3 is designed to strengthen training requirements for newly appointed judges and provide them with important insights into the myths and stereotypes that too often surround sexual assault. It would ensure that judges participate in broader training on social context, including social or cultural factors that may influence and affect an individual's engagement with the justice system. All relevant training would be done through the National Judicial Institute to ensure judicial independence.

In budget 2017, our government provided the Canadian Judicial Council with \$2.7 million over five years, and half a million dollars per year thereafter, to ensure that more judges have access to professional development, with a greater focus on gender and cultural sensitivity training. Budget 2018 provided funding for a number of targeted investments to help eliminate gender-based violence and harassment while promoting security of the person and access to justice. This included \$25.4 million over five years to boost legal aid funding across the country, with a focus on supporting victims of sexual harassment in the workplace.

These changes are aimed at enhancing the equality, privacy and security of the person rights of complainants by countering the myths and stereotypes that have persisted in our criminal justice system, while also balancing the rights of the accused, consistent with relevant Supreme Court of Canada jurisprudence. These myths

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include deeply rooted beliefs about how “real victims” react to sexual assault and myths about the reliability of women's testimony when they make sexual assault complaints.

• (1545)

[Translation]

In June 2017, the government launched its action plan to address gender-based violence, entitled “It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence”.

This co-ordinated multi-sector strategy is based on three pillars, namely prevention, support for survivors and their families, and promotion of responsive legal and justice systems. The government has invested substantial amounts to support the implementation of this whole-of-government initiative to address gender-based violence, co-ordinate existing programs and lay the foundation for greater action.

[English]

All this is to say that our government aims to end gender-based violence and has consistently worked toward this end. I strongly encourage all members in the House to vote in favour of Bill C-3, as it helps give a voice to survivors of sexual assault and harassment and helps us make the world a better place for Canadians.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in her speech, my colleague mentioned that the reporting of sexual assault cases is very low. What, in her opinion, is the best mechanism to encourage more cases to be reported?

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, in my opinion, if more of the victims of sexual assault who came forward were believed when they pleaded their cases, it would encourage more women to come forward. One of the main reasons women do not come forward is, as I mentioned, the awful statistics regarding sexual assaults and the outcomes of these trials. If our judges were better trained and knew how to pick up on when someone has been assaulted or were more culturally sensitized to these issues, I believe more women would come forward and the system would be more trusted by people.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate the member for her speech. I thought it was heartfelt, profound and deeply personal, which is something we do not often see in the House. I commend her for that.

I think that almost everyone in the House agrees on this bill, but I do want to ask her a quick question. Does she think that the bill goes far enough?

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**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, of course it is always possible to go further. This is a good starting point, but I would obviously like to see it go further in the future.

[*English*]

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her courage in sharing her personal story. Certainly, as New Democrats, we are strongly in favour of supporting the bill. I just want to go on the record and say that, as a man, I never have to worry about walking late at night and being the victim of a sexual assault.

I would like to ask the hon. member this. In outlining the three pillars the government is taking to dismantle rape culture, as it relates to prevention, what would be some of her ideas and priorities in getting to the root of the matter and preventing this rape culture that has been perpetrated on women by men?

• (1550)

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, it is really about making sure we are teaching our girls and boys from a young age to counter this. Our thoughts and beliefs about women and men and about how we treat each other stem from the way we were raised in our homes and the way we were taught things growing up. I believe that eventually prevention would be about tackling this at a young age and finding ways to get it into the education system or to just get it out there as quickly as possible to make sure that young boys and girls know the consequences of these types of actions at all levels.

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saint-Laurent for her courage, honesty and candour with respect to her comments.

The member touched upon the idea of victim control, which is the idea that the responsibility lies with women to prevent sexual violence by controlling their behaviour, their actions, how they dress, etc. Could she elaborate on that kind of myth and stereotyping and how this bill is trying to address and correct this phenomenon by educating those in our justice system on eradicating such myths and stereotypes?

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, in my view, there are people who have very traditional views on how women should act. Unfortunately, these are ancient and should be a thing of the past, because women should be independent and able to act the way they want. Men should be responsible for their actions. It should not be the women who take responsibility for the actions of men when they overstep or cross boundaries they should not. I really hope the bill helps us train judges to make sure this no longer happens and that women are believed and treated as human beings with equal rights to men.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There was a bit of a problem with the audio again at the end. I want to remind members to make sure that, when they are coming to us virtually, they wear the headset provided by the House of Commons because it helps the interpreters to ensure that everybody hears what everyone is saying.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to note that I will be splitting my time with the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

First of all, I am honoured today to rise to speak to Bill C-3. This is legislation that would ensure that sexual assault sensitivity training is required for judges who are being appointed to a superior court. While I am very encouraged to see the bill reintroduced, I must admit that I am equally disappointed that the bill has to yet again restart the legislative process.

This is the third time that the legislation has been introduced, and the latest reintroduction is due to nothing more than the Prime Minister's decision to prorogue Parliament to hide from his own ethical scandals. This needed legislation is just one of the issues that has taken a back seat and has been unprioritized due to the Prime Minister's self-interested actions.

Before I get too far ahead in my remarks, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the original author of the legislation, the hon. Rona Ambrose, who first brought forward this piece of legislation in 2017. It builds on her steadfast work to support women and girls here at home but also around the world. I thank her for not only introducing this legislation but for continuing to tirelessly advocate to see that it is passed.

All Canadians should have confidence in our public institutions, but unfortunately, the reality is that many survivors of sexual violence feel hopeless in the face of our justice system. As legislators, we have a responsibility to address that. The statistics around sexual violence in Canada are devastating. They are heartbreaking. They affirm that the bill is timely, yet at the same time, these statistics also affirm that the bill is incredibly overdue.

In Canada, one in six men will experience sexual violence in their lifetimes. For women, that number is much higher. One in three women will experience sexual violence in their lifetimes, and indigenous women and girls are at a much higher risk. Of those incidents, however, only 5% are reported to police and that number should be much higher. This means that the majority of survivors of sexual violence choose not to report it to the authorities. This begs the important question of why. Why do survivors of sexual violence and sexual assault in Canada choose not to report to the police?

A study based on self-reported data from the Department of Justice revealed that two-thirds of the participants stated that they were not confident in the police, the court process or the criminal justice system in general. That is why this piece of legislation is so important.

It is certainly a positive step that in recent years conversations around sexual assault and sexual violence have come into focus, including discussions around consent and healthy relationships. Whether it is breaking myths, calling out victim blaming, reducing shame or giving victims a voice, this move towards greater understanding has the potential to empower survivors of sexual violence.

We would be naive to think that there is just one reason that survivors choose not to come forward. As legislators, we cannot ignore the overwhelming number of survivors of sexual violence who have indicated that they do not have confidence in our legal system. Through the legislation we have the ability to do better for survivors, and we should.

Survivors of crime should always be at the heart of our criminal justice system. By identifying and announcing measures to increase confidence in our courts and our legal system, we can help ensure that our criminal justice system is victim-centric, and we can take practical steps toward helping restore confidence in it. It takes courage for survivors of sexual assault to come forward, and the bill is a tangible way we can support and empower survivors to come forward.

• (1555)

As we know, the bill would require lawyers who are vying to be appointed as a judge in a superior court to commit to taking sexual assault law and social context training. This training will help ensure that superior court judges have the knowledge and skills that are needed to ensure survivors of sexual assault are treated with dignity and respect.

The number of cases in recent years where judges have made comments shaming and blaming the survivor of sexual violence underscores the importance of this. There were comments like, “Why couldn’t you just keep your knees together?” or “Clearly, a drunk can consent.” These inappropriate comments have made national headlines, and these types of ill-considered words have, no doubt, had an impact on the public’s confidence in our judges to preside fairly and impartially over sexual violence cases.

Just the same, these events could deter a survivor from coming forward. As I have already stated, it takes courage to come forward, and there are many reasons why a survivor may hesitate. In going to trial, victims may be required to come face to face again with aggressors. They may be faced with retelling or reliving their experience. They could fear that their case will not result in a conviction; that in process, they might be revictimized; that their case might not be presided over in an impartial manner or on the basis of law and evidence only; or even that they might find themselves publicly blamed. The reasons could be endless. That is why it is not hard to imagine why there is a trend not to report sexual violence.

Of course, in pursuing the legislation, it is not meant to paint every judge and every lawyer with the same brush. It is not drafted with the intent to solely assign blame to the judiciary, nor is it drafted to overstep on judiciary independence. By mandating sexual assault sensitivity training, not only can we help ensure that judges presiding over sexual assault cases properly understand sexual assault law, but we can also help ensure that survivors are respected and treated fairly. We can help ensure that personal biases or societal biases do not influence judicial decision-making. We can also

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help ensure that judges have the training and the know-how to be more conscientious of their word choices in presiding over these cases.

By requiring judges to provide written reasons for their rulings in cases of sexual assault, the legislation would also take steps to enhance judicial accountability. I would also note that in leaving the development and provision of training and education to the Canadian Judicial Council, the bill appropriately respects the separation of powers. It is within the purview of Parliament to implement mechanisms to strengthen and encourage confidence in our public institutions.

Passing the legislation is a starting point for supporting survivors of sexual assault. Survivors should never be revictimized, no matter the crime. It is not just in superior courts that survivors of sexual assault should be interacted with using a victim-centric approach. Sexual assault survivor advocates make it clear that myths and victim-blaming attitudes exist at every step of the way, and that there are many deterrents in reporting incidents. That is why eliminating rape myths and victim-blaming attitudes should be the goal in all circumstances.

Where there is a need, we should also look at better training and accountability in other public institutions, but today we are considering measures to improve public confidence in our justice system. Given that this proposed legislation would give us the opportunity to proactively take action to support survivors of sexual assault, we should act. If it is within our jurisdiction to support them and we fail to act, then we are failing them. That is why I am very pleased that we are debating the legislation today, and that we are looking at tangible, real steps to help improve accountability and confidence in our justice system.

These discussions are very important. I hope that this debate continues to be victim-centric and that we continue to be focused on ensuring that our justice system treats survivors of sexual assault fairly. We all have a duty to ensure that victims of crime are at the heart of our criminal justice system. Because of that, we will give survivors of sexual assault greater confidence in our justice system, and that greater confidence is needed to change the status quo.

No longer can we allow the majority of sexual assault crimes to go unreported. We can do better.

• (1600)

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster underscoring the importance of this bill, and I fully agree with that.

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I am wondering if she may be able to comment on the delays in the passage of this bill that were posed by Conservative senators in the last Parliament, and indeed by the member for St. Albert—Edmonton, who denied unanimous consent to send this through second reading into committee last Friday.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Madam Speaker, I have two points. First, I never think we can talk about sexual violence and sexual harassment enough. The more we have these conversations, the more destigmatization can happen. This is part of taking the layers off education as well.

Second, we were prorogued for six weeks. This was reintroduced and this is the third time it has been reintroduced. We would not be in a third time if the Prime Minister and the Liberals had chosen not to prorogue Parliament. Before there is blaming on the delay of this passage, there needs to maybe be some members who look in the mirror.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I am very happy that we agree that action on Bill C-3 is long overdue.

I heard her denounce the Liberals' decision to prorogue, which delayed the passage of this bill. We would not have had to wait for third reading, which was delayed by the Liberals' decision to prorogue, if the Conservatives had unanimously agreed to send this bill directly to the Senate. It would not have come to this, and the bill might already be law.

What does the member have to say about that?

• (1605)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Madam Speaker, from what I understand, even if this bill passed today and went to the Senate, the Senate is not sitting until October 27. Even if this passed today, it would still be held up. It would not necessarily be in this chamber but that chamber, and frankly, Parliament should just not have been prorogued. We would not even be having this conversation.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate we are finally able to find some common ground in this House. Without getting too excited about that, I have to note that Conservatives have a history of cutting funding to women's lobbies, advocacies and research groups, yet we know those very groups are organizing around gender equity and women's issues, taking the time to understand the impacts of sexual assault and gender-based violence in their communities.

Does the member agree women's and LGBTQ+ trans communities specifically must be consulted in developing the continuing education program on the issues of sexual assault and social context?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Madam Speaker, this goes back to my response to one of my first questions. I do not think we can talk about sexual harassment and sexual violence enough.

It happens in every community, it happens in every age demographic and almost every type of workplace. It is not just certain

types of places where this happens. The more we have the conversations and the more we talk about this and bring education to the forefront, the better. It comes from people sharing their experiences and being vulnerable, but it also takes the people they are talking with to be respectful and understanding of their experiences.

**Mr. Bob Bratina (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, why, if this was so important and prorogation was so evil, did the member vote against the throne speech? We need to thank the NDP for this conversation being held today.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Madam Speaker, I am from Saskatchewan. I represent agriculture and energy workers, and they have been left behind and purposefully left out of that throne speech. That is one of the reasons I voted against it.

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to continue the discussion on Bill C-3, an act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code.

I am going to start where the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster left off. She did an excellent job on speaking to the issue. However, the questions that followed from the government were not about the importance of the discussion about sexual violence, sexual harassment or the contents of the bill. They were instead about the throne speech and why the official opposition voted against the throne speech.

It is important to note, first of all, it is not the obligation of Her Majesty's official opposition to support the government. We serve as a check in this place against the balance of power. It is also important to note that we are here today with this bill being reintroduced because the Prime Minister prorogued Parliament. He put covering up corruption in his government ahead of dealing with important legislation like what we are discussing here today.

A version of this bill was first introduced in 2017 by the former Conservative leader, the Hon. Rona Ambrose. It was called Bill C-337 and proposed judicial accountability through sexual assault law training. Going back to 2017, with respect to this bill, I want to start there and thank Ms. Ambrose for her leadership and for raising this important discussion. Over the past few years, she has played an important role in shining a light on this very important issue. She has been a strong voice for survivors of sexual assault. That initial bill received widespread support across party lines and from stakeholders, as does Bill C-3 today.



It is important that we discuss this bill and have that conversation. That is why I asked to speak on this bill. I am a dad. I have four children and one on the way, and two of my kids are little girls. Of course, I worry and wonder and have a lot of hope for the world they are going to grow up in.

The conversations and information around Bill C-3 and the necessity to introduce this legislation make me worried about the world my little girls live in. It makes me worried about the world my wife, my sisters and my mom grew up in, and my friends and colleagues in this House. Some of these women have lived in a world where they faced incredible challenges in dealing with experiences of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

We heard the member for Saint-Laurent talk about living in fear and growing up in fear. That is not the Canada any of us envision. That is not the Canada any of us want to live in. Making this country a better place for all Canadians, and as a dad, making it a better place for my little girls, is incredibly important to me.

It is heartening that we have cross-partisan collaboration in advancing this bill. It is important because we have an obligation, as legislators, to put these good intentions into practice and to enshrine them in law.

This bill has had support across the country before and that speaks to the ongoing need for it. In 2018, the legislature in Prince Edward Island passed a very similar piece of legislation. It was introduced by Conservative MLA Jamie Fox and he did that in consultation with Ms. Ambrose.

● (1610)

In the previous Parliament, Canada's Conservatives were proud to support the just act. In our election platform in 2019, we were pleased to include support for this legislation.

We need to continue to recognize and respect the experiences of victims of sexual assault, and we need to acknowledge that our justice system oftentimes fails them.

Bill C-3 would go part of the way to improve the trust that Canadians have in their judicial system, specifically victims of sexual assault. They need to feel confident, they need to feel safe when they come forward. The last place that a victim should be revictimized, the last place that a victim should feel they will not be believed, is with a judge.

We have all seen headlines about incredibly insensitive, incredibly inappropriate and, frankly, disgusting comments made by some members of the bench in dealing with victims. That word is so important, "victims". Oftentimes, we hear qualifying language around why they are victims. It is certainly not because they chose to be, but they did take the step to come forward and to put their faith in the rule of law, in the police, in the Crown prosecutors and in the judiciary.

Certainly, the least that we could do for them is ensure that the judge hearing the case understands the basics, understands where this victim is coming from. To achieve that, there needs to be transparency in the courts. Any of the decisions that they make need to have a rationale and they need to be accountable.

### *Government Orders*

This legislation would go a long way to do that. Bill C-3 would amend the Judges Act to restrict eligibility of who may be appointed as a judge of the Superior Court. It would require that individuals undertake and participate in continuing education on matters related to sexual assault law and social context, including attending seminars. This would not just affect the judges who are on the bench. Anyone who wants to be a judge would need to take this training first.

Instead of just members of the bench, anyone who aspires to serve would take the training, promoting understanding and ensuring that more women feel safe, more women come forward. All judges need to be fully equipped with a profound understanding of the law that must be applied to the facts of each one of the cases that they hear.

Bill C-3 would also require the Canadian Judicial Council to gather data and submit an annual report to Parliament on the delivery and participation in sexual assault information seminars established by them.

Finally, Bill C-3 would amend the Criminal Code to require appointed judges, as I said before, to provide those written reasons, increasing transparency and accountability. We have heard from previous speakers about the prevalence of sexual assaults, particularly in women between the ages of 15 and 24, the very low reporting rate, with 83% of them not reported to police at all. The need for this training is evident.

I am proud to stand today in support of this bill. I am hopeful that legislators in this place use it as an opportunity to look at how we can put the needs of victims first, how that can be reflected in sentencing against offenders, and how we can make sure that Canada's laws serve always to protect its most vulnerable, and in this case, in particular, protecting women and girls.

● (1615)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this is a good piece of legislation for many reasons. The amount of debate that has taken place has been mentioned. I believe all members of this House, except for the Conservatives, were prepared to have it pass last Friday, even though the idea for this bill originated with a Conservative leader.

Why is it that the Conservatives want to hold up this legislation? If they wanted to, they could talk it through all the way until December, if that was their intent. Could the member indicate why they want to hold up this very important piece of legislation?

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Madam Speaker, it is frankly disappointing to hear those comments from the member. Anyone who spends any amount of time in this place knows that he spends more time here. He is here all the time. I hope he would understand the importance of debate, speaking to the issues and hearing different perspectives.

*Government Orders*

There are 338 ridings, not just the ones represented by Liberals. There are members from across this country who bring diverse views. During this debate today, I have heard perspectives from members, including that of the member for Saint-Laurent, a member of the Liberal Party, who shared very personal and important details.

Debate is important. Committee study is important, and the work that this place does is important. Parliament is important. That is why we are debating this today, and that is why I am supporting this legislation. I hope, in spite of the opportunity the member has taken to try to score some cheap points, he too will vote for this legislation.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. We know that the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes likes to talk. He did so at the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** We cannot understand what you are saying. Too many people are talking across the floor.

I would ask all members, when someone else is speaking, to give that person the respect they deserve.

The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Madam Speaker, we know that my colleague likes to talk. I do too, but I also like to take action.

What goes around comes around. As my colleague mentioned, in 2017, Bill C-337, which was introduced by former Conservative member Rona Ambrose, received the unanimous consent of the House. This is practically the same wording, a carbon copy.

I respect that my colleague thinks it is important to debate Bill C-3 today, but it is also important to do something, to take action. It is useless to debate something that we already agreed on. It is a waste of time and taxpayers' money.

I would also like my colleague to explain what he thinks of the Senate, that archaic institution that is a waste of time and is very costly.

It was not the Conservatives that blocked the legislative process in 2017. It was the Conservative members who did not decide to give priority to examining this bill. That is the reason why, in 2020, we have to redebate the same issue on which there was already unanimous consent.

[*English*]

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Madam Speaker, I am glad to hear that the member is an admirer of my work. I encourage him to enjoy any of the debates that I have participated and that he has not heard either on ParIVU or in Hansard.

I was not here in 2017, but I am here now. I was elected in 2018 and again in 2019. Since being elected, I have participated in the protection and furtherance of this democratic institution and our democracy. Unanimous consent is not how this place was intended to operate.

The Bloc can opine about the abolition of the Senate. I am not looking to break up the country. I do not think that is the debate we are having today. Today, I am here to talk about the importance of Bill C-3. We are having a conversation about sexual assault, sexual harassment and violence against women and girls. The member opposite can yell into the wind about breaking up the country or abolishing the Senate. Conservatives are here to talk about Bill C-3 today, and I am proud to support that bill.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Unfortunately, because of the intervention I had to make, there is no time left for questions and comments on this piece for this MP.

[*Translation*]

However, because the hon. member for Shefford has a lot to say, I will give her the floor.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

This week, I got to see a comedy called *How to Be a Good Wife*. The movie made me realize that, not so long ago, women could not wear pants or dress how they liked. I am getting to the point, so please be patient. There is a connection. They were seen as creatures whose marital duty was to submit and be beholden to men. Of course, society has evolved. A woman who wears a short skirt or a low-cut top or who drinks should not be seen as a cheap piece of meat, nor should anyone interpret her attire or actions as signalling that she wants to be raped.

I have worked with women's groups, so it means a lot to me to speak to Bill C-3, an act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code. Everyone seems to agree on this bill.

There are three parts to my speech. First, I will situate the bill in the context of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. Then I will contextualize it from a uniquely Quebec perspective. I will conclude by explaining why I want to see it passed as soon as possible.

Bill C-337, which amends the Judges Act and the Criminal Code with regard to sexual assault, was introduced in the House of Commons on February 23, 2017, by the Hon. Rona Ambrose. It was studied by the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women, which, in its report on the bill, recommended amendments to three clauses and the deletion of one clause. The House of Commons passed the bill with the committee's amendments over two years ago on May 15, 2017. Bill C-337 received first reading in the Senate on May 16, 2017, and was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on May 31, 2018. Unfortunately, I was not yet a member of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women at that time.

Bill C-337, whose short title is the Judicial Accountability through Sexual Assault Law Training Act, has three central purposes:

First, it adds a new eligibility requirement for lawyers to qualify to become a judge of a superior court in any province, namely, that they must have completed recent and comprehensive education in sexual assault law to the satisfaction of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs.

Second, it requires the Canadian Judicial Council, or CJC, to submit an annual report to Parliament through the Minister of Justice on the delivery and uptake of sexual assault law seminars established by the CJC.

Third, it requires reasons for decisions in sexual assault cases to be entered in the record of the proceedings or, if the proceedings are not recorded, the reasons must be provided in writing.

Of course, improvements were made to Bill C-337, which is considered to be the forerunner of Bill C-3. However, it is important to remember what was going on in the media when the bill was proposed and what problems it was trying to address.

The legal system's handling of sexual assault cases was often in the news. When she appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women, the Hon. Rona Ambrose explained that she decided to introduce the bill after noting that a disturbing number of sexual assault cases had shaken the public's confidence in our justice system.

She was referring to statements made by judges in sexual assault trials or in their decisions. Some felt that these comments were based on discredited stereotypes about victims of sexual assault. In one case, the judge resigned after the CJC recommended his removal because he made comments or asked questions evidencing an antipathy toward laws designed to protect vulnerable witnesses, promote equality and bring integrity to sexual assault trials.

In a case from 2016, a new trial was ordered on appeal after the judge was found to have used myths about the expected behaviour of sexual assault victims to justify an acquittal. In 2017, another judge was roundly criticized for his insulting language towards a woman who was intoxicated at the time of the alleged sexual assault. "She had a pretty face". "She should feel flattered for getting attention from an older man". "What were you wearing?" "You should have just kept your knees together". "He was just a kid". "She's forgotten bits and pieces, so her testimony isn't credible". These are the kinds of comments we have heard, but this is 2020: These comments should not be coming out of the mouths of judges during a sexual assault trial.

Senator Raynell Andreychuk, who sponsored Bill C-337 in the Senate, explained that those cases only add to factors that discourage victims from reporting sexual assault.

• (1625)

She pointed out that Bill C-337 seeks to prevent further court cases from being decided on the basis of stereotypes about sexual assault victims and to restore victims' confidence in the judicial process. I would like to quote from the letter sent by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women in 2017.

### *Government Orders*

Based on the testimony heard during the study of the bill, the Committee encourages the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada to express to her provincial and territorial counterparts the need to make training in sexual assault law and social context more broadly available. Witnesses appearing before the Committee have highlighted the importance of training for all persons who play a role in the administration of criminal justice....

Additionally, the Committee wishes for the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada to strongly encourage provincial and territorial governments to make the transcripts of the proceedings of sexual assault cases for all courts under their jurisdictions available online in a searchable database....

The committee was serious about making this more transparent.

The Committee heard from Professor Elaine Craig, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law at Dalhousie University, that "it's inarguable that written decisions provide a degree of transparency and public accountability that's not available with oral decisions." The Committee requests that the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada inform and advise the Committee at the earliest opportunity of the results and outcomes of these discussions with her provincial and territorial counterparts.

The excerpts I just read are from 2017. Already in 2017, the Standing Committee on the Status of Women sent a letter calling on the Minister of Justice to take action. Then there was Bill C-5 and prorogation. Today, we are still here debating it.

I will now talk about Quebec.

In the meantime, an all-party group of women parliamentarians at the National Assembly are addressing the issue of violence against women. I recently asked one of those members how important the current bill is for helping women who are victims of assault and she told me that it was very important.

This is a very important bill. As I have already discussed this issue with some CALACS, I know that women hesitate to come forward because they do not wish to relive painful memories of an assault at a trial that forces them to relive these moments before a judge that lacks compassion or makes derogatory and inappropriate comments in their presence.

Let me be clear. I am not making generalizations or indicating that all judges are insensitive in sexual assault cases. Most already write very good decisions. That is not the case, and I am not making generalizations.

I believe it is high time that the bill be voted on and studied in committee especially in the context of a pandemic that has exacerbated the problem of violence against women.

During the pandemic, I had the opportunity to speak to someone from the Australian consulate about the importance of training for judges with respect to sexual assault. It is a question of dignity for the victims because it is important to have a good understanding of the sensitive issues involved in sexual assault cases. It is important to place them in their social and family contexts.

*Government Orders*

During the pandemic, I also had several conversations with a survivor from Quebec. She told me that she has received comments on her blog from women who, like her, have had difficult experiences in court. Here are some of the comments: “They cannot judge something they do not understand”. “They do not understand the victim’s emotional state as a result of post-traumatic stress”. “Fragmented memory means people cannot clearly remember the order of events. Memories come back in bits and pieces. It is not deliberate. It is how the brain goes into survival mode”. “Judges need to be able to adapt to the victim’s state, not vice versa”.

In many cases, these women are still in a state of shock. The courts expect them to maintain their composure, but how can they? It is not realistic to expect them to calmly testify and provide all the details. That is impossible for a victim of sexual assault.

I can only hope that, in the near future, the bill will be passed and brought into force as quickly as possible. We need to forget about partisanship and pass this bill now so we can fight the myths and stereotypes associated with sexual assault, which is far too common.

There are 600,000 sexual assaults in Canada every year. On average, one in two women will be assaulted at least once in her lifetime. That rate is even higher for women with a disability, not to mention the MMIWG issue.

There are far too many assaults happening. Rape culture has no place in 2020. We must act.

• (1630)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her speech.

I would like to ask her a question about the situation in Quebec. Has the government brought in legislation to prevent sexual violence? Does Quebec have tools to train justice system officials?

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Quebec is addressing the issue of education and training for judges on sexual assault cases. Those discussions are under way.

I would like to take a moment to expand on this. The civil courts could be another possible avenue for supporting sexual assault victims. There are other options still on the table.

The two levels of government need to communicate and come to an agreement.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to hear my Bloc colleague supporting the measures included in this bill. Given that the bill has already been studied in committee, and given the urgency of implementing the measures it proposes, I hope we can count on the support of our Bloc friends to pass this legislation quickly.

Would my colleague like to propose any changes to the bill before us, which we could make right now?

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, what I do know is that the bill can be passed and that it is up to a committee to study the issue of protection with regard to judges. We know that some

members of the Quebec bar association have expressed concerns. The bill has evolved.

We just have to ensure that the issue of judicial integrity is studied in committee. I believe that that would be the best place to make recommendations.

• (1635)

[*English*]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls noted that apathy from police services was indicative of ongoing racism and sexism which re-victimizes women and girls.

I think the hon. member mentioned this in passing. My French is not as good as it should be. If that is the case, could she expand on whether she would support extending the proposals in the bill to training and police services?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, other committees should already be looking into the possibility of expanding the scope of this issue to include other levels of the justice system. I would remind hon. members that the focus of Bill C-3 is training for judges. Other ongoing work will help determine how to expand the scope of this issue with respect to our justice system.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague for her speech and for her activism on this critical issue. I think the discussion about stereotypes in particular is very important and highly useful. Obviously, judges are not the only ones who have a problem with stereotypes.

We have studied the tragic case of Eustachio Gallese in Quebec and the issue of training the members of the Parole Board of Canada. In that case, a person was released on the basis of bad instructions. We have asked the government and the committees to look into this.

I would like to know if my colleague has an opinion on training for members of the Parole Board of Canada and on their assessment.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I made my opinion on the case of Marylène Levesque known in the previous session.

I think we can walk and chew gum at the same time. We can pass this bill, and other committees can examine the issue at other levels. We know that some have said they want to expand the scope of this issue, and there are other places where we can look at that.

*Government Orders*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. 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 Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, COVID-19 Emergency Response; the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable, COVID-19 Emergency Response; the hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe, COVID-19 Emergency Response.

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is nice to see you in person. I want to say hello to my colleagues on video conference.

I want to take a moment to pay tribute to my father, who died from ALS three years ago and whose birthday was October 7. I mention this because there is a lot of talk about these issues and about how to support caregivers.

I am pleased to be here today to speak to Bill C-3. We have been talking about this bill for a long time, but we are finally coming to the end. This is reassuring, because now we will be able to move forward. There are more steps to come.

No one here will be surprised to hear that the Bloc Québécois will support the bill. Our party supported the original version of the bill that was introduced by Ms. Ambrose, the former interim leader of the Conservative Party. My colleague from Rivière-du-Nord was eager to support the bill and sought leave of the House to move a motion calling on the Senate to promptly adopt the bill, since the parliamentary session was coming to a close.

Unfortunately, what we feared came to pass. Our colleague's bill died on the Order Paper. That was not the first time. I also saw this when I was a political staffer about 10 years ago. We hope that Bill C-5 will not suffer the same fate. I would hope that we will get there in this session of Parliament with Bill C-3, and that after two failures, the third time will be the charm. I am speaking to all members. This is what I hope for us, so let us hurry up and support it.

Bill C-3 is important. It is a short bill, only a few pages long, and we all seem to agree on it. Despite its apparent simplicity, this bill is of paramount importance, because it has to do with the confidence the general public has in the justice system. As everybody here knows, the justice system is the backbone of any society. If people can no longer trust the justice system, what will they do? The excesses we see from time to time, including right now, the excesses that turn our stomachs, would only multiply. That is why we must act.

As legislators, experienced or newly elected, it is on us to ensure that the justice system in place is credible and that it has the approval and support of the entire, or the majority, of the population.

In the interest of justice, those dealing with the system and the rule of law that we are tasked to protect, we must in my opinion pass this bill as soon as possible. What are the effects? The answer is simple. We are talking here about training judges. Bill C-3 specifically addresses sexual assault, which we have been especially ill-equipped and ill-informed to deal with, not to mention that our judgments on this issue are often biased.

It is up to us as legislators to bolster this trust by rectifying the situation. We must give our judges as many tools as possible, so

that they may do their job with the professionalism they already bring to it and want to continue to bring to it.

• (1640)

In almost all cases, a judge must assess the credibility of witnesses, that of both the victim and the accused. This is often where a judge can be influenced by preconceived notions that do not stem from malice, but from our lived experience and culture.

Bill C-3 seeks to address this situation by providing better training for judges and making everyone aware, including legislators, of the reality of sexual assault. We must understand how a victim may react in a given situation and why the victim may not recall the events surrounding the sexual assault. This is reiterated in practically every speech.

If we want the justice system to work, we need to ensure that the courts have a firm grasp of these issues. When asked to assess the credibility of a witness, a judge must have sufficient academic and practical knowledge to deliver a judgment that is sound and, above all, that Canadians can trust.

I hope that Bill C-3 will somehow open the door to the possibility of including, in sexual assault cases, a restorative component more common in the civil courts of Quebec and the provinces. We want to enhance people's trust in the courts, and not just criminal courts. It is normal for rulings to be overturned. Every day, rulings are handed down by the courts, and every day, rulings are overturned by the court of appeal. Sometimes the decision is two against one, as the judgment is not unanimous. Those cases go to the Supreme Court, which also often quashes appeal court rulings. Those judgments are not always unanimous either.

What is more, we are hearing that Quebec wants to establish specialized courts to hear sexual assault cases. Given that judges in all kinds of courts will receive this training, they may take it upon themselves to promote such avenues of recourse. In some cases, this could be done by improving legal aid so that people who rely on legal aid can seek redress through the civil courts.

That is why this bill must be passed quickly. Training is a driver of change because it seeks to increase awareness of the situation and to ensure that real needs are taken into consideration so that the work is done properly. We hope that no one has to experience sexual assault before having empathy for victims.

This training is essential for our current justice system. For all of these reasons, and for the reasons cited by all of my colleagues over the past few hours, we will be voting in favour of Bill C-3. I want to reiterate for the fourth time that I hope it will be passed very quickly.

*Government Orders*

• (1645)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, when legislation is brought forward, it is encouraging to see the type of support it is receiving from all sides of the House. As the member has said, no one political party owns this legislation. In fact, the former leader of the Conservative Party brought forward legislation in the form of a private member's bill. Then it was brought through the government and ultimately made it to the Senate. It went through all these processes.

I do not want to take anything away from the passion of the debate and the importance of the issue, but would she not agree that it is time we get this into law? It has been before us for a long time in one form or another.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. If I understand correctly with the help of interpretation, my colleague wants to know if we agree this bill should be passed quickly.

Earlier we talked about the process. As a new MP, I understand that there is a protocol and rules we have to follow. We are facing extremely tough challenges. There are people in the streets who are worried about the health of their loved ones.

That said, when we are unanimous and we respect the legislative process, I think we can not only show that we have confidence in our judicial system, but also increase our constituents' confidence in us as their elected representatives.

• (1650)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her excellent speech.

We recognize that more than eight million Canadian women have been sexually assaulted and that only 5% of them have reported the assault to the police. That is because the victims do not believe they will get justice.

What can we do to assure women that, if they report the crime to the police, justice will be served?

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question because I was involved in such cases in my previous career when I worked with community organizations.

People would come to me, asking me if they would be believed and what would happen, considering the tools currently available. These people told me they were afraid. They would ask me if they could trust the system, but they were not sure.

People are leaving their homes to go to shelters, where the staff will support them and try to help them the best they can. I really want to commend these organizations in my riding. With this bill, we can increase the level of trust that people have, and staff will be able to tell them that they are respected.

We can lead by example here and give this bill our support so that it can pass as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** I thank you for your plea, my dear colleague.

My thoughts go out to you for your father, as I know he was very—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would like to remind the member to address his remarks through the Chair.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Madam Speaker, my question is quite simple: Given the importance of this bill and the fact that all parties seem relatively in favour of it, does my esteemed colleague believe it would be important for the vote to be unanimous or at least very strong?

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, the answer is yes.

During these challenging times, can we do something positive? I do not know all the rules, but with the expertise we have here, I think we can find a quick way to show that we can pull together when we need to.

[English]

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to Bill C-3, an act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code. I have a lot to say about this bill, so I hope I do not run out of time.

First I want to thank my friend, the Hon. Rona Ambrose. I was with her from the inception of this bill. She did me the honour of making me the chair of the status of women committee. Watching her lead this bill through the House was a real learning experience for me. We know that she is an accomplished businesswoman and accomplished politician. She was also our interim leader and a cabinet minister. I heard she is writing a book, so I look forward to that. I would like to thank her again for recognizing the importance of this issue and bringing it forward.

I want to talk a bit about the history of the bill. We have heard in some of the speeches that this is the third time it has been before the House. It received unanimous consent when I was here and went to the Senate. Although I cannot explain what happened there, I was told that at the last moment the government woke up and realized it had passed no legislation and loaded up government legislation into the queue. That was the responsibility there for that failure.

Then we had Bill C-5. It was reintroduced, and I was happy to see that. Then the government decided not to sit all summer, so that was a wasted opportunity, and then on top of that it prorogued Parliament and delayed another six weeks. Everything fell off and had to be restarted, so here we are again.

*Government Orders*

It is disconcerting when we think about the statistics that we have heard. I know that many people have quoted them in their speeches, but I want to add a few comments to them. It is astounding when we hear that 83% of women who have been sexually assaulted do not even report it. That is just the tip of the iceberg.

We heard some testimony at the status of women committee. We were studying violence against women and girls at the time this bill came forward. The Ottawa Police reported that, of the women who show up at the police station to claim that they have been sexually assaulted, the police do not even write a report for 40% of them. Think about the humiliation for women, of being sexually assaulted and having the courage to go to the police knowing that, if they show up, only one in five cases is even reported, which then may go to trial. A very small percentage of those ever come with a conviction.

Once they come up with a conviction, it is astounding to see the small sentences that people receive in this country for sexual assault. When we look at it on paper, we can see that there are supposed to be minimum sentences of 10 and 14 years for these kinds of offences, but the reality is that it is up to the judge of the day to determine whether he wants to go with a summary conviction, probation or a fine. In fact, in many cases, even for the very small percentage convicted, the punishment for the crime is measured in months, or people are allowed to be on probation or they pay a fine for sexually assaulting a woman.

When one in three women in this country is going to be sexually assaulted in her life, this is totally unacceptable. We know, and it has been pointed out, that indigenous women and members of the LGBTQ community are even more at risk for this kind of sexual violence. It is all the more reason why we need to have training in place that could address parts of this.

I liked many of the recommendations I heard today that said that we have the purview, here in the House, over federal judges. However, that is not the whole story. There are provincial judges. This bill was brought forward and shared with all of the provinces. The report on violence against women and girls in Canada, which brought 45 specific recommendations to address this issue, was shared as well across the provinces. I am sad to say there has been very little uptake of that. Therefore, I was encouraged to hear my colleagues from Quebec tell me that they are starting to look at this and address the issue, because that will be very important.

Police sensitivity has been pointed out as a factor in the murdered and missing aboriginal women and girls recommendations, as well as 40 other reports that went before them on similar terms.

• (1655)

We heard testimony as well that training is needed there, but the reality is we have limited sway. This bill would address training for lawyers who want to become judges. We really wanted to have it address all the justices who were going to hear sexual assault cases, but unfortunately, that was not something we were able to make happen.

Justice Kent showed up at committee. As soon as Rona had tabled this bill, she was very enthusiastic and implemented training for lawyers who wanted to be judges in the federal judiciary, and

recommended training to all those who were existing justices. She was unable to force them to take it, but at least there was immediate action taken. While there has been lamenting about the amount of time to pass the bill in full, people have stepped up to the plate and have been able to address some of the needs without even seeing the legislation.

Some of the statistics I find really troubling have to do with young people. Young people aged 15 to 24 are twice as likely to be sexually assaulted. When we were at committee, we heard testimony that 30% of women who attend Canadian universities would be sexually assaulted in the first eight weeks. This is unacceptable and unbelievable. Imagine these young girls in that state of trauma, not understanding the judicial system and having no guidance of any kind to help them manoeuvre through the police, and of course the peer pressure that exists on campus. We can see why we really need to have sensitivity.

The study we did came up with a lot of recommendations, and I am disappointed to see the government did not end up doing much with those. If I look at the importance it placed on addressing this issue, \$100 million was put into one of the budgets to address violence against women and girls. If we think about the four million women, plus or minus, who have experienced sexual assault, it works out to 25 bucks for each one. That is not very much when compared, for example, with the government's response to the COVID pandemic, where some \$240 billion has been rolled out to date for about 106,000 cases. That is \$2.2 million per case of COVID compared with 25 bucks per sexual assault. I just wanted to put that into perspective. Sometimes the math tells us a lot.

Obviously, with this legislation we are trying to address some of the really egregious comments that have been made by judges in sexual assault trials. We know the most infamous one: Robin Camp's comments asking a survivor if she could not just keep her knees together. That was totally unacceptable. We know there was another case in the Atlantic provinces. A woman who had been drinking was assaulted, and the comment from the judge was that she was drunk, as if somehow that justified her being sexually assaulted. Maybe the most egregious to me personally were the comments made about Cindy Gladue, who was sexually assaulted and murdered, and when she was not even there to defend herself, the judge referred to her continually as the aboriginal prostitute. That is unacceptable in the extreme. We absolutely need to see change.

*Government Orders*

I have pointed out why the bill is needed. I want to spend a few minutes talking about what the bill would do and some of the things that have changed over the evolution of the bill. The bill's purpose is to improve the interaction between sexual assault complainants and the justice system, specifically the judiciary. It would restrict the eligibility of who could be appointed to become a judge in Superior Court by requiring them to commit to undertaking and participating in continuing education on matters related to sexual assault and social context, including attending seminars.

● (1700)

It requires the Canadian Judicial Council to submit an annual report to Parliament on the delivery of and participation in the sexual assault information seminars established by it, and it requires judges to provide reasons for their decisions in sexual assault cases. It is really important that we understand why written decisions were necessary. When the decisions were not written, there was some evidence that perhaps they were less well thought out, or less likely to be appealed because the wording was not on record. Therefore, that was important.

In the bill itself there is more robust language about the consulting that needs to be done with other organizations for the training. We want to make sure that the training gets at the things it needs to address, so it needs to be “developed after consultation with persons, groups or organizations that the Council considers appropriate, such as sexual assault survivors and groups and organizations that support them; and include instruction in evidentiary prohibitions, principles of consent and the conduct of sexual assault proceedings, as well as education regarding myths and stereotypes associated with sexual assault complainants.”

Earlier we heard the member for Oakville North—Burlington recite the history of the legislation that went into place in 1983, which was the rape shield provision. That prohibits someone from bringing up someone's past sexual history as any kind of information that would be relevant to a sexual assault trial. In addition to that, the principle of consent is important and is something that does not just belong in training for judges. I agree also with an earlier member who talked about how it is important to educate children from the time they are young about consent.

If anyone has not seen a very short clip on YouTube called “Tea Consent”, I would encourage members to look at it, because it uses a cup of tea as an example of when we could expect sexual advances to be acceptable or not. We do not give someone tea if they are unconscious. We do not give someone tea if they say they do not want tea. I really think that is an excellent short video, but the education needs to be ongoing.

I am happy to see the consultation here and my hope is that they would consult as well intersectionally to make sure that concerns from the LGBTQ community as well as indigenous communities are heard, who as I already pointed out are more likely to experience assault. The training can be sensitive in all ways.

One of the things I do not like about the current revision is the metrics for tracking how well this is going. Originally, the tracking was going to be the number of sexual assault cases that were heard and the number of cases that had judges who had the training, so we could get a sense if it was working. Do we have judges, 100%

being the goal, who have had the training actually presiding over cases?

Instead, the metric has been changed to the number of judges who attended each seminar. It is important to measure the number of people taking the training, but I am more interested in something very specific, which is that the people who are presiding over sexual assault trials have had the training. That is one of the things that brought this forward. The other justices who were somewhat insensitive did not have the training. I do not know if that metric is really where it ought to be, but I am sure that will get hashed out as well when it gets to committee.

I want to talk about some of the other issues that contribute to the whole problem of sexual assault and the ramifications of it. If we think about the victims who have been raped, there is a range of sexual assault that goes from the extreme on down. However, in every case there is trauma.

● (1705)

Many of the women and men who have been assaulted and experience this trauma have mental health issues as a result. Many turn to addictions of various sorts. The opioid crisis and the methamphetamine crisis we studied at health committee, if we look to the root cause of these things, it comes back to sexual assault in many cases. The cost to society is huge and it cannot be overlooked when we look at the importance of getting the legislation in place.

The other thing I wanted to talk about is rape culture. We were studying this whole issue of violence against women and girls and how we get to all of the different solutions. Rape culture is actually a pyramid where at the top we have sexual assault as the most heinous act. However, at varying levels below, there are behaviours that will walk somebody in that direction, starting with the catcalling, heckling and harassing of women and people on buses, for example.

There was an organization locally that came and did a very good presentation on the different behaviours and all the steps that would be needed to make sure people understand these small behaviours become more and more egregious and can, if not interrupted, lead somebody to cross the line and commit sexual assault. That is one thing that definitely needs to be looked at.



The other thing I want to talk about is the length of time all of this takes. We have talked about this particular bill being introduced for the third time, but that is not the only thing. I get very frustrated when I look at the work done at committees, which is very valuable and produces very detailed recommendations on what the government needs to do with violence against women and girls. Members should read the report.

There are 45 recommendations, some of them specific to those young women on university campuses and what we need to do to prevent sexual assault, help these women and guide them through the process. Each university should have a protocol in place to make sure they follow up correctly on the incident without shaming the victim, and to make sure the victim has support as they go through the police and judicial system. There are a lot of good points in there. It takes a long time to get anything to happen and I have not seen much happen with that.

The same is true for many issues affecting women, such as human trafficking, pay equity, corporate boards and systemic discrimination of women during the COVID pandemic. We have had a lot of discussions about how women are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and how many of the programs rolled out did not really hit the mark there.

We need to be more nimble and agile. I heard that word in the throne speech. I am a fan of agility. Some folks in my past have said that I ram things through, but that is not true. I am a person of action and I like to see things done quickly.

In this case, it is something that is very serious. I am definitely going to support Bill C-3 and I am happy to have the opportunity to speak to many of the new members who may not have known the history of the bill as it came through the House, or who may not have been familiar with all of the statistics as to how bad the situation is in our own country.

I do not want to get away from the theme that one of the members talked about in terms of the government's approach of prevention, support and justice. I do think those are the right pillars to move forward with some action. We talked about education and some of the supports, but justice is something I would like to talk about for one minute.

We met with women from other countries who were parliamentary representatives. I remember sitting with a woman from another country and I asked what the sexual assault frequency was in her country. She told me that it is not really an issue for them. When I asked her why that was, she said that there is a mandatory 10-year sentence with no exceptions. That is the take-away.

We need to do something in our judicial system in addition to this bill that actually puts a punishment in place and does not leave it to the discretion of the judges who are preferentially choosing to go with punishments measured in months for the sexual assault of teenagers, people who may have trauma for the rest of their lives.

I thank members for listening and I thank Rona Ambrose for bringing the bill forward. I look forward to questions.

### *Government Orders*

• (1710)

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her very eloquent speech. Indeed, I am one of the newer members in this chamber that the member referred to.

As a litigator and as a woman, Bill C-3 is something that interests me very much. I have looked at what has happened in the past. I appreciate the fact that the member says she is a woman of action, but the truth of the matter is that, with one-third of Canadian women going to experience sexual assault, we need to move very quickly at this stage.

I hope we can count on the Conservatives' support to get this through committee very quickly. Also, if I understand correctly, I believe it was members of the Conservative senators' caucus who previously blocked the passage of the bill. I hope to count on Conservatives' support in order to get this very important bill through.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, definitely I will tell the member what happened when it came to the Senate delay.

It was coming to May of that year and the government woke up and realized that it had passed the least legislation of any government before it. It decided to put a slew of things in. We had Bills C-91, C-92, C-93 and a whole bunch of them come in. The Senate has a protocol where they have to address government business first, before private members' business, which this was at the time. That is what happened there.

I assure the member that the Conservative senators are on the page and absolutely believe that we need to do something to address sexual assault in this country, and will support this bill as well as others that take that measure.

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague from Sarnia—Lambton on her speech.

Obviously, it is hard to have a perfect bill. We can see some improvements, but there could have been more. I, too, think that Bill C-3 is not perfect.

I have a question about interference in provincial jurisdictions. The Quebec bar association has its own expertise and has conducted an analysis of former Bill C-337, which passed unanimously. According to the association, the administration of justice is a provincial jurisdiction and the proposed changes, both to the Judges Act and the Criminal Code, are likely to encroach on the jurisdiction of Quebec, the provinces and the territories.

*Government Orders*

I would like to know if my colleague is opposed to any interference in these areas of jurisdiction.

[English]

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, the federal jurisdiction here would only require that lawyers who want to be federally appointed judges get the training. That was the only part of the pie that we have jurisdiction on, that we could legislate. That is why that is what is in here, so that it does not infringe on provincial legislation as it is written.

That said, we did send it all out to all of the provinces. I do not understand why not. If Quebec provincial jurisdiction allows them to get their lawyers this kind of training so that when they become provincial judges they will judge with sensitivity in sexual assault cases, that needs to happen. We need to get going on that.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I might disagree with the member slightly on the story around the Senate, but we can take that up off-line some other time.

Regarding the final report on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, it found that the apathy from police services is indicative of racism and sexism that re-victimizes women and girls. Would the member be in favour of, while not perhaps in this legislation, extending the training that we propose here to police services?

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, I would say that I am in favour. However, again, we have this issue of provincial jurisdiction. Some of the police in the country are under provincial jurisdiction. For the ones that are under federal jurisdiction, such as the RCMP for example, I would definitely encourage this kind of training.

We have seen this not just in the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls report, but I think there were 40 reports before that that looked at these various situations, all of which had police sensitivity and training as a recommendation. I would love to see that across the country, but at least we can do our part federally.

**Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows the history of this bill and a lot of the research that has gone into it. I really appreciate her perspective on this.

Could the hon. member give us a bit more background on the bill? We know that our former colleague, Rona Ambrose, brought it forward, and the Conservatives certainly supported it. However, there were reasons why she brought the bill forward. Could she speak to those reasons?

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, it was during the time when diligent reporting by journalists like *The Globe and Mail's* Robyn Doolittle found that 5,000 allegations of sexual assault cases were closed by Canadian law enforcement annually. That statistic got Rona thinking.

Then there was the Robin Camp incident and the Jian Ghomeshi case. With all of these things happening, she thought something had to be done. We needed judges who understood the sensitivity needed to address sexual assault and who understood the laws that had already been passed with respect to the rape shield and others. I think that ignited the passion in her. She was already a passionate

advocate for women and girls, being a co-author of *The International Day of the Girl*. From there, with some input from stakeholders, she was able to draft the bill.

The bill was unanimously passed when it came to the House. Of course, it is the will of the House that needs to happen.

• (1720)

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I appreciated the speech delivered by my colleague, who has a thorough understanding of this matter. That is remarkable.

I believe we are all of one mind on this issue. I think that everyone is pretty much on the same page. In Canada and Quebec, we want to ensure that the courts are more welcoming for victims of sexual assault.

Now, what is the next step? How can we get there?

The statistics we heard, which I was not familiar with, are appalling. Approximately 5% of victims of sexual assault in Canada file charges.

How can we make the courts more welcoming than they are at present? What can we do to get there?

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about this.

[English]

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, it comes down to this. If victims know in advance that they will be shamed, that they will have to go through a long and arduous trial where they will be made to look bad and that at the end of the day only 7% of people will be convicted and will receive a sentence of a probation, fine or maybe a few months in prison, they will not put themselves through that. They have already been traumatized.

We need to address the conviction rate. The punishment should fit the crime. We need to educate people about the change so women are aware. One of the recommendations in our violence report suggested something like a spirit guide to guide women through the process and be there as an advocate for them, especially for younger women.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I particularly appreciated my hon. member's comments about the issue of rape culture and how we could combat that. I know some work was done in the last Parliament around the exposure of especially young boys to violent sexual images online and how that might shape their socialization around sexuality.

Could the member speak to that and some of the action that could be taken on that issue?

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, when we looked at some of the contributing factors to sexual assault against women and girls, pornography and a lot of the online images people were seeing, especially young boys, was one of the causal factors. One of the solutions presented was to organize men to come alongside the boys, train them how to treat women appropriately and help them understand the inappropriateness of their behaviour.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to take a different approach on this debate.

Looking at Bill C-3, I anticipate unanimous support from the House. I believe that every member, all 336 of them, actually supports this proposed legislation, and justifiably so. After all, it is not the first time that we have had this legislation before us. In fact, the former interim leader of the Conservative Party brought the idea forward.

The Prime Minister has inferred in the past that no one owns a good idea, and if it is something that is for the betterment of Canadians, let us do it. Back then, the government of the day said that it supported the bill, and when that did not work, we ended up bringing in a government bill. The previous bill not only passed in the House, but it also went through the committee stage and on to the Senate. There was plenty of opportunity for good, healthy debate.

Sex assault is a very serious issue. Again, I suspect that all 336 members have something to say about this very important issue and the impact it has on our society. All of us, I am sure, have something to share with the House. However, if we look at all the private member's bills and all of the government's proposed legislation, we see that, mathematically, it would be impossible for every member to talk about every piece of legislation.

It was not possible even when we sat during the summer in a different forum in the House. At the end of the day, there is a limited amount of time, and the official opposition knows that. Those members understand that, last Friday, if they wanted to, they could have passed the bill. This is a very important issue, which all members of Parliament are very passionate about, and it could have actually passed last Friday.

What would have happened had that taken place? Well, we would be debating Bill C-5, the national day for truth and reconciliation. I have heard from some that the Conservatives might not support that piece of legislation. I am hopeful that the majority will, but I suspect that there will be huge demands from the Conservative Party that we debate that piece of legislation. When it comes to legislation inside this chamber, the only way we get the Conservatives to pass it is to either bring in time allocation or shame them into doing the right thing.

At the end of the day, when we look at what we have before us, I challenge any member to indicate their opposition to this legislation. As I pointed out, the very essence of the issue is of the utmost importance to all Canadians. I am sure that there is not a member in the House who would speak about this legislation not passing, and we recognized that years ago when the interim leader of the Conservative Party brought it forward.

I would like to challenge my friends across the way. I have been affiliated with House leadership teams for a while now, and I can tell members that, at times, we need to allow bills that have unanimous support to go through the process.

● (1725)

I know a member of the opposition can stand up in a righteous way and say that every member should be able to speak to this legislation, I am not going to deny that. If members want to speak to this piece of legislation, let them speak to it, but we must remember that not every member can speak to every piece of legislation; it is not possible. We cannot do that and the Conservatives know that. It does not take much to put off any piece of legislation, because after we debate it, with all 100 members speaking between questions and answers, and the speeches themselves, which are a half hour for the first five hours, then 15 minutes afterward, we could be speaking for weeks on this legislation, and all because the Conservative Party does not want legislation to pass so it can criticize the government in the future for not passing legislation. If we try to pass legislation, the Conservatives ask why we have to bring in time allocation.

The opposition members need to come to the realization that if they do not want time allocation, if they want to see a consensus, and if they behave like this, that is what they will get. I am focusing on the Conservatives. At the end of the day, what I would like to see, and I did it when I was in the third party, is support for the government of the day with respect to certain time allocations, because I believe that unfortunately at times we need to bring in time allocation. I would like to think that on this piece of legislation we do not need to bring in time allocation; rather, what we could do is recognize the fine work that has been done to date on this legislation.

Maybe it is because I am eager to get on to Bill C-5, which is about truth and reconciliation and one of the calls for action. I understand the Conservatives will be demanding a lot of time for debate on that legislation. I would think that call for action is something there is a great deal of interest in with respect to finding out where the Conservative Party is at. We know where MPs are at with respect to this piece of legislation. I would suggest the members opposite in the Conservative Party will no doubt want to continue to talk about this debate. I will no doubt be one of the first to remind them in the future why it is we did not get as much time to debate Bill C-5, because I suspect they will not provide us the opportunity—

● (1730)

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member is making repeated reference to Bill C-5. I wonder if, even though the rules of relevance are loosely applied in this place, we ought to speak to the bill that we are debating. We are talking about Bill C-3. We have heard a lot about Bill C-5, so if the member does not want other members to speak to it, perhaps he could actually speak to Bill C-3.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the member might not necessarily like it, but there is a direct link that I have made between Bill C-5, which in all likelihood is going to be the next item for debate, when I focus my attention on the importance of Bill C-3 and getting it passed. There is a direct link between the two issues, and that is what I have been referencing.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We will resume with the member's speech, and I would remind the parliamentary secretary to focus on Bill C-3.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the last thing I would want to do is contribute to an ongoing debate, when I know the Conservatives are anxious to see this bill ultimately pass.

I will leave it at this. I would ask my Conservative friends to support what is a very good idea, something that has been debated not only inside this House, but the House of Commons on Parliament Hill. There has been a great deal of debate. Everyone is in support of it. We have seen legislation pass relatively quickly inside this House. We even saw it with reference to this piece of legislation in another session with another bill number. Therefore, I implore my Conservative friends across the way to give serious consideration to allowing Bill C-3 to go through so that we can debate Bill C-5, as I am very much interested in hearing where the Conservatives might fall on the important issue of reconciliation.

**Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC):** Madam Speaker, that was an unfortunate display we just saw from the hon. member as we are discussing a bill as important as Bill C-3. He spent virtually no time on the bill and spoke only about delay.

I just want to draw the attention of the hon. member. Maybe he could answer a question for me. Prorogation of Parliament, according to Marleau and Montpetit, results in the termination of a session. Prorogation is taken on the advice of the prime minister, and the effect of it is to terminate all business, including the work of committees.

My question for the hon. member is this: Who is the prime minister whose advice it was to prorogue Parliament, thereby requiring a restart on all business in this House?

• (1735)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, in my home province of Manitoba, the Progressive Conservative premier, Brian Pallister, did the very same thing. He prorogued the Manitoba legislature.

The Prime Minister has recognized, as this government and some other members have recognized, that we need to be very much focused on coronavirus, as well as the health and well-being of Canadians and our economy. That is something that justifies the need to prorogue, reset and put into focus what is important to Canadians in all regions of our country.

I believe that the Province of Manitoba, after proroguing, is reading its throne speech today.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will elaborate on my colleague's comments.

We are here to debate Bill C-3, an important bill that will help victims of sexual assault. My colleague just said that prorogation

made it possible to turn the page and focus on the economy. Let us talk about the economic victims: women.

This summer, I was a member of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. We met on an emergency basis to study the impact of the pandemic on women in particular. The Liberal government decided to prorogue Parliament and our work was stopped. We had an important report to give to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality, but we were unable to complete it. We have to start from scratch.

Does that really help the victims of COVID-19?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I suspect that if the member was to pose the question to the Minister for Women, she would probably have no problem providing a two- or three-minute answer discussing the types of things that we, as the government, have tried to do. We are working with different levels of government, municipal and provincial, and the many different stakeholders to minimize the negative impact of coronavirus on women and girls throughout the country. We take the issue very seriously.

The member raises a good point by posing that particular question. That is one of the reasons we needed to prorogue, so that we would be able, through the throne speech, to refocus and ensure we are talking about the coronavirus. If members read the throne speech, they will see that some of the answers to the questions the member just posed can be found right in that document.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is encouraging to me that we have unanimous support for this bill, and I would love to see this pass as quickly as possible, but I am disappointed that we have had to go back to the beginning. The Liberal government's decision to prorogue Parliament had many impacts, and one of them was restarting and slowing down the progress on important bills from the last session, such as this one.

When I spoke on this bill last February I mentioned that, like it is for many Canadians, this is a deeply personal issue for me. I am one of the one in three women who have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime. That statistic is staggering, but for most women it is not surprising. Yesterday, Tanya Tagaq, the incredible artist and Inuk throat singer, said, "Every woman I know has to carry the memory of at least one unreported sexual assault".

I am curious if the member has an answer for women like me who have to carry that story. Why did his government prorogue Parliament? Why did they slow down the progress of bills like this? How can he stand in defence of a government that prorogued Parliament for what seems like no good reason?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I truly appreciate the member's willingness to share her story. Throughout the debates over the years, we have heard many personal stories. Hearing the stories and comments first-hand inspires me to work harder and make sure we do the right thing.

*Government Orders*

As for the prorogation, one of the nice things about the House of Commons is that we have the capacity to put it aside, whether one agrees or disagrees with it. We have the ability to unanimously pass this bill if the political will is there. If we were to ask the member who just posed a question, I suspect she would support that political will. I believe most people in this chamber would support that political will, because we see the passion, whether it is from the member who just posed a question or from other individuals who have been profoundly impacted by this particular issue.

• (1740)

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in light of the prorogation and the fact that the committee receiving this bill does not even start for two weeks, would the member not agree that it is worthwhile to have a discussion on an issue that is so serious for one in six people in Canada and that educating new members is also worthwhile?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there are all sorts of things that could be done to pass this bill sooner rather than later. There are many ways it can be done, and I would encourage the member and others to consider that.

At the end of the day, many pieces of legislation are absolutely fabulous and deserve hours and hours of, if not endless, debate. However, time does not necessarily allow for that to occur. When we have the opportunity to do something good on an issue that is unanimously supported in the House, why squander that opportunity? As I said, if we wanted to, we could have passed the bill last Friday.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I can maybe understand why some members are complaining that the debate is going on too long, but for the member for Winnipeg North to complain that other people are talking too much on a particular piece of legislation is something I never would have expected.

I know the member across the way is not new to this place. He spends a fair bit of time in Parliament, as he has over the years. I think he knows that it is the prerogative of the Prime Minister, to a significant extent, to schedule the debates that occur in this place. We know, for instance, that the government's euthanasia legislation removing safeguards is scheduled for Friday and the following Monday. The government has a choice over what bills it wants to schedule and when. If moving this bill forward is a priority of the government, it could schedule this bill more frequently than it has.

What we have seen from the government, though, is that no legislation has been passed this year, except for spending bills, and that the House has barely sat, sitting less than 40 days since the last election, with a prorogation of Parliament and the complete suspension of Parliament prior to the prorogation, other than the committees. The House has barely sat, and it is a pattern of the government to demand that we quickly pass legislation in the very short windows that it prescribes, and then it shuts down Parliament.

How do we know that it is not the intention of the government to again shut down Parliament as soon as possible after some of this legislation moves forward?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, in part, the member makes my point.

I must say at the outset that I do enjoy very much the opportunity to address the House. I am often afforded the opportunity, and I do appreciate it.

Having said that, there is important legislation that I would love to see debated, such as the assistance in dying legislation and the reconciliation legislation, but I suspect that there is going to be a great deal of demand to make time for that. We will have at least two opposition days—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Madam Speaker, today, while we are celebrating the International Day of the Girl Child, we are debating a bill that would require judges to take sensitivity training around “sexual assault law and social context”. This is because of men like John Reilly, former judge and federal Liberal candidate who said, “Well, you know, there are sexual assaults and there are sexual assaults”. Reilly then pointed to a case of a man who had digitally penetrated his girlfriend while she was sleeping, saying that a three-year sentence would have been too harsh.

We are also debating this bill because of men like former judge Robin Camp who asked a 19-year-old complainant why she had not done more to prevent her alleged rape and then told her that “sex and pain sometimes go together”.

However, there is something about this bill that really makes me angry. It is absurd to me that we have to spend time figuring out how to train the men in Canada's systemically misogynistic justice system to be sensitive to sexual assault. In so many ways, it is blindly the wrong approach because it is so paternalistic in its design.

Instead of using tax dollars and research to illuminate men on the finer points of how being fingered against one's will while one is sleeping is wrong, or that it is kind of hard to keep one's knees together when one is being overpowered by somebody twice one's size, or the lingering shame and emotional burden these things can cause a woman, why can we not simply appoint fewer sexist women-haters to the bench? If men want to be honoured with a judicial appointment, why can the hiring criteria not be what they have done in their career to remove the systemic barriers women face? Why do we have to train the idiots in society, and why could we not just hire the allies?

This bill would not do much to fundamentally change the systemic misogyny embedded in the Canadian government, whatever the branch may be. There are those who will say that systemic misogyny does not exist in Canada. To these people I would say this: That we are debating this bill today is clear evidence of systemic misogyny.

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If people are part of a system that they benefit from at the expense of others due to barriers others experience of stereotypes, bigoted social mores or rigidly traditionalist beliefs about women, and they do nothing to stop it, then they are part of the problem. That is systemic misogyny. If they refuse to look for these issues or address them when they see them because they think it does not exist, then they are part of the problem. If they think that protecting the rights of women will erode their own rights, they are part of the problem. They are lazy and cowardly at best and misogynist at worst. No amount of training will fix that system. Only removing those who benefit from perpetuating it from their position of privilege and power will.

This system has affected me. I regularly receive sexualized death threats. I get microaggressions like being asked by a colleague if I am pregnant because I committed the sin of eating a sandwich during a Zoom meeting, or being called the B-word because I am a woman who unapologetically challenges the dogma of the system. I have had my gender and my brand used as a fig leaf to cover the misogyny of others through tokenization, and there has been so much more.

If this is me, a white straight woman in a position of power, imagine what it is like for a racialized, queer or trans woman. Imagine what it is like for a woman in poverty with children. Imagine what it is like for a woman living on reserve. Imagine what it is like for Nadia Murad and the millions of other women around the world who have had their bodies used as tools of war while the world refuses to even prosecute their oppressors.

This bill is a good opportunity to take a moment to reflect on the experience of these women, the Yazidi genocide survivors, because the experience of these women really does highlight to me the problems embedded in our system, not only for women on the international stage but their quest for justice here in our own country. As some of the members in the House might remember, several years ago I worked with these women to bring their plight to the attention of Canadian parliamentarians and to get justice and action for their people. It was the voices of these women, these survivors who were seeking justice after experiencing genocide and sexual enslavement, that effected some change.

Imagine what these women went through and then imagine, after all of that trauma, having to come to Canada's Parliament time and time again to push the government to do something when it was obvious that action was needed to do what is right. Take a moment and reflect on that.

• (1745)

Take a moment and reflect on being a victimized woman who was sold as a sexual slave and who had to beg to have her plight recognized by those who sit in this position of power, and then having them wonder if this was going to be politically convenient for them. That is what is wrong with the system, and no amount of training is going to fix that.

After many motions in the House, committee studies, press conferences, news releases and, most importantly, advocacy by the Yazidi community here in Canada and abroad, we were able to get some movement, but it is not close to being enough. We must seek justice for these women, and that includes prosecuting their oppres-

sors. To date, there has been no justice for these women. ISIS has not been brought to trial on the international stage, and day after day the women are revictimized because they have to explain to the world that there is no closure and there is no change without justice being sought.

This issue alone shows that Canada has much work to do on gender equality. We live in a country where human trafficking occurs, and indigenous and first nations women go missing and are murdered. Last year, the national inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls found a “significant, persistent, and deliberate pattern of systemic racial and gendered human rights and Indigenous rights violations and abuses”, yet the government continues to fail to take meaningful action in creating safer conditions for indigenous women and girls. Instead, the Prime Minister offers up a lot of platitudes on Twitter. He was rightly criticized for that this week. He is more interested in keeping up the appearance of positive change than in actually effecting it.

That is what this bill is about. We cannot speak about the misogyny in the justice system today without recognizing the significant racialized and colonial violence against indigenous women across our country, both inside and outside the courts. We live in a country where we feel we need to educate the ones who are supposed to uphold and champion justice, our judges, not to be sexist. We live in a country where we have to talk about how those meant to care for us in our time of need, nurses and doctors, need sensitivity training.

We saw this intersection of sexism and racism in the heartbreaking tragedy of Joyce Echaquan. It is difficult for us to admit Canada is not as exceptional as we may think. The reality is these systems, which were meant to protect us, often fail many because we are not getting to the heart of the problem. We need to do more to disrupt the systems that perpetuate this aggression.

I will go back to this bill about judges and training them to be more sensitive. No amount of training, for someone who was privileged enough to finish law school as they were about to get a plum judicial position, will correct a systemically misogynistic system. Everyone needs to change their actions, and it should start here in this place.

People should not be running under the banner of a major political party if they have substantiated harassment allegations. People within the tents of these parties should find the courage to speak up when this happens. The most senior levels of leadership should not be allowed to follow a different set of rules from the rank and file when harassment allegations surface. Women who speak truth to power should not be turfed and labelled as problematic.

I have watched all of this and more happen in this place during my time here. Just this week, I watched the chair of a major parliamentary association stay silent as a group tried to force a Canadian woman off the ballot for the presidency of an international organization. All of these—

• (1750)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am going to interrupt the member for two seconds.

I would like to remind members that there is a member speaking very seriously, and we would like to hear her.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, I have watched all of this and more happen in this place during my time here. Just this week, I watched as the chair of a major parliamentary association stayed silent as a group tried to force a Canadian woman off the ballot for the presidency of an international organization. All of these experiences have led me to this central question: Why is it that the women always have to be ones to do the heavy lifting on these issues? Why is it that, in many cases, it is the women who have to stand up and demand these changes?

Yes, I see men speaking up when it is politically convenient for them. I see the social media posts. However, what we need to see is more courage demonstrated through action. As parliamentarians, we need to be reflecting on this, because it is this system that we work in that needs to be shaken.

I think about how no one has spoken out against the former Liberal MP for Kitchener South—Hespeler who is facing assault and criminal harassment charges. This is after the Liberal Party allowed him to run under the party banner, despite the fact that claims about inappropriate behaviour involving him and a female staffer were reported to the party multiple times over the last five years. I did that when it happened under my own tent. Where are the feminists on this side on that issue? We need men standing up in the House acknowledging the privilege found within patriarchal systems of power and, more importantly, we need them to take action when sexism happens within their own caucuses. It should not be me having to do that work all the time. Where were the woke MPs when we needed them to speak out, to enact change and to ensure that all of these things never happen again? It is all good and well to post on social media or voice support for gender equality, but when there is no action, there is no change.

Let us not forget about the issue of female genital mutilation. When I served as the shadow minister for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, this was an issue I had to repeatedly and shamefully push in the House of Commons. Media had reported that a draft version of the new citizen guide had dropped the condemnation of this abhorrent practice. There were headlines like, “[The minister of

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immigration] won't commit to keeping warning about genital mutilation in immigration guide”. After these reports came to light, I had to sponsor a petition that called on the government to ensure that the final draft of the new citizenship guide included the condemnation of this practice. I questioned the minister about this change repeatedly. Why did I have to do that? This is a no-brainer, yet it was weeks, months before we saw action on feminism. The fact that this question had to even be brought up and officially condemned in our Parliament is appalling to me.

When I think about today's debate, I also think about the women in my riding who have been devastated by this government's policy on the energy sector in Alberta more broadly. Everyone in my community wants to support a transition to a renewable energy-based economy. Having no plan to support them and no plan for other jobs has left my community destitute, and that has a unique effect on women. Almost every day, I heard about how the Liberal-induced jobs crisis in my community has left women in unimaginable situations. I have had women in my community say that, with job losses in the energy sector, they have contemplated turning to prostitution as a means of feeding their families. Rates of domestic violence are up, and they are losing their homes and their children. Yet, we are talking about training people who have the privilege of being appointed into a judicial position.

It is abhorrent that we are putting women in these situations because of the bourgeois attitude of this government. It is abhorrent that the women of my community are left behind while the Prime Minister stands idly by, claiming to be a feminist without any compassion or plans to address their plight. Do these women and their families not matter simply because the province they live in and their gender does not tend to overwhelmingly vote for this brand? Is their struggle any less, simply because the Prime Minister believes that their jobs are dirty? This is systemic misogyny, and it is right here in this place and we are not addressing it.

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These issues are not limited to our legal system. In schools across this country, young women are taught next to nothing about their bodies. Female sexuality is still taboo to discuss, never mind talking about pleasure. We still see unfair dress codes that target girls who are wearing so-called revealing clothing that is just comfortable to wear. We see this with the ridiculous stigma around menstruation, a completely normal bodily function that billions of people around the world experience. That is to say nothing about the complete lack of discussion in schools about the unique experience of trans women and girls and the violence that they are subject to. This lack of education extends to issues of consent as well. Our youth, especially our men, are not taught that “yes” means “yes” and that “no” means “no”. How can we expect to actually address sexual violence in this country if girls learn to be ashamed of their bodies and young boys are not being taught when sex is consensual?

• (1755)

If we are silent across party lines on these issues here, in the centre of power in our nation, what good does training judges do? If those who run the show here do not face consequences, why should those in the judiciary expect that they will be treated any differently? Every person has an individual responsibility to change the culture that has precipitated the need for the bill, and that includes calling out people in our own networks and challenging our own rigidly held dogmas.

We are in the month of October when the traditional images of witches take centre stage in popular culture across the country. Warped, disfigured, evil-looking women are held up as signs of all that is evil and wrong in the world, and if something bad befalls us, witches are to blame. I could not think of a more apt month to discuss the bill.

For a significant portion of relatively recent history, women were burned at the stake for being midwives and herbalists because the church and wealthy mercantile class wanted to consolidate the medical trade into the hands of men. Women were burned if they embraced their sexuality. Women were burned if they were too pretty and spurned the advances of a wealthy man, or if they spoke truth to power. For a time, between 10,000 and 40,000 women were burned simply for being women who did not conform with the behaviour that the system of male patriarchal institutions prescribed.

Today, the image of a witch still evokes deep-seated cultural norms that strong, empowered women with extraordinary ability are evil: something to be feared, at best, and eliminated at worst. The shamans, the elders, the wise women, the truth tellers, the midwives and the empaths are the women who have brought change for the better to our world, yet in our history and celebrations they are still portrayed as something to be warded against.

While women in our country are no longer literally burned at the stake for being powerful, how many are passed over for promotions by those who fear their courage? How many women are sexually assaulted and made to feel that they brought it on themselves? How many children sit in poverty because they bear the cost of child care? How many women are taught that their sexuality is a sin, not a gift? How many women are placed in situations where they do

not have total control over their bodies? How many women never see justice for wrongs they have experienced?

We still burn women for being witches, even if it is metaphorically. That is why we are debating the bill, but there is hope. Women have always had the innate power to create, to bless, to lead and to heal. When I came here, I thought I knew my power but I really did not. It took me time to understand that my intuition is always right, that my voice always has agency, that compassion always wins and that courage, while sometimes met with great personal cost, will always deliver change.

I have learned from tremendously courageous women in my time here. I remember the power and blinding radiance of Nadia Murad's face when she sat in the gallery as I fought alongside her for justice for her people. I remember the member for Vancouver Granville sitting resolute in her truth as her party worked to suppress her agency, but could not because her source of power was from something far greater that they could never remove.

I remember Jane Philpott, now the Dean of Medicine at Queen's University, courageously supporting her in her cause even though it cost her political career. Congratulations, Jane. I remember Megan Leslie, a champion for Canada's environment as she pushed to remove plastic beads from our lakes and rivers. I remember Lisa Raitt as she gracefully mentored me through some of the hardest lessons these halls of power can present.

I name these women and salute their courage and power, but we cannot forget the millions of unnamed women across this country who demonstrate their power on a daily basis. There is the mother who manages to feed her children with no partner to help her. There is the grandmother who takes care of her daughter's children. There is the doctor who finds a breakthrough in a disease, and the lawyer who wins a case, and more.

I stand here today unafraid, after all these years, of doing what is right no matter what is thrown against me. This is the magic that entrenched misogynistic systems try to beat out of women. They still try to beat it out of me every day, but we are remembering our power that has never left, and we are embracing it. We are demanding justice. We are claiming our power and refusing to let men in power skate by. We are not here to make the system comfortable. I am not here to make anyone comfortable, I am here to effect change. That is why the bill angers me: that we must put forward a program of training, in the expectation that those who we elevate to the judiciary have come to this place of power needing it, is a clear demonstration to me that the system is broken.



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• (1800)

Why do we not appoint less misogynists to the bench instead of coming up with special programs to train away the hate that women experience?

Why do we not appoint more brilliant women to the bench, women who will work to dismantle the systemic misogyny that exists across our legal system rather than pour tax dollars into a training program that does little to actually protect women?

There are questions that this bill plainly fails to address and the government has taken precious little meaningful action to address them. While I support the bill, I refuse to be quiet about how it clearly takes the wrong approach to an issue that cuts to the very core of our society. This topic is worthy of much debate. I have no problem criticizing the bill for not going far enough. There are those who might even call me a witch for doing so, but I will not be silent.

By the way, happy Samhain to those who are celebrating.

We owe it to women and girls in my riding and across the country, our daughters and those who will come after them to demand more for them, a future where women and girls no longer live under the constant fear of sexual violence.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague has demonstrated the importance of having debate on this bill. We have heard from members across the way that we should not have to debate it, but what we have heard today in the important, thoughtful and impassioned speeches is just how the debate itself is moving forward awareness and important conversations that need to happen.

Could the member speak more to the nature of training? She spoke very well about the limitations of training in that it will not change what is in the hearts and minds of certain people who are appointed to the bench and must go through a perfunctory training requirement.

Does the member have thoughts on the types or forms of training that are more effective than others and what guidance she would give to those who shape these kinds of training programs on how to make them as effective as possible?

• (1805)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, we need less idiots. I wish we would appoint more people who do not need to have sensitivity training. I find the premise of this to be ridiculous.

Think about this for a second. We are debating a bill that presumes that those who we are about to elevate to positions of influence where they are deciding justice in situations of sexual violence will need this training. Might this not already be a condition for their elevation? It is actually ridiculous. It is fundamentally misogynist in its nature.

I do not understand why I have to talk about having to train somebody not to be John Reilly. It makes me really angry. I think it sends a message to women that somehow we have to train people to do the right thing when we should be hiring people who have already done that.

For too long we have hired people, we have elevated people who do not take action on these issues, who do not believe in it and I am tired of it. I understand the intent of the bill, but it does not address the bigger problem and everybody here is guilty of it. After almost 10 years of being here, enough is enough. I am tired of having these debates. I am tired of talking about sexual violence, sexual harassment, women in politics and this stuff. I am done. I am tired of the requests for interviews.

There just needs to be equality. There needs to be an understanding that certain things are just wrong and that my agency is equal to everyone else. That is what needs to happen.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

In many ways, she and I are just as passionate about the cause and the advancement of women in politics. In fact, before I was elected, I ran workshops focusing on the issue of women and poverty. Clearly, there is a connection. Women need to be able to access better jobs, get into politics and have the same opportunities as men. We agree on that.

The problem of violence against women goes well beyond the scope of the bill before us today. However, I think this bill is an important step. This has been discussed with members of the Quebec National Assembly and with elected officials in Australia and elsewhere in the world. We want to see diversity and we hope to see diversity when we make judicial appointments, to bring in a new awareness.

I think that we can work on that and pass this bill at the same time. It is a matter of awareness and helping victims be better understood. This bill is certainly not perfect. It is not a panacea. However, it is an important step in advancing the cause of women who are victims of sexual violence and assault.

[*English*]

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, I said I support the bill. What I am done with are the fig leaves, where we take a small gesture to cover up a much larger problem and say that we are good. What that means is that we keep debating these things and we never see meaningful change. After almost a decade of it in this place I am still doing the same media requests, I am still seeing the same problems here with regard to sexism, and I am still getting the sexist comments. I am almost 40 years old, and it still happens to me. I do not understand it. This is me. I am in a position of privilege.

What I am saying is that this issue in particular is one that is tokenized. It is one where there is a small crumb that is always put forward, and it is meant to be a feast but it is not sufficient. We cannot just be debating this without debating every other issue. This is not going to deliver justice to first nations and indigenous women. It is not going to make it easier for women to report sexual assault. It really is not.

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It is not enough. Maybe it is a small step, but it cannot be celebrated. It cannot because we still have so many things that we have to address. I live this, and I am tired of living it. If I am living it, what about the women who do not have my privilege? That is why this is so important. That is why we need actual, real, fundamental change.

• (1810)

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Calgary Nose Hill for empowering all women. That is the thing; it is about how we can empower women and how we actually get to equality. Like her, I know I have gone through sexual harassment and different ordeals over my last 49 years, so I totally understand. These are things we need to do.

I am looking for the member's thoughts, specific to what we should be doing with young women and boys, how we can teach empowerment and at what levels we should work at that. To me, the core of the issue has to start through education.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her work, collegiality and friendship to me. I wish I had two hours for this. I do not.

This is my lived experience. I think I scare people because I am really good at what I do. I do not tolerate things that are unjust, I do not tolerate cowardice, and I do not apologize for that. What we need to do is embrace the fact that this quality in a woman is inherent to all women, and it is something that we should nurture and empower, rather than trying to snuff it out. That quality is punished. It is. That is the starting point.

A strong empowered woman who leans into her courage and her place of power is everything that our society needs. It is just not respected in our systems. We have to realize that there are many barriers for many women across this country, millions of women, to being able to do that, be it poverty or housing or lack of access to education or lack of access to justice or trauma. That is where we need to start.

We need to start understanding that this is something that we value, not that we value with a “like” on social media but that we like in our own practice and actions. When someone is confronted with a strong woman who does something bold, rather than castigating her for it, they should embrace it and empower her and run with it.

Until that happens, we will never see change and we will always be fighting for our rights. While I am here, and while I have breath, I will do my best to make people do that and to empower those who will come behind me.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her speech, for her words and for her frustration and rage at the situation that women are facing. I share that.

I have been a member of Parliament for just a year, which means I have only had maybe a 10th of the barrage of sexism. I think back to February when this bill was put forward, and one of the Conservative members rose in the House after I spoke about the importance of listening to sex workers and of acknowledging that sex work is work. That member asked me if I had ever considered sex

work. Underneath that was an undermining of sex workers' value and a restigmatizing of the sex workers out there.

I am curious if the member would want to comment on the need for legislation that actually protects sex workers and destigmatizes the work that they do.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, I would love two hours for this topic too. I share the member's concern about protections for sex workers. This goes back to my comment that, overall, our society, especially in Canada, has a very poor understanding of what consent means. We do not openly talk about women's sexuality, their agency, their rights and their bodies. It is something we put in these little silos and do not think about. There is so much work to be done on that. It is something we can all work on across party lines, and I would really support the member on it.

I would say this to the member: I am angry. I am angry that I have to carry the emotional labour of this stuff and my male colleagues do not, or that they put it on me and do not think about doing it. Enough is enough.

• (1815)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, could you clarify how much time I have before the end of the day?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** There are 15 minutes remaining.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today to Bill C-3.

Before getting elected, I had the opportunity to serve on the board of an organization in my riding called the Saffron Centre, and I want to recognize the great work it is doing in providing counselling and education on bullying, sexual violence, boundaries and related points. I served on the board of that organization prior to the #MeToo movement. At the time, the board would have conversations about the lack of social awareness around these issues and some of the challenges of fundraising and engaging people in supporting our organization in the context of where the awareness was at that time.

There is still a long way to go, but I think a lot has changed. As a result of the #MeToo movement, there has been a real growth, awareness and recognition. It was interesting for me to speak with some of the people involved in the organization after the start of the #MeToo movement. They shared with me that there was a significant increase in the demand for counselling. A lot of it was cases of historic trauma, that is, people who had experienced sexual harassment and violence, perhaps decades ago, and had never come forward or sought help. They were empowered to seek help based on what they were hearing about in the media or on social media when other people were stepping forward and sharing their experiences. We probably all have stories about community-based organizations in our riding. The way that public conversations around the #MeToo movement encouraged people to come forward to seek counselling and support for historic trauma really reminds us of the importance of these conversations.

Some time today has been spent debating the debate, with members across the way challenging why we are having this debate and asking why we cannot just give unanimous consent at all stages of the bill. We have seen cases in which bills that maybe have one objective do not fulfill that objective or could be strengthened in other ways at committee, so the parliamentary process is important. We have also seen, even today, how the conversations around these issues can be important and inspiring for people. It is therefore important for us, as members of Parliament, to discuss these issues as we support Bill C-3 and work to move it forward.

[*Translation*]

In 2017, our former Conservative leader, Rona Ambrose, introduced the just act, a bill that would have required lawyers seeking a judicial appointment to undergo training about sexual assault. It would also have required courts to provide written reasons in sexual assault rulings. The House of Commons passed the bill unanimously, but it was delayed in the Senate, and as a result the just act was never passed.

In Canada, an estimated one in three women and one in eight men are victims of sexual violence at some time in their lives. That means approximately 5.73 million women and 2.3 million men will be victims. We can all agree that those numbers are too high. Statistics Canada reported in 2014 that, sadly, only 5% of sexual assaults were reported to the police. That means that fewer than 5% of sexual predators get the justice they deserve for their despicable acts.

The low number of reported cases is due to the fact that victims of sexual assault no longer have confidence in our justice system. A report published by the Department of Justice entitled "A Survey of Survivors of Sexual Violence in Three Canadian Cities" found that two out of three women had little or no confidence in the justice process. This is because the judges presiding over sexual assault cases had no knowledge of Canada's sexual assault laws. This led to incidents where judges unfairly questioned the character of the victims and completely ignored our sexual assault laws.

The just act would have improved this situation. Last Monday the Liberals decided to re-introduce this bill. Like the just act, Bill C-3 would require all newly appointed provincial superior court judges to participate in training on sexual assault and would amend the Criminal Code to require judges to provide written reasons or

### *Government Orders*

provide reasons in the record when making a decision in a sexual assault case.

Let us put politics aside. I am pleased that this bill has been brought forward again to protect the vulnerable victims of sexual assault. However, I think that we should take this opportunity to go even further. In February, I told the House that it would be useful to include sexual assault training for parole officers as well. I would like the government to add that to this bill.

We know that there have been problems in the past with the Parole Board of Canada. Dangerous criminals have committed more crimes after being released on parole. One example is the case of Eustachio Gallese, a convicted murderer who stabbed a woman after being released on parole. This incident could have been completely avoided had the Parole Board of Canada demonstrated good judgment. I am worried that this sort of thing could happen again when predators are released on parole. That is why it is essential that we give parole officers training on sexual assault and sexual predators. Victims must be protected.

I know that the current Liberal government likes to boast about being feminist. Here is a perfect opportunity to show Canadians that its feminist approach is legitimate and not just a political talking point. Going above and beyond the previous proposal by adding other measures to protect victims of sexual assault would be a worthwhile initiative. I know that we all want to ensure that Canadian women and men are protected from predators.

As legislators in this minority Parliament, I think it is important that we work together to ensure that we pass good, comprehensive legislation. I look forward to discussing the need for sexual assault training for our judges and our parole officers with my colleagues from all parties.

• (1820)

[*English*]

Having discussed now the substance and history of this particular bill and some related issues, I would like to add a few additional general comments about the vital work of combatting sexual assault and then respond to some of the other comments that have been made thus far in this debate.

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While recognizing the value of educational initiatives, we also need to recognize their inherent limits. Criminal behaviour by some and callousness or indifference by others can, indeed, result from ignorance. Ignorance can be resolved through education, but ignorance is not the only cause of bad behaviour. Some people who are fully informed about what is right and wrong will still go on to commit heinous crimes or show indifference to the suffering of others. For such people, the problem is not awareness; rather, it is inclinations or patterns of behaviour that they have not brought under control.

It also might be a lack of empathy. For those who lack a requisite degree of empathy, no amount of information will change their behaviour. As author C.S. Lewis once observed, “Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil.” Lewis’s point deserves reflection as we consider the importance, but also the limitations, of prescribing education and training in response to sexual assault and harassment. We need to ask ourselves what actions we can take and what actions other institutions can take to support the development of positive, as opposed to negative, patterns of behaviour, as well as the development of empathy. Without this necessary development of character and virtue, more education in terms of legal lines and processes will be ineffective.

Another way to consider this issue is through the lens of the old debate between virtue ethics and rule-based ethics. Rule-based ethics frames ethical actions being about adherence to rules. In the present case, a rule like, “Don’t assault or harass another person” is the one being applied.

- (1825)

Virtue ethics, on the other hand, frames ethics in terms of the need to develop positive qualities of character that allow individuals both to know what is right and to be able to apply that knowledge in specific situations. Virtue ethics would emphasize the need to develop the virtues of justice and self-control. A person who has developed the virtues of justice and self-control will necessarily not engage in behaviour that hurts or threatens other people, justice being the virtue of giving to others what is due to them and self-control being the virtue of controlling one’s own appetites or inclinations.

These two ethical frameworks, rule-based and virtue ethics, are not mutually exclusive, but there is a question of emphasis. Personally, I believe the virtue ethics framework is more important because it seeks to not only attend to questions of what we ought to do, but also attend to questions of how to develop the capacity to consistently do what we ought to do.

Efforts to combat sexual assault should not just involve education in the form of passing on information about standards of conduct and legal frameworks but should also involve the positive promotion of qualities of character like justice and self-control. Growing up, I do not specifically recall ever being directly told not to sexually harass or assault people. Instead, I was taught to recognize the innate dignity of all people and to exercise control over my impulses. When justice and self-control are fully absorbed, the specific rule in this case seems very obvious.

As a father, I obviously think a lot about how to raise my own children to be good people and good citizens. My own children are

too young for discussions about sexual violence, but I already try to work to encourage the development of the virtues of justice and self-control as well as a sense of solidarity and empathy. The development of these intellectual and practical virtues will hopefully make it obvious how to behave in situations they may encounter in the future.

Much is said today about the idea of toxic masculinity. In my opinion, it is important for us to seek to replace toxic masculinity with a redefined masculinity. Toxic masculinity involves seeking power over others, but a redefined concept of masculinity means power and control over oneself and one’s own appetites and the courage to work to protect vulnerable people and advance justice.

Winston Churchill once observed that the power of man has grown in every sphere except over himself. Here, Churchill puts his finger on one of the biggest problems we face today: People who may know what is right and have been fully educated in terms of what is right still do not always have the will or virtues required to exercise the necessary power over their whims and appetites. The exercise of that power over self is vitally important in order to be a good person and a good citizen. A person without the virtues of justice and self-control can never be truly happy or resilient.

A redefined masculinity would emphasize justice and control of self, not personal gratification and the domination of others. I worry that in so many domains modern governments emphasize rules but not virtues, training but not the development of character. We need to give more considerations to the lessons virtue ethics can provide for combatting evils like sexual harassment and assault. I hope those who are developing these training programs for judges as well as for young people, educators, former offenders, etc., will take into consideration the important insights of the virtue tradition.

I want to take the remainder of my speech today to just respond to some of the points made. My colleague from Sarnia—Lambton spoke very eloquently about many different issues. She spoke about the importance of jurisdictions. This bill is an action in federal jurisdiction but it reminds us as well that there is other action that needs to be taken in other levels of government. The debate we are having today can hopefully be an impetus for further conversations.

My colleague from Sarnia—Lambton also spoke about the issue of rape culture. It is worth revisiting the important work done in the last Parliament that was initiated by my colleague, the member for Peace River—Westlock, on understanding the impact violent sexual images can have on especially young boys who see those images. We need policy changes that specifically combat rape culture, such as having requirements for meaningful age verification on the Internet. We should not be allowing young boys to access violent sexual images on the Internet. By instituting mechanisms for meaningful age verification, we could provide greater protections to ensure there are not those aspects of rape culture shaping the early sexualization of young boys.

I want to salute the member for Sarnia—Lambton and the member for Peace River—Westlock for the work they have done on those issues. I hope we will see, in the spirit of meaningful action on these issues, things like meaningful age verification. I will be picking up my remarks when we return.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1830)

[*English*]

### COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to be able to join everyone virtually today and talk about a question that I first raised last week about another potential WE scandal the Liberals are trying to hide.

Members will know that we have national security exemptions in this country, which is a designation used around the procurement of national defence equipment. It is rarely used except when we need to make sure that we do not release any details of a situation or a piece of equipment that could compromise the security of Canada or members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

What I asked the Minister of Public Services and Procurement last week was whether or not the government was using the national security exemption designation to hide the details of sole-source contracts for personal protective equipment.

We have learned there is a \$237-million sole-source contract for the procurement and production of Baylis ventilators, which are called the Baylis V4C-560. The V4C stands for Ventilators for Canadians. They are built by a consortium, but the manufacturer is Baylis Medical. Of course Baylis Medical is owned by Frank Baylis, who is a former Liberal member of Parliament. The minister proclaimed in the discussion last week during question period that everything had been publicly disclosed, yet we know the department is still hiding the details of the sole-source contract to FTI Professional Grade Inc. under the auspices of national security. It makes no sense.

We know that the Liberal government likes to hide behind a veil of secrecy and it has used that iron curtain before through non-disclosure agreements with over 235 members of the Canadian Armed

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

Forces, who are not allowed to talk about different procurement projects that are under way based on the idea that it might violate commercial proprietary rights. We also know that it has used non-disclosure agreements as a gag order, and I will use Vice-Admiral Mark Norman as the example of what happens if one tries to step outside of the chain of command, outside of the PMO, to discuss what is in the best interests of Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces. After it was proven that the government wrongfully accused Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, it made him sign a non-disclosure agreement so he could not talk about how he was abused and misused by the federal Liberal government.

We need to make sure that all the details of these sole-source contracts are widely available. We need to make sure that we are getting the best value for our taxpayer dollars. I do not begrudge the government for having to use a sole-source contract during a pandemic to access ventilators. I do not begrudge Baylis Medical, which is building our needs under contract for the Government of Canada. I think making sure that we get ventilators to Canadians is an important thing. However, the details of these transactions are not a matter of national security—

• (1835)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am sorry to interrupt.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

**Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to extend a cordial good evening to my hon. friend in Manitoba. Through the miracle of technology we get to have this exchange.

I know that the member is properly concerned with the efforts we have under way to ensure the safety of Canadians, to ensure we are protected through this pandemic and to ensure that Canadians, health professionals and others, such as border guards, RCMP officers and all sorts of people who look after us, have access to PPE, the very best equipment and the supply channels we are going to require as we move through the various stages of this pandemic.

[*Translation*]

The government continues to ensure the health and safety of all Canadians. I think all members would agree that this is the most urgent priority.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the government has been taking measures to control the spread of COVID-19. Public Services and Procurement Canada continues to focus on procuring enough supplies to handle any eventuality during this pandemic. It is purchasing the essential PPE, treatments, vaccines and tests needed to protect Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[English]*

I will note that the minister has shared a number of details through the PSPC website and continues on a weekly, or even more often, basis to reveal details of our arrangements with respect to pandemic-related procurement.

I do want to take a moment, because often it goes unrecognized, to recognize the very hard work of the procurement professionals at PSPC. They are unsung heroes in the same way that our nurses, our doctors, our first responders, our Health Canada officials and public health officials in the provinces are all guardian angels and heroes through this pandemic. So too are those at PSPC, who use the tools available to them to make sure, in a hyper-competitive global market, that Canadians, our government, and through our government to our partners, the provinces, acquire billions of units of PPE, including masks, N95 masks, respirators, face shields, hand sanitizer, protective gowns and gloves and, of course, more on the way.

*[Translation]*

Of course, we called on a number of foreign suppliers to purchase the supplies we needed and to secure future supplies. Furthermore, we can all be proud of the many innovative Canadian companies that got to work producing essential supplies right here in Canada, which in turn had economic spinoffs for the regions.

*[English]*

The member mentioned the national security exception. He mentioned its application in defence procurement. I am sure he is well aware that it is not limited to defence; that we use it in other areas, for example in IT and cybersecurity. I do not think any Canadian would argue that the question of the pandemic and pandemic-related procurement was also warranted, that we use and avail ourselves of the national security exception with respect to pandemic purchasing. That is going to be something on which we will be as transparent as we can be, going forward. I know that Canadians will also understand that it is a matter—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, in my rebuttal to the parliamentary secretary, I want to read in here, right off the government website:

The [national security exception] element permits a government to exclude a procurement from the application of the procurement rules of the trade agreements if it is necessary for the protection of its security interests.

...[The government] shall only invoke the NSE if Canada's security interests are at risk.

National security is not at risk over the purchase of ventilators or N95 masks. The question back to the government is, what are the Liberals trying to hide this time?

It is just another example of how the government likes to cloak itself in the curtain of secrecy and never, ever talk about details of these contracts. This is another sole-source situation and we could be looking at another WE scandal. The government needs to come clean on this.

● (1840)

**Mr. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, let me just finish the thought and say that using the national security exception does not mean we do not use procurement best practices, negotiate and conclude fair and fair-market contracts with our suppliers. That is of course what we do. I am rather surprised the member believes that a global pandemic, the worst seen in 100 years, is not a matter that we would apply national security measures to. I think it is very fully, and Canadians understand that it is a matter that we would apply national security measures to.

*[Translation]*

I want to reiterate that, in light of the increase in COVID-19 cases in Canada, we must ensure that our country is prepared for any eventuality.

*[English]*

This pandemic is the most serious public health crisis Canada has ever faced, and the government must continue to meet the challenges that it presents, head-on.

*[Translation]*

## COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would first like to mention that my intern, Olivia, helped me prepare my speech for this evening. I think it is important for MPs to let young people assist us in our work. What I am going to say this evening was prepared in part with help from Olivia.

Five days ago, I had to ask for clear answers from the Liberal government concerning problems arising from work sharing at businesses in Mégantic—L'Érable and elsewhere in Quebec and Canada.

One of the answers I received last week from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion was that, in August, the government announced steps to support Canadians through the pandemic, that the government's plan included a transition to EI, and that the government had created new benefits so that no worker, no Canadian, would be left behind.

The trouble is, that is not what I asked. My question was about businesses that used the federal work-sharing program and decided to call employees back to work because that is what the government and the Prime Minister asked them to do. The eligibility period for the work-sharing program was even extended.

The problem is that the recalled workers who had been receiving the CERB did not receive their pay because of a computer glitch. Since May and June, over 150 workers in the riding of Mégantic—L'Érable have not received the federal portion of their wages because of this glitch. Unfortunately, the government has not been able to resolve the matter. The public servants who answered us were very sympathetic. They did everything they could and pushed every button imaginable, but it did not work.

We talked to cabinet, which tried to do something. We talked to the minister. I asked questions last week, but the answers I got had nothing to do with my questions, unfortunately, so those 154 residents of Mégantic—L'Érable, whom I have talked to, still have not received the wages they are owed.

Employees in the Granit RCM reported that the glitch affected them, too. A Princecraft employee had to quit because the financial pressure was too much for him. A Plessisville business asked Service Canada to fulfill its responsibilities toward its employees. Businesses can no longer justify the fact that their employees are not getting their full pay. Businesses just want Service Canada, the minister or anyone in government to acknowledge that the problem is their fault, because the employees no longer believe the business owners. This is a real problem.

Today, I had the opportunity to ask the Prime Minister a question about this, and he clearly indicated that he would look into the situation. I hope that, when he does, this situation will finally be resolved. I know that things have already started moving since question period.

However, is it normal that a member should have to take all of those steps? I have been working on this since June. I even published a news release to speak out about the situation, not to blame anyone, but to make sure that these workers could get their full pay after answering the government's call.

My question this evening is very simple. Could the government finally tell us when these people will get their full pay? They deserve it. They answered the government's call. Now the government needs to answer the call of these businesses, which do not know what to do anymore.

• (1845)

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

I would like to make it clear that the Government of Canada is committed to supporting Canadian workers through the COVID-19 crisis.

[English]

The workers in Princeville, Thetford Mines and Plessisville deserve our support. They expected our support when they applied for the work sharing program.

[Translation]

The work-sharing program makes it possible for the Government of Canada to support employers and employees when there is a reduction in business activity like the one we are currently experiencing.

[English]

The program allows employers to retain valued and skilled workers while allowing EI-eligible employees to maintain their work skills. When COVID-19 hit, the Government of Canada worked quickly to make work sharing available to more employers and workers through the introduction of temporary special measures,

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including doubling the maximum duration of an agreement to 76 weeks. We reduced the time to set up these agreements as well, from six weeks to two weeks. We simplified mandatory requirements by easing the employer recovery plan and removing the need for employers to submit financial documents, and we extended the program to workers considered essential to the recovery and viability of businesses, such as those engaged in product development and marketing.

The work-sharing program has been very popular. Since the start of the pandemic, demand for agreements rose 3,938% compared with the same period last year. As of early October, the Government of Canada has approved over 3,600 work-sharing agreements involving nearly 115,000 workers. While the vast majority of these workers are receiving their work-sharing benefits, there are some who are experiencing problems. We are working hard to fix that, day in and day out. Department officials are working around the clock to fix these claims. The money will be flowing very soon and people will get their due. They will not lose benefits as a result of this delay.

In the meantime, I want to be clear that the Government of Canada understands the difficulties that any delay in benefit payments can cause to claimants and their families.

[Translation]

We support Canadian workers. We will do whatever it takes to help Canadians get through the crisis.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, this shows goodwill, but what I have been hearing from the start is that they are working hard to solve the problem and find a solution.

Maybe the parliamentary secretary should call the three businesses and talk to the three union presidents so he can explain to them that there is a problem in the government and that the workers cannot receive 55% of their pay. They have been living on 45% of their pay, some of them since June. That is outrageous.

I do not want an explanation of how the work-sharing program works. What I want is for these people to get paid. I want them to be able to support their families. They kept their end of the deal with the government by agreeing to go back to work. The government said that it would bring in a program to pay part of their wages. They are no longer getting the CERB. They are back at work now, but unfortunately, they are getting only half their pay. This is unacceptable.

I hope the parliamentary secretary will pressure his department and the government to correct this situation.

[English]

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk:** Madam Speaker, I can assure the member we do recognize the urgency of this situation. As I stated in my comments, department officials are working around the clock to fix these issues and the money will be flowing very soon.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

As we look to the future, we are going to reform the EI system so that it reflects how Canadians are working now. We are going to re-design it for the 21st century and for a successful economic recovery. In the meantime, the Government of Canada has the backs of Canadians, so the successful work-sharing program will continue to be there for Canadians.

In addition to a simplified, more accessible employment insurance program that supports work sharing, the new Canada recovery benefits act will allow workers to bridge the gap from receiving the CERB to one of the recovery benefits: the Canada recovery benefit, the Canada recovery sickness benefit and the Canada recovery caregiving benefit that were passed into law on October 2.

The simplified EI program and these new recovery benefits will support Canadians—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe.

• (1850)

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to follow up on my question from Friday and hopefully get some clarification on the Liberal government's lack of transparency when it comes to the procurement of essential PPE. To reiterate, the Liberal government has been using national security exceptions in order to prevent Canadians from knowing who is being awarded contracts for items such as disposable, non-medical masks.

When asked on October 1 by the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles about contracts not being disclosed due to national security reasons, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement said, and I quote, “we made all of our contracts public on our website at the end of July in the interest of full transparency for Canadians.”

Then when my colleague from Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman pushed back on that reply, the minister doubled down saying, “in the interest of full transparency we revealed on our website at the end of July all of our contracts and suppliers.” That is a definitive statement. It leaves no room for interpretation or doubt.

On Friday, when I raised in question period that I have an email from the minister's departmental staff confirming to a business in my riding that contract recipients for non-medical, disposable masks were being withheld based on the national security exception, the parliamentary secretary changed the government's tune.

The parliamentary secretary acknowledged that they had been using the national security exception in order to prevent Canadians from knowing who is getting contracts for made-in-Canada PPE. Apparently, this is happening so regularly that the Liberals need to plan for a big document dump after the fact.

Setting aside that the Minister of Public Services and Procurement appears to have misled the House and risked putting herself in contempt of Parliament, given what we know to be true based on the department's own website and the parliamentary secretary's recent admissions, it sounds like the Liberals are trying to use the

same tactics they did when they released the WE scandal documents. They tried to bury the opposition with redacted paperwork.

If I were a betting man, I would guess that this additional information will come out right before a constituency week or maybe late in December before the House adjourns, or maybe even in June when it adjourns again. That is the real issue.

The government can use the national security exception to prevent foreign companies or governments from bidding on these contracts. However, that does not mean they need to use the secrecy components to prevent Canadian taxpayers from knowing how much the federal government is paying for our own domestic PPE and other protective equipment, and who we are buying it from. How can Canadian companies know they are competitive with other Canadian companies if all of this information is withheld?

To say that we cannot know who is awarded a domestic-only contract for non-medical, disposable masks because it would put our supply at risk seems very disingenuous, especially when the posted list of interested suppliers is on the website, with the company names, emails and phone numbers to get in touch with them. What it comes down to is this: My constituents no longer believe that the government is spending their tax dollars wisely.

After the WE scandal and the Frank Baylis debacle, and with the procurement ombudsman looking into the former minister of environment's contracting practices, just to name a few recent examples, the Liberal government has proven time and again that they do not deserve the benefit of the doubt.

When will the government release the names of the companies that received contracts for PPE so that Canadian taxpayers can be assured their money is not being funnelled to well-connected Liberal insiders?

• (1855)

**Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** I want to thank my hon. friend from Red Deer—Lacombe for his intervention and his interest in this issue. I listened with interest to his comments. I can say very simply that, when the global pandemic was declared, we faced a situation where the personal protective equipment and equipment of all kinds that Canadians and health care workers would require on an urgent basis had to be sourced, in some cases from countries around the world and in some cases from Canada. We applaud all of those suppliers.



I refer my hon. friend to the comments I just made to his colleague from Manitoba. Let me very briefly assure the hon. member that the procurement professionals at Public Services and Procurement, along with our colleagues at the Public Health Agency of Canada and of course partners across the country, are working extremely hard to ensure that Canadians have the supply of personal protective equipment and health care equipment of all kinds that is required.

We are also very grateful to those domestic suppliers who have stepped up and supplied the government with equipment of all kinds. Their contributions will go a long way in ensuring that Canada has a sustainable supply of domestic equipment and other materials available for use as we traverse this incredible public health crisis.

The company the hon. member references in his riding is welcome to offer to the department and to officials the equipment it may be in the process of or may have the capability of producing. I know that our officials have entertained thousands of such offers from across Canada and I know that they will deal with the member's with the same level of interest. I want to thank him for offering that up.

In conclusion, the professionals at Public Services and Procurement Canada, just like those across the Government of Canada and throughout, first responders in the health care system, are owed a great debt of thanks for the night and day work that they have done for the six months of this pandemic to make sure that Canadians are safe and have access to the equipment that they need.

• (1900)

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary is trying to skirt the issue again. He is not actually hearing the question I am asking.

The people I represent, who have asked me to look into this matter on their behalf, would be more than happy to be suppliers. In fact, they did bid on a contract, but they were unable to find out

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why they were unsuccessful in their bid. This does not make any sense, because there is nothing sensitive about non-medical, disposable masks. Given the fact that we are now months down the road, there seems to be no reason or rational explanation for the need to hide some of this information from the taxpayers of Canada.

I want to know from the parliamentary secretary when this information can be released. Are future contracts where PPE might go to tender from the Government of Canada going to have the same national security exceptions, given the fact that we know much more now than we did several months ago?

Frankly, I too share respect for the bureaucracy—

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

**Mr. Steven MacKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I assure the hon. member that the national security exemption is applied in situations where officials believe it is in Canada's interest, and in the interest of our citizens, our partners in the provinces and our health care workers, that Canada have ready access to contracting for equipment that is urgently required and that the details, in some cases, represent a strategic interest of Canada.

We have released details of dozens of contracts on our website. We will continue to apply the same levels of accountability and transparency to our procurements and, yes, in the future, continue on to more competitive procurements.

In conclusion, I assure the member that as a first order of business—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I apologize, but I have to respect the timelines.

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

(The House adjourned at 7:03 p.m.)



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