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Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)
[*English*]

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 40(1) of the Access to Information Act, a report from the Information Commissioner entitled “Access at issue: The need for leadership—Systemic investigation of the RCMP”.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

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[*English*]

DIGITAL CHARTER IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2020

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-11, An Act to enact the Consumer Privacy Protection Act and the Personal Information and Data Protection Tribunal Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts.

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

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, five reports of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

[*English*]

The first concerns the CPA EXCO Coordinating Committee meeting, held in London, United Kingdom, from February 27 to 29, 2020.

[*Translation*]

The second concerns the bilateral visit to the Caribbean, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and Bridgetown, Barbados, from January 18 to 24, 2020.

[*English*]

The third concerns the CPA EXCO Coordinating Committee meeting, held in London, United Kingdom, from January 18 to 19, 2020.

The fourth concerns the Westminster Seminar on Effective Parliaments 2019, held in London, United Kingdom, from November 25 to 29, 2019.

The fifth concerns the 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, held in Kampala, Uganda, from September 22 to 29, 2019.

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PETITIONS

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling a petition from my constituents that calls on the Canadian government to invoke the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, otherwise known as the Magnitsky law, against foreign officials responsible for gross human rights violations or acts of corruption. Specifically, the petitioners are calling on the government to deploy all legal sanctions, including the freezing of assets and the barring of entry to Canada, against corrupt officials from China.

JUSTICE

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present e-petition 2767.

The citizens of Canada call upon the Minister of Justice to amend section 8(2) of the Privacy Act to include an additional circumstantial provision that would allow personal information under the control of a federal institution to be disclosed to a third party for the purpose of protecting an individual from interpersonal and domestic violence, otherwise known as Clare's law. This would give us another resource to combat domestic violence.

*Business of Supply***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

• (1010)

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD CHINA

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC) moved:

That, given that (i) the People's Republic of China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, is threatening Canada's national interest and its values, including Canadians of Chinese origin within Canada's borders, (ii) it is essential that Canada have a strong and principled foreign policy backed by action in concert with its allies, the House call upon the government to: (a) make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network within 30 days of the adoption of this motion; and (b) develop a robust plan, as Australia has done, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada and its increasing intimidation of Canadians living in Canada, and table it within 30 days of the adoption of this motion.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will share my time with the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

The government has logged a number of foreign policy accomplishments. It signed a new free trade agreement with the United States under very difficult circumstances. It also signed a new free trade agreement with the European Union and the Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, most of which was negotiated by the previous government.

[English]

Despite these accomplishments, the government's overall foreign policy has been a disappointment. The government came to office telling the world that Canada is back, but the facts say otherwise.

Last June, Canada lost the vote for the UN Security Council seat with 108 votes, which is six fewer votes than Canada got a decade ago. That is six fewer countries today that see Canada as a global leader than did a decade ago. This is a quantitative indictment of the government's foreign policy.

On foreign aid, the government has been a disappointment. It came to office saying that it was going to make Canada a leader in helping the poorest around the world. The opposite has happened. Under the government, official development assistance has declined by 10% to 0.27% of gross national income. Compare this with the previous Conservative government's decade in office, when ODA averaged 0.3% of GNI.

On climate change, the government has been a disappointment. It came to office promising to do better, but the facts say otherwise. Under the government, Canada's emissions have been increasing. In its first full year in office, in 2016, Canada's emissions were 708

megatonnes. In 2018, the last year for which we have data, Canada's emissions rose to 729 megatonnes.

It is on China that the Liberal government has been the biggest disappointment. China is not upholding its responsibility to the rules-based international system. It is ignoring its condition of entry into the WTO. It is manipulating its currency using state-owned enterprises to interfere in other countries' economies, infringing on international property and violating international law in its treatment of Canadians Michael Kovrig, Michael Spavor, Robert Schellenberg and Huseyin Celil. It violates international law in its treatment of the people of Hong Kong and in its treatment of religious and ethnic minorities, such as the Tibetans and the Uighurs in China. In short, China is threatening our interests and our values.

In that context, it is really important that the Government of Canada speak with a clear, consistent and coherent voice. Unfortunately, that is not happening.

In January of last year, the Prime Minister said he was not going to intervene in the judicial proceeding concerning Meng Wanzhou in Vancouver. The same week, former Canadian ambassador to China, John McCallum, said that the government should intervene and trade Meng Wanzhou for Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor.

This inconsistency and incoherence have continued into this year. In July, the foreign minister told the House that he is looking into putting sanctions on Chinese officials for their actions with respect to Hong Kong. The very next day the government told Reuters that this was off the table.

In September, the foreign minister told *The Globe and Mail* that the pursuit of free trade with China was being abandoned, and on the same day, Ambassador Barton, Canada's ambassador to China, was in Edmonton telling an audience, which included the Chinese ambassador to Canada, that Canada should do more in China and expand trade with China.

These are just a few of the many, many examples.

The government itself acknowledges implicitly that its China policy is not working. It has acknowledged it by its recent change in rhetoric on China this fall, and it has acknowledged it by its announcement that it plans to come forward with a new framework on China this fall, by December 24. That is why I have introduced this motion today.

Any new framework on China must include two elements.

First, it must include a decision on Huawei. In May of last year, the government said it would make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network before the 2019 election. That July it changed its mind and said it would make a decision after the 2019 election.

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• (1015)

It has now been more than a year since the last election, and there still has been no decision. It has been years since the government first started deliberating on this decision. The consequence of these years of delay and indecision on the part of the government is threatening Canada's national security. Because of the government's delays on this file, Telus, a major Canadian telecommunications company, went ahead and purchased Huawei's equipment for its network. It installed it in the national capital region, where most of Canada's federal government offices are, including the RCMP, CSIS, the Department of National Defence and other military installations, despite having reached an agreement with the federal government not to use Huawei's equipment in the region. Reports now indicate the federal government is scrambling to get Telus to remove its equipment, which has now been installed on some 80 towers and sites in the national capital region. Under article 7 of China's national intelligence law, Huawei must support, assist and co-operate with China's intelligence activities.

The government's lack of action on Huawei demonstrates something else: the yawning gap between its rhetoric and reality. The government said it believes in multilateralism, but when given the opportunity fails to act. Huawei is a good case in point. Four of the Five Eyes intelligence partners, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom, have banned or put restrictions on Huawei's involvement in their networks. Canada is unilaterally alone in failing to take action.

It is long past time for the government to make a decision on Huawei. No framework on China is complete without it. Any new framework on China must also include a robust plan to counter China's subversive operations here in Canada. China, through its agents and foreign operations here on our soil, is threatening our national interests and values. It is intimidating Canadians, particularly Canadians of Chinese origin. It is spying on and cyber-attacking our citizens, companies and the federal government itself. It is spreading disinformation. It is engaging in elite capture: the provision of monetary inducements, in sinecure, to retired bureaucrats and retired politicians. It is providing financial support for research institutes that support Beijing's positions, such as the Confucius Institute. It is co-opting Chinese-language media and local organizations on the ground to promote Beijing's interests. It is surveilling and organizing Chinese foreign students at Canadian universities to stifle on-campus debate and threaten others, as it has done at the University of Toronto and McMaster University. It is interfering in the Chinese community by mobilizing political support against those who do not support Beijing.

There are countless examples of China's influence operations here in Canada documented by CSIS, the RCMP, Amnesty International and the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations of the House. Any new framework on China must include a plan that does more to protect Canadians from China's foreign influence operations here in Canada as our allies, such as Australia, have already done.

The government came to office talking about responsible conviction. That was jettisoned for Canada being an essential country. We now get a new framework on China. Any new framework must include a decision on Huawei and a robust plan to protect Canadian

citizens and interests from China's subversive foreign influence operations here on Canadian soil.

I have a final point on the timing in the motion. The motion calls on the government to make these two decisions within 30 days. The government has announced for months that it is coming forward with a new framework on China by the end of this fall, which ends on December 21, so the timing of the motion's provisions is very reasonable. That is why I have introduced this motion. I hope members will support it.

• (1020)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to quickly address something my colleague said at the beginning of his comments about increased emissions in Canada. I think it is all relative. I am sure as we look back on 2020 that, as a result of COVID-19, we will see an economic underperformance and that those emissions will be lower than before. I wonder if he is interested in qualifying his statement to reflect the fact that things are relative, and perhaps wants to compare that with the economy.

Specifically with respect to the motion my colleague has introduced today, I respect the fact he has come up with the 30 days based on the timeline and his calculation back from the end of the fall. Does this mean that he is open to possibly extending that timeline slightly to make sure there is all the information, and that proper attention can be paid to such an important response?

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, we are open to looking at any amendments that any member of the House proposes. We will have to see the substance and the details of the amendment before we make a decision.

With respect to the member's earlier question on climate change, I will paraphrase Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations, Bob Rae. Declining national income is no way to meet either Canada's overseas development assistance goals or our climate change goals.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees with the motion, overall. We have the same concerns as the ones already mentioned regarding the 30-day deadline.

Why not wait until the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, which the Conservatives themselves asked for, releases its findings?

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

The reason is very simple. The government has announced that it would present a plan before Christmas to solve the problem of China. As the official opposition, we believe it is very important to take a two-pronged approach. We need a decision regarding the Chinese company Huawei and a plan to address Chinese operations in Canadian territory.

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That is why we moved this motion in the House.

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills for bringing this motion forward today.

I want to ask my colleague if he believes that Canada needs to bring in legislation to combat foreign interference from China and other state parties here in Canada.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, in short, the answer is yes, we believe legislation is needed: a new legislative framework to deal with a number of issues. For example, we believe that former senior politicians and former senior bureaucrats should register their contracts, if they are working for a foreign state or an entity controlled by a foreign state. We also believe that there need to be better enforcement tools available to law enforcement to counter these subversive Chinese foreign influence operations on Canadian soil.

Those are just two measures that we believe need new legislation in order to provide the tools necessary to counter these activities.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to attend the speech by my colleague this morning. One thing he failed to mention, and what I am inquiring about, is Canada's leadership when it comes to taking action.

Why is the member not mentioning to Canadians who are watching us that Canada was the first country to suspend an extradition treaty, between Canada and Hong Kong? Why is the member not mentioning to Canadians that Canada suspended the export of sensitive equipment? Why is the member not mentioning to Canadians that we took immigration measures?

I chaired the meeting of the Five Eyes, and I consulted with our British counterparts at every step of the way. Why is the member not mentioning that we are continuing to engage with our partners around the world to show leadership, to take action, and to stand up for Canadian values and interests?

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the minister has listened to the debate and is attending today's debate.

With respect to his question, I have acknowledged some of the government's foreign policy accomplishments, particularly in the area of trade. However, I disagree with him on the issue of Hong Kong. The fact of the matter is that other countries were much more vocal about the challenges in Hong Kong in 2019. Canada was not the first to indicate its concerns.

On the issue of immigration from Hong Kong, Canada's plan pales in comparison to that of the United Kingdom, which is allowing admissibility for residency and a path to citizenship for up to 2.9 million residents of Hong Kong through the recognition of the British national overseas passport.

The Minister of Immigration's plan is a pale imitation of that plan, and will merely admit some thousands of Hong Kongers who want to seek asylum here in Canada.

• (1025)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to our motion.

I want to begin by talking about courage. Anyone in a leadership position should expect to have to show some courage. However, just because someone is in a leadership position does not guarantee that he or she is courageous. History is full of examples of leaders who chose appeasement instead of making difficult decisions. Here in Canada, the Prime Minister has chosen to appease China instead of doing what is best for Canada.

Unfortunately, being courageous is never easy. Difficult situations require courage, and our relationship with China's Communist regime has become unacceptable for Canada. When we are faced with a situation where the status quo is unacceptable, we must take action.

Today's motion calls on all of us to act with courage to protect public safety, Canadian industry and Canada's sovereignty. Canadians also know that the Chinese communist dictatorship is no reflection on the Chinese people. We have to be careful not to confuse Chinese people with the Chinese communist regime. It is important to understand that the Chinese communist regime has nothing to do with the population. There is enough evidence that the regime has no interest in its citizens. It has a singular focus on becoming a global power.

Today, our motion is clear. We believe that given that the People's Republic of China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, is threatening Canada's national interest and its values, which are important, including Canadians of Chinese origin within Canada's borders, it is essential that Canada have a strong and principled foreign policy backed by action in concert with its allies.

We are calling on the House to urge the government to make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network within 30 days of the adoption of this motion. We are calling on the government to develop a robust plan, as Australia has done, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada and its increasing intimidation of Canadians living in Canada, and table it within 30 days of the adoption of this motion.

When Chinese communists are hurling thinly veiled threats at Canadians living in Hong Kong, we need to do something. When Canadians are being detained on bogus charges, we cannot bury our heads in the sand and claim everything is fine. When pro-communist officials are intimidating Chinese Canadians on Canadian soil, it is impossible to turn a blind eye. When billions of dollars' worth of intellectual property belonging to Canada and our allies is being stolen by these same communists, we need to do everything we can to protect it.

Obviously, there is no way to trust them, to work with them or to seek to deepen our relationship with them. Friendship requires trust, and we simply cannot trust them. Some will say that we need to be careful about criticizing these communists so as not to make enemies. However, if this communist regime was really Canada's friend, its actions would show it, and that is not currently the case. What is more, in Parliament, only the Prime Minister has publicly stated his affection for China's communist model.

As a former soldier, I was taught not to be afraid of the enemy. In our capacity as elected officials, friends come and go and we also make enemies. However, the way I feel about having enemies makes me think of a poem I heard recently by British poet Charles Mackay. It reads as follows:

You have no enemies, you say?
 Alas! my friend, the boast is poor;
 He who has mingled in the fray
 Of duty, that the brave endure,
 Must have made foes! If you have none,
 Small is the work that you have done.
 You've hit no traitor on the hip,
 You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
 You've never turned the wrong to right,
 You've been a coward in the fight.

The Prime Minister needs to be brave. He must ban Huawei and protect Canadians from the influence and intimidation of the Chinese Communist Party.

• (1030)

Huawei's participation in Canada's telecommunications networks is unacceptable. Huawei is a threat to Canada's national security. It is a well-known fact that under Chinese law, Huawei must support, assist and co-operate with China's intelligence services.

If the Prime Minister cannot see the threat, it is only because he is hiding his head in the sand, unless there is another reason. The Liberal government is dithering, but it must make a decision on the possible participation of Huawei in Canada's 5G network.

I would remind the Prime Minister that on May 1, 2019, the then Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Ralph Goodale, stated that the government would make a decision about Huawei before the 2019 general election. On July 30, 2019, former minister Goodale stated that he would announce the decision after the election. Today, more than one year after the election, we still have not heard from the government on the Huawei file. It takes courage to make decisions, and that is what we expect from a government.

Everyone knows that Canada is currently the only member of Five Eyes that has not banned Huawei from its networks. Yes, England has conducted an analysis and walked back its decision. However, it is clear that countries unanimously recognize the danger of installing Huawei 5G technology in their networks.

The world is watching Canada to see whether the Prime Minister will take our country's security seriously. We would be having a different debate if all the stories about Huawei were made up or stemmed from a war between competitors, or if people believed that the Conservatives were trying to promote a given company over Huawei. We would be talking about competition among large

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corporations looking for an opportunity to make billions with Canadian networks. That, however, is not the case.

Two years ago I had the opportunity to meet with senior officials from the FBI, the Pentagon and the CIA in Washington. I also met with cybersecurity experts in San Francisco. Every single one of them warned me of the danger. I asked whether they were just touting their president's position, but they told me no. These were public servants, directly involved in operations, and their response to me did not appear to be political. It was truly a matter of national security.

I think the evidence is clear, and even our Canadian agencies know this. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service has already expressed concerns about Huawei, and the chief of the defence staff has talked about it. At some point, it has to be enough.

Our motion calls on the government to respond within 30 days. Why bother taking 30 days to provide a response when it could respond today? We know the answer and so does the government. It just needs to find the courage to say it out loud and take action. It must tell communist China that Canada will stand up to them.

Canada is a large country with a small population and we are often told to pipe down because China could wipe us out with the snap of a finger. We shall see whether Canadians and the Government of Canada will be courageous and stand up to communist China by taking the necessary measures.

• (1035)

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his intervention. I have a great deal of respect for him, first for his service to our country, but also in his role as an MP.

He talked about courage. Two individuals who have shown a great deal of courage so far are Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, who were detained in an arbitrary and coercive manner, which Canada has denounced. I too denounced this situation around the world, noting that we are not talking about two Canadians, but two citizens of a liberal democracy who are being detained arbitrarily.

I have a question for my colleague. While all Canadians must unite, put political considerations aside and speak with one voice as we have many times throughout history, how does the Conservative Party plan to join its voice to that of the government to call for the immediate release of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, for whom I also have a lot of respect.

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I think it has been pretty clear from the beginning that the Conservative Party has always been a strong advocate for the release of the two Michaels. We have often asked questions about this. Of course the minister and his government are making diplomatic efforts as best they can to secure the release of the two Michaels. Of course we support any and all such attempts.

Still, all the other files we are discussing today, including 5G technology and Huawei, are matters of national security, and we also need to take action in that regard. We therefore need to find a balance between the detention of the two Michaels and what needs to be done to protect the interests of Canadians.

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at least this motion has the merit of putting something very important into perspective, namely our relationship with China.

However, I want to repeat our question to the Conservative Party, which has said that it is open to being flexible. The motion proposes bringing forward a plan dealing with a rather complex relationship and doing so within 30 days. We always hear that if it were so simple, it would have been done already.

Does the member think this is realistic?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

We included the 30-day deadline in our motion because we think it is entirely reasonable. Given that this situation has been going on for quite some time, plans are already in place. If plans are not in place, then there is a problem on the government's end. Plans for the Huawei decision and for the rest of our motion are ready. All we are waiting for is for those plans to be tabled and implemented.

As such, I think 30 days will suffice.

[*English*]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2014, the Stephen Harper Conservative government signed the FIPA with China, an agreement that arguably benefited China more than it did Canada.

Does the hon. member regret that the Conservative government signed that agreement, given that it now exposes us to an expensive lawsuit if we exclude Huawei from our 5G network?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I am not as familiar with the Canada-China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement. I believe it is about protecting foreign investment.

If the agreement did not produce good results for one of the parties, I am certainly open to amending it. Clearly, we are putting pressure on the government and condemning some of its actions. Were previous governments, either Conservative or Liberal, always 100% successful? No, and bad decisions may have been made at times. Today we are here to make changes. This is 2020, and Canada simply cannot keep doing business with China like this. That is why we need to look to the future and take the necessary steps.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in December 2019 I spoke in favour of a Canada-China special relations committee, because the Minister of Foreign Affairs had said publicly that there was no framework on China. Unfortunately, due to the prorogation by the government, that particular committee lost a lot of time. During that time, just prior to the prorogation, we heard at the committee from citizens who said that they had been intimidated by Communist Chinese government operatives here in Canada. Yesterday, the Minister of Immigration said he had never cancelled any permit to be in Canada.

Does the member believe that the government is allowing this kind of intimidation and has been silent? How many more times do we need to hear that this is a problem in Canada before the government acts?

I would like the member to speak on this concern.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I am now a member of the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations and I participate in the work of that committee. The evidence we heard demonstrates that there is a great deal of intimidation occurring in Canada. Chinese Canadians living here are subject to direct intimidation in Canada. We cannot just ignore that. We must implement measures, whether on our university campuses, in industries or anywhere else. It does not matter whether someone living in Canada is an immigrant or was born here. We must protect our citizens.

[*English*]

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this House to address the motion brought forward by the member for Wellington—Halton Hills and our dear colleague for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles. I have enormous respect for them both, and I have said it many times in this House.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and China. This anniversary is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on the foundations of our relations and how to adapt going forward.

In light of the current challenges, we take a sober view in assessing the relationship 50 years on, considering the importance of mutual respect and reciprocity, adherence to rules and principles, including human rights, and achieving results that are in Canada's interests. While we share long-standing connections that took root well before the establishment of diplomatic relations, today we are facing a difficult reality.

Less than four weeks before the second anniversary of their detention, Canadians are deeply concerned by the arbitrary detentions of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. The use of coercive diplomacy and the ongoing crackdown on freedoms in Hong Kong, human rights violations in Xinjiang and Tibet, not to mention the hostile activities against Canadians, are entirely at odds with Canadian values and interests. Our government continues to be unequivocal on these issues, making sure that our stance is clear to China at all times.

However, we are not alone. It is not only Canada, but many like-minded democracies have raised their voices to challenge China on the question of arbitrary detentions and other human rights abuses in China, most recently in a joint statement on Xinjiang and Hong Kong at the UN General Assembly Third Committee, which was signed by Canada and 38 other states.

[Translation]

It is important that China recognize that its actions harm its reputation in many other countries, not just in Canada, and that it is sending the wrong message to the international community.

In light of China's hardening of its position, and in a broader geostrategic situation, we are adopting an approach to China that has three fundamental pillars: Canada's long-term interests, our principles and values, including human rights, and the rules of international law.

We will do so while continuing to defend and protect Canada and Canadians against activities that harm democratic values, our sovereignty, our economic interests and, of course, as my colleagues mentioned, national security in general.

[English]

The promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of Canada's foreign policy, and we will continue to play a fundamental role in the Government of Canada's engagement with China. We will continue to raise our voice to express our concerns about China's behaviour and failure to abide by its international obligations. The best way to do this is to continue working with our allies and partners to hold the Chinese government accountable and to defend the rules-based international order.

We will also continue to pursue co-operation when it aligns with our national interests. China is a key player in the global commons in the fight against COVID-19, climate change or to ensure the stability of financial markets and global economic development. We are aware that China is and will remain an important commercial partner for Canada. China is also a significant source of tourists and students to Canada, and brings economic and enriching social benefits across our nation. Canada believes in a strategic approach to trading with China. We will also continue to encourage trade diversification.

• (1045)

While co-operation in these areas is beneficial, Canada is taking a clear-eyed view in examining our relationship. We are not alone in recognizing the need for a new approach. Like-minded democracies around the world are adjusting to the new dynamics that have

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emerged in recent years. As I have said, we will, and we are, continue to engage with China with our eyes wide open.

As part of our assessment, we continue to be seized at all levels of government by the cases of Canadians detained and sentenced arbitrarily in China. It is unacceptable that any citizen, anywhere, be arbitrarily detained.

Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor must be brought home, full stop. This is something for which all Canadians stand united, and I am sure every member of the House as well. The government has been very clear that the detention of these two Canadians is unacceptable. Their arbitrary detentions are something we will speak against at every opportunity. They must be immediately released.

We are encouraged by the fact that Ambassador Barton was able to have consular access to Mr. Kovrig and Mr. Spavor this fall after more than eight months without contact. I personally raised this in a meeting with my counterpart, state councillor Wang Yi, in Rome in August of this year. We have worked on this tirelessly. We continue to request ongoing access to them and to all Canadians who are detained in China.

We also continue to provide all appropriate support for Mr. Robert Schellenberg and oppose the arbitrary decision to issue a death penalty sentence at his retrial. We continue to call on China to grant clemency to Canadians facing death sentences.

As we work to resolve these serious conditions, the government will also continue to provide consular support to them and their families and press for consular access to all Canadians detained in China. I have been talking to their families regularly to update them on what we are doing. We are taking an approach of all hands on deck when it comes to obtaining the release of Michael Kovrig, Michael Spavor and other Canadians.

[Translation]

I would now like to talk about what is happening here in Canada. Like many other open and free democracies, Canada is targeted by hostile states looking for information, intelligence and leverage to advance their own interests.

This is not a new threat and is not limited to a single country. More and more, we are seeing governments around the world exposing and countering foreign actions that are detrimental to their interests. Furthermore, state and non-state actors that may present a security threat have greater access to economic tools.

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Our government recognizes that such economic threats can affect traditional national security concerns but, as we have heard this morning, these threats can also affect Canada's long-term prosperity, economic competitiveness, and industrial, military and technological advantage.

This situation has been exacerbated by globalization and the use of the Internet and social media platforms.

Hostile actors have better access to cheaper online tools to run operations, which are difficult to track. This has become more apparent during the pandemic. For example, our government has, on a number of occasions, acknowledged the increased risk of foreign interference in and spying on our hard-working biopharmaceutical companies, our university scientific research institutes, the various levels of government and other organizations participating in international efforts to develop a vaccine.

• (1050)

[*English*]

This is why our domestic agencies have been working tirelessly with these entities to raise awareness of the threat and to ensure they have the tools and information they need to protect themselves and their proprietary information. Our government is equally aware of intimidation tactics being used against Canadians in Canada and that is something which is of great concern to me, my colleagues and this government.

State actors target the fabric of Canada's multicultural society, seeking to influence communities, including through pressure and threats. States may attempt to threaten and intimidate individuals outside their country. These tactics can also be used as covers to silence citizens, pressure political opponents and instill a general fear of state power no matter where a person is located.

Any reports of harassment and intimidation of individuals in Canada is troubling and will not be tolerated. We invite Canadians to report any such action to law enforcement officials. CSIS uses the full mandate of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act in order to investigate, advise and respond to any threat to the security of Canada. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police will continue to investigate with a view to laying charges under the Criminal Code.

An open and multicultural society is at the heart of our Canadian values. Canadians can be assured that their government takes the threat posed by foreign interference activities very seriously.

Increasingly economic tools are also deployed by state and non-state actors that can pose threats to security and threaten Canada's long-term prosperity and economic competitiveness. For decades, Canada has been a strong supporter and builder of the rules-based international order. We believe in and support these rules because we know that when companies compete in a predictable and level playing field, the positive outcomes are tremendous: rising living standards, improved choices for consumers and new technologies that improve the quality of life to name just a few.

However, the success of this system is not guaranteed and it must be fostered. It can be undermined when some countries do not abide by the rules or disregard reciprocity.

Our government has responded to this ever-changing environment by utilizing existing regulatory tools as well as creating new initiatives that will protect the integrity and robustness of Canada's economic security.

First, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry oversees and utilizes the Investment Canada Act to ensure that investments coming to Canada are of a net benefit and are not injurious to national security. The act applies to all investors regardless of the country of origin.

Second, Canada has one of the strongest export control regimes in the world. We have a robust risk assessment framework under the Export and Import Permits Act. Canada also became a party to the Arms Trade Treaty in September of last year. Canada evaluates every export permit application on a case-by-case basis to determine what the goods or technology will be used for, where will they be used and by whom among many other factors.

Through this regulation Canada seeks to mitigate against risks that the exported goods could be used to undermine peace and security, commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law or serious acts of gender-based violence.

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

There is no doubt that 5G technology has raised some serious security concerns. The government is carefully examining the security challenges and threats related to 5G technology, while recognizing that this technology is key to Canada's future economic development.

Canada's review takes into account technical, economic and national security factors and obviously includes advice from our allies and partners. Canada considers this issue to be an important element in the context of our bilateral relations with the United States. The security of Canadians will be central and critical to how we proceed with the deployment of 5G technology in Canada.

Public Safety Canada, the Communications Security Establishment, the Department of National Defence, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Global Affairs Canada and Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada are working together on this important issue.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

Protecting the critical systems and infrastructure Canadians rely on every day is a major priority of the Government of Canada and protecting telecommunications equipment and services from cyber-threats is particularly important. We will ensure that Canadian networks are kept safe and secure at all times and that Canada's public interest is protected.

The government will continue to work with telecommunications service providers and vendors to mitigate security risks in current and future networks as 5G technology is adopted by Canadians.

I would like to submit that China poses some of the key foreign policy challenges of our time. In this context, we must engage with China with eyes wide open. As we adapt our approach to China, given the new realities, Canada will work with partners and allies around the world to defend the rules-based international order in the face of common challenges and continue to hold the Chinese government accountable for its actions and international obligations.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister has said that Canadians who are being intimidated and threatened by Chinese agents operating on Canadian soil will have their complaints investigated and pursued. However, as reported in *The Globe and Mail* on November 10, the reality is that this is not happening.

CSIS spoke to *The Globe and Mail* and indicated that Chinese agents were actively targeting Canadians in the Chinese community on Canadian soil, but that there was very little action that had been taken on the part of the government to counter that intimidation, unlike what we see in the United States. On October 28 of this fall, the FBI charged eight individuals, including three Chinese citizens, for their involvement in Operation Fox Hunt for intimidating American citizens on American soil.

When was the last time the RCMP or another Canadian police force charged Chinese agents operating in Canada for utilizing similar tactics on Canadian soil?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question. When it comes to national security, politics does not have any place in that.

What I have said to Canadians who are watching and to the House is that all our agencies are seized of this issue, that Canadians should report any threats or any actions they experience to law enforcement authorities and that the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness is seized of this matter and has been consulting with our agencies.

Canadians, and every member of the House, should have the utmost trust that we have the best possible expertise in Canada to ensure we protect Canadians at every step of the way. The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness will come forward soon with additional measures to protect the safety and security of Canadians.

● (1100)

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is an expression in French about a flood of words in a desert of ideas.

Obviously this expression does not apply to the Minister of Foreign Affairs because he has a lot of ideas and is generous with them, so I do not think that that applies here.

That being said, in his very dense speech, he told us that he was concerned about the security of Canadians, whether it be with regard to the undue influence of the People's Republic of China or with regard to Huawei.

I would just like to know, after that very lengthy speech, whether he is or is not in favour of the motion moved by our Conservative colleagues.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I thank my Bloc colleague, for whom I also have enormous respect. We are working hand in hand. When it comes to foreign policy, I think countries like ours need to work together, and it is always a great pleasure for me to work with him on all these issues.

On this side of the House, we recognize that some elements of the motion have merit. I am referring to states' interference in Canada, measures we are taking and the 5G issue, which I addressed in my speech. On this side of the House, we believe that national security must be our top priority. We cannot commit to a specific timeline because all our decisions must be based on ensuring the security of the country, its citizens, and the network we need to build. National security is and will always be our absolute priority. When we are ready, we will present concrete measures.

There are certainly some interesting things in today's motion, but when it comes to a timeline, everyone needs to understand that national security must come first.

[English]

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this motion is about the Government of China. There are Canadians here who are living in fear because of the efforts to silence dissenting voices by the Chinese government.

However, it is not just the Chinese government. I spoke to members of the Oromo community in my riding who told me stories about being targeted by the Ethiopian government. Canadians are victims of cyberbullying, threats of sexualized violence, threats of harm to their family members who live overseas, racist insults, intimidation and harassment for speaking out about human rights.

What is the government currently doing and what additional measures can we expect to protect these Canadians who are advocating for human rights and who are being targeted by the Government of China but also by other governments like Ethiopia and others?

Business of Supply

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, the member is making a very important point and I totally agree with her. Today the motion reflects on China, but we should all be concerned about other state and non-state actors who are trying to unduly influence Canadians. We have seen it in different chapters. The member mentioned certain elements.

When I defended, and continue to defend, the families of flight PS752, we saw Iran trying to interfere. We are aware of it, but I want to reassure Canadians who are watching that this is not unique to Canada. As I think the critic mentioned, in all my interactions and engagement with the Five Eyes, the G7 and other countries, this is something that is concerning to all of us, whether it is cyber-bullying or new cyber-threats. We are really working, as liberal democracies, to make sure we respond to that.

I invite every Canadian, and those who are watching, to immediately report any evidence or attempt to interfere or threaten Canadians to law enforcement authorities so that our agencies can collect the proper evidence to lay charges.

• (1105)

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier the minister referenced conversations with the Five Eyes countries, and in particular he referenced the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom, over four months ago, made its decision to ban Huawei.

Again, this is not a new issue. It is a simple question. What is taking so long to make the decision to ban Huawei?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, indeed, I do not think there has been a time when Canada and the U.K. worked more closely together, such as in the matter of Hong Kong. I did hear comments before on our immigration measures. These measures were discussed among the Five Eyes allies, and all of that is coordinated.

To the member's point, he will appreciate that as a country we have to put our national security first. We still have our agencies looking into that and it will come out when we are ready. I assure him there is wide consultation and co-operation among the Five Eyes when it comes to issues like 5G and other national security issues.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like the minister to comment on a larger philosophical issue that also applies in this situation, which is to have engagement or not to have engagement. History has shown us that one could have no engagement for a thousand years with a regime or a nation that is abusing human rights, and it would have no effect. I would like him to comment on making progress in human rights through engagement or non-engagement.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I believe in engagement. Engagement is the only way we can interact and hopefully change behaviour. To the point of the motion today, let me be clear to the House that the China of 2020 is not the China of 2016. There will clearly be areas where we will challenge China, for example, when it comes to human rights, as we have been doing, not only on our own but with a number of partners and allies around

the world. There will be areas where we will co-exist with all our respective interests. There might be areas where it would be in the best interest and common good of the planet to co-operate to a certain extent, for example, when it comes to climate change and global health.

I do believe in engagement. That is part of the long tradition of foreign policy in Canada. All members in the House should join. When it comes to foreign policy, maybe I am an optimist or a real believer that we can do things together, but I wish we could join together on these big questions, because that is in the national interest of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in this debate after the speeches from my Conservative colleagues and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

This is another motion similar to what we have come to expect from our Conservative friends. It is a motion that I would say is coming out of left field. It is a rather unexpected motion. I think that the phrase “left field” is quite appropriate in this case because the Conservatives are giving themselves another opportunity to raise the spectre of communism. They have this urge, this fantasy, I would even call it, to harp on the idea that communism must be condemned.

Members will recall that Stephen Harper's government wanted to erect a monument to the victims of communism, as though communism were the only authoritarian regime in human history that has generated a certain number of victims, and as though Canada itself had lived under the yoke of communism, which is not the case, thank goodness. They are always obsessing over the Chinese Communist Party and the dire threat it poses to Canada, Canadians and the entire world.

A few moments ago during questions and comments with the minister, our NDP colleague rightly pointed out that China is definitely not the only country in the world with an authoritarian regime. It is definitely not the only country that openly violates human rights. It is definitely not the only country that tries to unduly influence events in other countries, including Canada.

What is perhaps a little different about China, however, is the fact that western states have often facilitated China's emergence as a superpower and that China aspires to play a predominant, if not dominant, role in international politics. Consequently, the motion moved by our friends in the official opposition raises some very legitimate concerns.

Business of Supply

China aspires to a certain role and is taking action to play that role on the world stage. One need only think of the 5G network, which we discussed. I will come back to that in a few moments. China has also developed an entire network in what is known as the new silk road, a network of client states, a network of states that are beholden to the government in Beijing on a whole series of internal decisions or economically. This even includes some European countries, not just countries in Africa or South East Asia. We are talking about certain European countries where the financial influence of the People's Republic of China has become central and decisive and will have an impact on the decisions made by a number of countries all over the world. We must not bury our heads in the sand and ignore this situation, because it is a reality.

Driven by its ambitions, China is engaging in a type of diplomacy that is truly unique in the context of the long tradition of diplomacy in the history of international relations, an extremely aggressive and coercive diplomacy, the kind of diplomacy where a country will even go as far as to take foreign citizens hostage in order to put pressure on their government's decisions.

That is why we cannot take all of this lightly.

• (1110)

That is why the House decided last December to form a special committee to study the Canada-China relationship in order to determine what has led to its deterioration and the motivations behind the decisions that Beijing is making against Canada. Examples include the unjustified imprisonment and detention of two Canadian citizens and the imposition of retaliatory economic measures. All this is completely unjustified. What could possibly be causing the People's Republic of China to behave this way against Canada? Through a motion moved by our friends in the Conservative Party, we formed a committee to look at all of this.

While we are studying all this, however, the Conservative Party comes along with a motion that presumes that the committee's findings are a foregone conclusion. I understand that there is evidence in the motion, and I will come back to that. However, beyond that evidence, there is something that makes me a bit uneasy. In December, the Conservative Party put us, as parliamentarians, in a position where we had to decide whether or not we would create a new committee to examine the Canada-China relationship. We said that might make sense, that we might need to reflect on it and study it at greater length. We decided to support the motion and create that committee.

Now that the committee's work is under way, however, the Conservatives are saying that the motion that we adopted in December is not enough and that they want the government to do more right away. The government has not been standing idly by, because even before the committee finished its work, it announced that it was going to unveil a new policy regarding our relationship with the People's Republic of China. We are currently in the process of examining that, and we may have some suggestions and recommendations for the government.

Yesterday, the Minister of Immigration appeared before the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations. It was a very interesting meeting, but it left me unsatisfied as a parliamentarian. One of the reasons we invited the Minister of Immigration to appear was

the urgent situation regarding Hong Kong. There are defenders of democracy in Hong Kong whose freedom, safety and very lives are being jeopardized by the enforcement of the national security law. The committee found that Canada needs to react and do something to provide a safe haven for these defenders of freedom.

Yesterday, the minister rattled off a whole series of pre-planned answers about how mechanisms already exist for welcoming refugees. However, this is a completely extraordinary situation, and we could suddenly end up with an unprecedented influx of refugees here in Canada. Until it is proven otherwise, they will be told that there are mechanisms in place to deal with this type of situation, but in fact, there are not. That is why the committee focused on the situation in Hong Kong in particular, and that is why we asked the Minister of Immigration to appear yesterday.

There are things to do and things we need to consider. We could talk ad nauseam about human rights violations by the People's Republic of China, especially against religious minorities. We have heard some horrendous stories about entire communities being sent to concentration camps, where sterilization policies are enforced to wipe them out. This is called genocide. Our colleagues on the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, which includes the member for Lac-Saint-Jean, have recognized this as genocide. I think we need to call a spade a spade.

• (1115)

However, this debate is not about the safety of people in the People's Republic of China. We are discussing how the People's Republic of China poses a threat to people in this country, to Quebecers. This is what we need to look at.

Is this reflection premature? Are we putting the cart before the horse, since we have a committee actively looking into this issue? I have my own opinion on the matter, and I think I have already expressed it. I do think that this is a little premature.

Once again, the Conservatives are forcing us to take a stance. Whether or not this is premature is not at issue in this debate because, like it or not, we are being forced to take a stance. Let us do just that.

Here is the motion moved by our friends in the Conservative Party:

That, given that (i) the People's Republic of China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, is threatening Canada's national interest and its values, including Canadians of Chinese origin within Canada's borders, (ii) it is essential that Canada have a strong and principled foreign policy backed by action in concert with its allies, the House call upon the government to: (a) make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network within 30 days of the adoption of this motion; and (b) develop a robust plan, as Australia has done, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada and its increasing intimidation of Canadians living in Canada, and table it within 30 days of the adoption of this motion.

Business of Supply

Before I dive into the details, I just want to say that every time our Conservative friends move a motion like this one, I cannot help but think they might be trying to make the government look bad. Maybe I am just being a little paranoid because we know there are a lot of conspiracy theorists around these days, or maybe I am making assumptions about the Conservative Party's true intentions, but it seems to me that 30 days is both an extremely tight deadline and an extremely long period of time.

Take the 5G network as an example. I assume that the Canadian government has already begun thinking about this issue to some degree and that it is not surprised today to be asked what it has decided with regard to 5G. I also assume the government is not surprised that we are asking whether it has reflected on the issue of the undue influence of the People's Republic of China within Canada. Quite honestly, between my colleagues, myself and the fence post, if the government has been caught with its pants down today, we have a big problem. If the government has not yet started thinking about these fundamental issues, we are in trouble.

A 30-day deadline may seem really tight, but it may also seem quite long if we assume that the government has already done its homework on these matters. If it has done its homework, we can then assume that it should be in a position to deliver. When the government says the Conservatives are being unreasonable by allowing only 30 days, I have to wonder whether this means that the Liberals are not entirely ready to deal with these matters, and if that is the case, that really worries me. If the deadline is far too tight and it really puts the government in a tough spot, it is because it is incapable of delivering.

I would now like to take a moment to look at the 5G network. I mentioned conspiracy theorists earlier. I do not want to use that term in a pejorative or derogatory way, but some of our constituents sincerely believe that the 5G network poses a threat to their fundamental rights and their privacy. When we consider Huawei's attitude around the world, their concerns are understandable.

• (1120)

We know that Huawei was caught with the African Union and accused of passing on information. China has passed a national intelligence law that requires all companies to collaborate on the People's Republic of China's national security. Chinese authorities swear by all that is holy that this law does not have extraterritorial reach. However, we have our doubts because we now know that the new national security law for Hong Kong does apply extraterritorially. Does a Chinese company have a responsibility to contribute to Chinese national security in its foreign operations? In light of what happened with the African Union, the answer is yes.

On that issue, the minister talked about national security and intelligence services. The Five Eyes, of which Canada is a member, also includes the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. These five countries co-operate on their intelligence activities. The other four countries have already decided that Huawei is out because it is too dangerous. Again, however, it seems that Canada is reluctant to upset Beijing.

Most of the experts who have appeared before the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations so far have said that ingratiation and appeasement have had no effect on a political regime of this

nature because the only thing it understands is forcefulness, in other words, a puffed-out chest and an assertive tone. That is what the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand did. Canada is lagging behind this group of allies since its government still does not know what it is doing and is keeping Canadian businesses in uncertainty by failing to tell them whether or not it will choose Huawei technology.

The 30 days allotted in the motion is a very reasonable timeline for the government to make a decision, and I think the time has come for a decision. Canadians and Quebeckers have serious concerns and expect the government to make that decision.

I now want to talk about the other point, which is the undue influence of Chinese authorities on Canadian soil.

Based on all of the evidence we have heard, we know beyond any reasonable doubt that the People's Republic of China is using agents on Canadian soil to intimidate people who are protesting the Beijing regime and intimidate people of Chinese origin who are here in Canada.

Earlier, one of our Conservative colleagues asked the minister a question about the action taken in other states and about what is happening in Canada. Has the Canadian government been looking into this issue and does it plan to propose a policy? Will the Canadian government continue to tolerate the undue influence of foreign states, in particular the People's Republic of China, on its soil? Is it prepared to do something, or does it need a push from the Conservative Party's motion and its 30-day deadline?

• (1125)

This is why I asked the minister whether he supported our Conservative colleagues' motion, because everything the minister said was quite relevant. However, we still do not know whether the Liberals will support the motion or what justification they will use if they choose to vote against it. No matter what the government decides, we need to know whether it is prepared to act on these two issues. Either way, we need to know.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question on the Five Eyes and the interaction with the Canadian federal government.

Does the member think that the government should take action quicker than within 30 days? The member talked back and forth about whether it is too soon or too late. If he could wave a magic wand, does he think the government should take immediate action?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, in an ideal world, I would imagine that the government would already be prepared and in a position to speak to its policy on these two issues. In an ideal world, it would be unthinkable that the government would not be prepared and that it would not be ready to respond to these issues.

That is why I am waiting to hear from the minister whether or not the government will support the motion. If the government decides to vote against the motion because 30 days is not long enough—which could be the case if it were not ready—there is cause for concern.

There really is nothing new about the debate surrounding Huawei or the undue influence of the People's Republic of China in Canada. Has the government studied these issues? If it has, it should be ready. If not, that is worrisome.

• (1130)

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech. I really enjoyed it. I think that he addressed quite a few issues and I would like to respond to two of them.

First, have we started thinking about it? Obviously, we have. I think that, as parliamentarians, we need to trust Canada's agencies, which have been working on these issues for a long time. The phenomena that members have spoken about are nothing new, and our agencies are aware of them. Great national security professionals have been working on these issues for a long time.

The real question is whether it is in the best interest of Canada and its national security to impose an arbitrary deadline, as does today's motion, which was moved by a party that has suddenly decided that such a deadline takes precedence over national security. I think that if we were to ask Canadians this question, their answer would be clear: National security is far more important than a motion moved by an opposition party to impose an arbitrary deadline that does not take into account our intelligence services, discussions with our allies or discussions with those who supply or use this equipment.

I would therefore like to ask my colleague whether it would not be wiser to suggest that this action be taken as soon as possible. Yes, the government has considered these issues, but I do not think that an arbitrary deadline is the answer to matters of national security.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I have full confidence in our national security agencies. The problem is that the pandemic makes it possible to do a lot of things in the name of national security. That is why we need oversight mechanisms in a democracy, including parliamentary oversight.

Parliament, however, was suspended for months, then prorogued, so it was unable to perform its oversight function. Moreover, the government set up a parliamentary committee on public and national security, of which I became a member after undergoing a security investigation to get the necessary security clearance. However, the committee has not met since October 21, 2019.

To get back to the issue of oversight, it is important to find out exactly what is happening in our national security agencies. I find that the concept of national security is a catch-all that can be used to justify pretty much anything. That is not how things work in a democracy.

Business of Supply

If the government is serious about national security and trusting our agencies, it needs to restore the bodies tasked with ensuring civil and parliamentary oversight of our national security agencies.

I would like to conclude—

The Deputy Speaker: We will continue with questions and comments.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, certainly the Chinese government's attack on Hong Kong is very concerning. The attack on minority groups such as the Uighurs is very concerning.

In Canada, though, one of the things that concerns me is that our Parliament has not spoken up about or dealt with the proliferation of illegal fentanyl labs, which have caused such horrific death and destruction in community after community across this country.

Thanks to international pressure in May 2019, China finally made fentanyl illegal, but we know that there are hundreds of labs across the country in China. They are using the various ingredients, hiding through elaborate corporate networks and moving these products through the dark web. They are having a disastrous impact on the lives and health of Canadians.

Why is it that this Parliament has not spoken up on the crisis of the illegal Chinese fentanyl labs? Why are we not working with our allies to shut this down and stop the horrific opioid epidemic, which is causing so much heartache in our communities?

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I will be very brief, Mr. Speaker.

I think that our colleague is touching on a very interesting point. As I said at the beginning of my speech, the Conservatives made choices in their motion. They chose to focus on two specific issues. I mentioned that we could have discussed any number of other issues, but that the Conservative motion limits us to these two.

To answer the minister, our Conservative colleagues told us that they were open to amendments. Since the start of this minority parliament, I have had the unfortunate impression that the government's default position is to vote against opposition motions simply because they come from the opposition.

If the government is serious about a reasonable time frame such as “as soon as possible,” let it table an amendment. Our colleagues are open to amendments. That way, we could come to a consensus on the motion.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the motion has a 30-day deadline. That is reasonable, because, a year ago, the government announced that it would be submitting a new policy on China. In my view, any new policy on China should include a decision concerning Huawei and a plan to settle the matter of Chinese operations on Canadian soil.

Business of Supply

What does the hon. member think?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I thought I had answered that question in my speech.

Let us summarize what I said in greater detail. Is the 30-day deadline reasonable? The government says that we should not pick dates out of a hat, and that we should act “as soon as possible.” I agree with my colleague that “as soon as possible” is not in six months or a year and a half. The government made announcements, and we expect it to make decisions. The other Five Eyes allies expect Canada to stand with them based on shared information about Huawei. Many Chinese Canadians expect Canada to take domestic action.

In other words, let us not get overly excited about the 30-day deadline. If we can agree on something else, let us agree and stop this partisan game in which we look daggers at each other and vote against the opposition's motions and for the government's motions, or vice versa. The minister has an opinion about the deadline and he shared it. Let us propose an amendment and, if the Conservative Party agrees, we will all be in agreement and can present a common front in dealing with our friends in the People's Republic of China.

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief.

I really appreciated my colleague's entire speech because, as parliamentarians, we cannot specialize in every field.

That being said, I clearly understand that there is a time issue, that we have our heads in the sand and that we are lagging behind other countries.

I would like to ask my colleague a question. He spoke of reasons why the government does not want to offend Beijing. Can he elaborate? Why does the government refuse to act for fear of offending Beijing?

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I said at the beginning of my speech that, in a way, western governments had created a monster. In the early 1990s, the People's Republic of China was an economic Eldorado because of its low manufacturing costs. Everyone wanted to do business in the People's Republic of China.

Many companies ran into trouble because the regulatory framework is so dreadful and ended up losing everything, but we created a monster, and now the monster wants to devour us. Some governments, including the Government of Canada, it appears, have not yet realized that the monster wants to devour us, so they try to placate it. They think that if we are nice to the monster the monster may be nice to us but, as we have seen, that does not work.

The experts who appeared before the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations told us again and again: We need to get tough. I think that today we have the opportunity to get tough with the People's Republic of China.

• (1140)

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join today in the opposition day motion presented by the member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

Without accepting everything in the preamble, the issues are set out pretty clearly. The motion is calling on the House to do two things: make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network within 30 days, and develop a robust plan, as Australia has done, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada and its increasing intimidation of Canadians living in Canada. It also calls for it to be tabled in the House within 30 days. Aside from the timing, which is fairly precise for an opposition day motion, I want to say that these are two issues that have been outstanding in this country for quite some time, and I think the time has come to bring them to a head.

At our Canada-China committee, we have heard lots of evidence of intimidation of Canadians by agents of the Chinese government in one form or another. Concerns have been raised about Canada's lack of a proper response. We have also heard of the confusion that has ensued as a result of people being approached, intimidated and sometimes threatened, whether obviously or subtly, and when they go to report this matter to the authorities they do not get a positive response. We had direct evidence from individuals passing on this information. They talked to people at CSIS and were told to go to the RCMP. When they talked to people at the RCMP, they were told to go to CSIS. CSIS then told them to go to Global Affairs. Essentially, it is the proverbial runaround.

I know there have been comments made by the Minister of Public Safety about this in the House recently, but there seems to be a lack of a coherent plan as to how to deal with this. Obviously, thought must be given to this. The agencies of government are well aware of this. The government itself is well aware of this. There seems to be something missing here with respect to the kind of response Canadians would expect on a matter of such great importance and concern to Canadians, particularly Canadians of Chinese descent who are living in Canada. These are citizens of Canada, or in some cases students or international students who are here, or people who are engaged in political activities within Canada who are being intimidated in their home country by agents of a foreign country, in this case China.

It is a problem no matter who it would be. This is not particularly aimed at China. If there is a need for a response by government, it should be a response that applies to any country. We are not looking for an expectation that there is a China-specific rule here. The examples that have been brought forward are related to China in this instance, and should be rules of general application.

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For example, it has been said in the Canada-China committee that legislative approaches have been taken by other countries. I know Australia in particular has been singled out in the motion, but that does not need to be the exact model. The clear point is that other countries have taken legislative action. The United States has a particular strong piece of legislation dealing with the rules of the operation of foreign missions in the United States. Action has been taken under those rules against individuals, in particular from China, using that legislation, getting a fairly quick response and showing clearly that this kind of behaviour is not going to be tolerated. We do not see examples like this within Canada. We do not see a clear indication by government that action is being taken where it is needed to ensure this kind of activity cannot happen.

The Canada-China committee was set up nearly a year ago and has been studying this. We have been looking at these questions. We have been hearing from witnesses. We have been getting plenty of information to show there is a need for an effective government response, which is lacking.

● (1145)

Witnesses come to our committee and say they feel that CSIS does not have the enforcement power that it ought to have. They feel that the RCMP, at the local level, are ill informed as to how to deal with this question and do not really have answers for people. People feel abandoned by their government in circumstances where either threats were made against them or there was intimidation toward them and their families who remain in China. That is something we have to do something specifically about. People need to know that their government is prepared to respond. That is what is missing from this picture right now.

We support the notion of seeing the government lay out a plan quickly, so that people can be assured that the government is prepared to respond, in a positive and necessary way, to the kind of intimidation and interference that we are seeing. We are seeing it at other levels as well. We are seeing interference, and potential interference, in universities. We have heard some evidence on that in the Canada-China committee, and there seems to be a growing concern that there is undue influence in that respect. However, whatever involvement there might be in terms of research support, it is something that ought to be transparent and open and not subject to the kind of pressure and concerns we have seen being raised.

As well, the decision being talked about, thought about and clearly studied on what to do with Huawei has to be brought to a head. Clearly, the government has been looking at this, or says it is looking at it, and we would like to know the results of the investigation and the results of the concerns that have been raised. We have seen them very broadly raised internationally. We have seen other governments take action. Other members of the Five Eyes have decided that they are not going to allow Huawei to participate in 5G. That, obviously, has to have some influence on decisions made by Canada.

I think the U.K. decided that it could get around it at one point, but then changed its mind. This is something that weighs heavily in the mix if we are going to continue to have the kind of relationship that we need at the international level and know what is happening in the intelligence world. We need to be as prepared as possible to

deal with that, and if the government has a workaround on it, it had better tell us. It is something that the U.K. at least made a decision on, based on having a workaround, but obviously it changed its mind.

There is the recent change that was brought about as a result of decisions by the United States to prevent certain elements of the 5G network from being exported to China, whether for commercial or other reasons. This is perhaps irrelevant in some respect, but not necessarily irrelevant to the decision that Canada has to make. If the Huawei capability is interfered with by this technical matter, then that is a consideration as well.

We also have mounting evidence of the ability of Huawei to act in a monopolistic way, with special support from the Chinese government in terms of investment, capability and providing it with a near monopoly market within China. This allows it to grow exponentially and act in a manner in the rest of the world that is highly competitive, perhaps unfairly. It has been assessed to be unfair to competition with other enterprises, and is in a position of having control over a market that is extremely important, from a strategic and industrial point of view, within Canada. If we become overwhelmed and dominated by the Huawei enterprise system, then we are vulnerable, through its control over the future of communications and technology to a large degree within Canada, to the exclusion of other players and to more robust interaction with different enterprises.

● (1150)

There is research and development that goes with that. Innovation goes with that. Opportunity and alternatives need to be available for companies and enterprises, and for the free movement of ideas and control.

We are now in the virtual world. We are talking in a virtual world. We are dependent, for our parliamentary democracy, on the electronic equipment we are using right now to operate our Parliament. It is also penetrating totally into the industrial world, the commercial world and the transportation world. It is an extremely important strategic element and infrastructure for our future. That is something that we have to take very seriously.

Frankly, we cannot take the kind of chances that are open if we go with Huawei as a major player, and perhaps the only player in a sense, if it is able to meet the competitive price for our upcoming 5G network. We have to take all of those things into consideration and make a decision. The decision starts to lay very heavily against Huawei's participation for all of those reasons.

Other members have pointed this out, but in addition, we have the issue of Chinese government law, which requires economic enterprises to respond to information requirements if the government so decides. They tried to downplay that, but the law is the law, and the potential is there. Whether they would choose to exercise it or not is not necessarily something we can place a bet on.

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At this particular point in time, we are seeing a relationship with China that is far less than wholesome. We have two Canadian citizens who have been arbitrarily detained in China for almost two years now as a result of, and in response to, Canada acting in accordance with its legal treaty obligations to the United States on an extradition matter. We are using and following our laws in an open and transparent manner, yet we have a response by China that is cruel, arbitrary and clearly not in keeping with the kind of relationship that Canada should have with any of its international interlocutors.

We have had a very strong trade relationship with China throughout all of this. There is a bond of trust that appears to have been broken quite dramatically as a result of these actions. We heard a response from the Chinese ambassador to Canadians' complaint about human rights and the imposition of a state security law on Hong Kong. This was in contravention of treaty obligations and international obligations. We had been asked, back in 1997, to support the treaty obligations and help make them work.

We now see the Chinese government is not following through on those. There is a loss of faith here that is going to take an awful lot of activity, behaviour and change to try to mend. It is not going to happen soon enough to allow us to trust the use of a Chinese technology that is so vital and important to the future of how our economy will operate, how our communication system will operate and how our country will operate in these circumstances.

The time has come for Canada to make a decision on this. We suspect, as perhaps most Canadians suspect, that the government may have made a decision, but for whatever reason, it is deciding it is not an opportune time to make it known publicly. I think the time has come for us to see that. We do not need to be left in the dark about this issue. It is something that has to be faced. It is holding up investment and progress on the development of the 5G network.

• (1155)

The Huawei decision is affecting the economic activity and investment activity in our country. I know some in the telecom industry have moved forward with other platforms, and I think that is to be expected, but there are other investment decisions that may be very important for getting broadband all across this country as quickly as possible. It has been brought strongly to the forefront as a result of the COVID situation we are dealing with and the obvious need for it. A great divide is occurring between people who have access to broadband and the Internet and people who do not when it comes to access to education, educational materials, working from home and economic activity. This needs to be fixed, and certainty needs to be part of it. It is desirable.

We see in industrial activities, including in automobile factories, the kind of investments that might occur and will occur. However, will they occur in Canada? We are not certain what the platforms are going to be. We see this in the auto industry, which is extremely important for parts of Canada. I know many members of Parliament have concerns about this in their ridings and regions, and it is extremely important to the economy of Canada that we equally participate in innovation in automobile technology, whether with regard to autonomous vehicles or advances in manufacturing techniques.

All of that is highly dependent on computers and computing technology, so this type of investment is extremely important.

This has to be brought to a head. It is on the table; it is already there. However, a decision needs to be made, and if there is a very good reason not to make the decision now, the government should come forward and tell us what it knows so far and what is of concern and bring it forward.

I will raise, as a final point, something that we have not heard from anyone. I understand from some of the questioning earlier that some Conservative members of Parliament may not be familiar with what their own government did in making a foreign investment protection agreement with China in 2014. I have not done an analysis of the consequences of that legislation, but I am hoping that the Conservatives, when they speak, will tell us what they think the consequences would be. The government should also tell us what it has determined based on an analysis of that, because there seems to be protections for China that we do not receive. They are not reciprocal and are, in fact, fairly secretive and not transparent, and they may have extremely negative consequences on issues like Huawei. I would like the government to explain that as well. It looks like a deterrent for us to do what we may have to do for our national interests, our national security interests and our national economic interests.

For both of these issues, the issue of dealing with the interference and intimidation and the issue of the activities of China's government in particular, we need a legislative response. We need a direct response about what the government plans to do to deal with this in a comprehensive way. This should be on the table very shortly. I am hoping the government can give us some outline today as to what might be included in that, and will ensure that this happens very quickly so that Canadians can feel safe in their own country from foreign influence, intimidation and threats from representatives of other governments. Both of these things are important, and I will end by saying that we support the motion.

• (1200)

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this morning, the minister stated that if Canadians noticed any type of interference from the Chinese government, they should go to the RCMP and report it immediately and the RCMP would take action. In his speech, the member said that the RCMP was asking to be involved at the committee level in these discussions on how to deal with Chinese interference at the country level and at the local level. This seems rather disjointed in the thought process of how we should tackle this.

Why is the government delaying these types of decisions and not getting together a plan on how we are going to approach China in the future?

Mr. Jack Harris: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question.

The focus needs to be changed. The focus needs to be brought to a head. Why they are waiting is something the Liberals have to explain. This is an opportunity for them to do it, which is one reason this motion is quite timely.

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We have heard testimony in recent weeks, before the Canada-China committee, that this is a problem. We heard from Amnesty International a couple of months ago, which outlined the difficulty people are having. They are going to one agency and being told to go to another, only to be told to go to the government. This clearly underscores the lack of a cohesive and comprehensive response. The government has to make the response clear to ensure that Canadians who are affected by this have a single point of contact so they know where to go and what they are going to get when they get there.

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 understand that in all likelihood the NDP will be supporting the motion. My question is related to the time constraints. Does the member have any issues with the time constraints?

He talked about the automobile industry, which is so vitally important. All we have to do is talk to some of my Ontario colleagues and members in all regions to recognize how important it is for certain sectors of our economy and so much more. There are security issues also.

The concern I have is about the timing obligation. Does the NDP have any concerns with respect to that aspect of the motion, which says, "within 30 days"?

Mr. Jack Harris: Mr. Speaker, we are calling on the government to make a decision within 30 days. That is what the motion does. The 30 days, I will acknowledge, is rather arbitrary, but it does convey a sense of urgency.

This has been on the front burner, not the back burner, because it has been top of mind. If we read the newspapers and follow events around the world, governments have been dealing with this issue. Other governments have found a solution and have come to a conclusion. It is time for Canada to do so as well. I suspect the government does have a decision, but for some reason it is holding off on it.

• (1205)

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

The motion talks about developing a robust plan, as Australia has done, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada and the intimidation of Canadians living in Canada.

Last year, La Presse reported that groups right here in Canada had prevented LGBTQ2 activists from Hong Kong from participating in Montreal's pride parade. There was intimidation on social media. This is a very serious and important issue.

Does my colleague consider that unacceptable? What can we do to prevent that kind of intimidation on social networks?

[English]

Mr. Jack Harris: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question is very important because we have seen this not only in suggestions of participation in public events, but in demonstrations that have taken place in Canada by pro-democracy advocates. They have been at-

tacked by large groups of counterprotesters, apparently at the behest of the Chinese government or Chinese agents. Intimidation, cyber-intimidation and so on go with that.

We need the government to make it very clear that this kind of interference is unacceptable. We also need it to provide legal mechanisms and enforcement. It should participate. Instead of standing by and watching things happen, it should actually get engaged and do something about it, identifying people who are breaking the law and, if necessary, making laws that need to be made to ensure that this kind of intimidation does not go on.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it was a breath of fresh air to hear someone in this place reference the Canada-China foreign investment protection agreement, which I have reviewed. I do not think the motion before us is allowable under the terms of the Canada-China FIPA. Acting on this motion is not allowable under its terms.

Under Stephen Harper, with a vote that did not happen in Parliament but solely in cabinet, we gave away the store. In the words of Professor Gus Van Harten, who wrote a book on it, we were *Sold Down the Yangtze*. I do not know if we can even begin to imagine the secretive and sticky-tape restrictions on us as a country in saying that we would not allow Huawei to do anything that we would not allow a Canadian corporation to do.

I thank my colleague for raising this, and I encourage all members in this place to familiarize themselves with how we have already surrendered our sovereignty to the People's Republic of China, by way of Stephen Harper's signature.

Mr. Jack Harris: Madam Speaker, if the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is right, and I am afraid she may well be, that this is probably one of the most outrageous actions by any government in Canada with respect to its sovereignty, it begs one question: What does the government have to say about it? Many of its representatives were here when that happened. I was here when it happened. We objected very strongly to the secrecy, to the commitment to secrecy, to the giveaway of natural resources implicit in it and to everything else.

There is a particular consequence with respect to Huawei. We may not be able to act in our national interests without significant repercussions, and that would be a terrible travesty.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for asking really tough questions of the government.

The motion today comes from the Conservatives. As the previous questioner said, it was the Conservatives, in 2014, under the Stephen Harper government, who made the FIPA trade deal with China against the will of many indigenous communities, including the Nuu-chah-nulth in my riding. They were concerned about their rights, the environment and security. All of this was brought forward.

Does my colleague believe that because of this agreement, Canada could potentially be facing a very expensive lawsuit? The government could choose to allow involvement in 5G networks, including Huawei's, and there are security risks associated with that. If my colleague could answer that, it would be fabulous.

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• (1210)

Mr. Jack Harris: Madam Speaker, that is an extremely important question. I recollect some of the debate and discussion going on at the time, as well as the concerns that were raised and ignored by the then government.

I do not know the exact answer to this question because it is complex. I think we would like to hear some answers today from the Conservatives about what they think they did to the country's interests with the passage of that legislation. We also want to know what kind of analysis the government has of the current circumstances.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am grateful to speak today in support of this motion. I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

I want to thank the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for bringing forward this important motion calling on the government for real action. The need for the motion is clear. The Liberal government has not taken the threats from the Chinese government to Canada and to Canadians seriously and so far, has failed to act decisively and forcefully on this urgent public safety issue.

Canadians have been arbitrarily detained in China. Officials from the Communist Party of China and their government harass, bully and intimidate Canadian citizens here on Canadian soil and around the world. Canadian citizens living abroad, especially in Hong Kong, have faced an erosion of civil liberties and increasing control and threats from China.

When the world needed information and access from the Chinese government at the start of the pandemic in order to protect our own citizens, China's regime presented obfuscation and delays. Every day, the Canadian government, businesses and civilian networks face intellectual property theft and data breaches by China. Enough is enough. It is long past time for Canada to take the threat from the Chinese government seriously and for the Canadian government to take action to protect our own citizens and our national interest.

Despite all the evidence and warnings, and months, even years, that have passed, the Liberal government has still not made a decision to ban Huawei from involvement in Canada's 5G infrastructure. This motion calls on the government to make a decision on Huawei within 30 days. Because of the government's repeated delays, it seems there is no other choice left for us but to try to force the government to take it seriously through this motion.

If Huawei were permitted to build Canada's 5G infrastructure, it would give the Chinese government sweeping backdoor access to confidential information from Canadians, from Canadian businesses and even to secret government information. This cannot be allowed to happen.

Alarming, the government's delay in making a decision puts Canada at odds with the rest of the countries in our Five Eyes intelligence-sharing alliance with the United States, Australia, New Zealand and the U.K., each of which has now either banned or restricted the use of Huawei 5G equipment. The Canadian government's passivity and delay is mind-boggling. Presumably, it accesses the same intelligence as our free and democratic allies around

the world and every one of them have come to the same conclusion that Huawei is not to be trusted. Therefore, the question is: Why has the Canadian government not done so? What is holding the Liberals back from making a decision? Protecting Canadian citizens at home and abroad should be the paramount responsibility of the Canadian government, its number one priority.

Others in the Five Eyes community caution that if Canada does not ban Huawei technology, it will put Canada's intelligence sharing and protection with our allies in jeopardy. It is galling that the government would risk relationships with our closest allies and Canada's own security and sovereignty in order to placate the Chinese government, but that is why we are debating this crucial motion today.

Canadian intelligence agencies are taking the threat from the Chinese government seriously. Just last week, a Globe and Mail report showed that CSIS has confirmed that Chinese state security officials are operating on Canadian soil, targeting members of Canada's Chinese community in an attempt to suppress criticisms of the Communist government and its leader.

One of those campaigns, Operation Fox Hunt, is directed by Beijing's ministry of public security itself and has been going on for years, since 2014. A CSIS spokesperson said, "When individuals in Canada are subjected to such harassment, manipulation or intimidation by foreign states seeking to gather support for or mute criticism of their policies, these activities constitute a threat to Canada's sovereignty and to the safety of Canadians."

Therefore, the Liberals must do more than share words of concern. That is why this motion also calls for Canada to develop a comprehensive plan, similar to that of Australia, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada, its increasing intimidation of Canadians here and around the world, and to table it within 30 days.

The proof is there. The intelligence is clear. Canadians want and need action from the government in order to protect citizens, to keep them safe and protect our values. If the government already has a plan, then it owes it to Canadians to show how it is taking this seriously. It should act quickly to assure our political, economic and strategic free and democratic allies around the world of the same. The threat posed to Canada from China is wide-ranging and Canadians are right to be concerned.

• (1215)

At the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, my Conservative colleagues and I already moved a motion that was adopted. It called for the committee to examine the influence of hostile foreign entities in Canada and the abuse of Canadians by foreign national regimes in Canada and abroad, along with cases and evidence of hostile and distressed acquisition of Canadian assets by state-owned enterprises, corrupt foreign regimes or organized crime organizations.

Because we cannot seem to get concrete answers from Liberal ministers, the motion says that the committee will hear from the RCMP and CSIS on the measures taken to prevent security violations of Canadians of national economic interests, including theft or acquisition of sensitive technologies and current measures and potential future actions to prevent state-backed and corporate espionage, intellectual property and trade secret theft.

The reality is that China is advancing a plan of economic imperialism throughout vulnerable developing countries, but also in Canada through increasing ownership of resources and economic and intellectual property interference. It is not only the Chinese government guilty of campaigns of economic and political interference in Canada.

The Communist government of China plays by an entirely different set of rules. Today's motion would require the Canadian government to act urgently and to present its plan to combat China's growing foreign operations. China's communist regime does not respect the rule of law and the independence of the judicial process.

The Chinese government's ambassador to Canada has gone so far as to threaten Canadian citizens living in Hong Kong. He said that if Canada grants asylum to pro-democracy activists from Hong Kong it would jeopardize the "health and safety" of the 300,000 Canadians who live there. That is a clear threat. The ambassador must retract his remarks and issue a public apology, because a threat to Canadians anywhere is a threat to Canadians everywhere. This House passed a unanimous motion condemning the ambassador's remarks, but the Liberals equivocate and delay in response and the ambassador continues to double down.

With enough evidence of illegal Chinese government operations on Canadian soil, and Chinese Canadians and Chinese immigrants to Canada being threatened by Beijing, they and their family members, both in Canada and in China, being threatened with violence and intimidation, these Liberals must go beyond words.

It is a clear violation of Canadian sovereignty and a clear threat to the public safety of Canadians. It is the Government of Canada's duty to do everything in its power to protect its citizens, and that duty to protect extends to Canadians living overseas.

One concrete action is to finally actually make a decision on Huawei and leave no room for doubt or question; to ban it from having anything to do with Canada's 5G infrastructure. The government must put the safety of Canadian citizens first and must put our allies ahead of an aggressive and hostile foreign government.

I encourage all members to support the Conservative motion today and to do what we were elected fundamentally to do, which is

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to put the lives, the interests, the liberty, the rights and the safety of Canadians first and foremost beyond all else.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to go back to something raised by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands earlier, and ask the member if her party did an analysis of FIPA and its potential impact on the banning of Huawei from our 5G network, and if so, if, in her opinion, whether it proves to be a constraint in terms of our actions on our 5G network.

• (1220)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, it is not a constraint on our action or on the ability for the Liberal government to take action and to make a decision on banning Huawei from our 5G infrastructure.

What deeply concerns me is our opposition colleagues continuing to focus on the past or unfortunately doing as they often do, which is blaming Stephen Harper instead of talking about the pressing, urgent public safety threat and threats to national security, to the public safety of all Canadians, to the rights, lives and liberty of Canadians here at home and around the world, including all the threats posed by China to our businesses, security networks and economy.

That is what opposition members should actually be focused on. We should be united in calling on the Liberal government to finally make a decision that our free and democratic allies around the world have done, in some cases two years ago already, and allow there to be no mistake and no questions about the Government of Canada's position on China.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, there has been a lot of misinformation about the Canada-China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement. This is an agreement that the Government of Canada struck with dozens of countries. It is an agreement that other OECD countries have struck with dozens of countries. What the FIPA says is that a foreign firm can sue Ottawa only if they receive different treatment compared to that of a Canadian-owned counterpart.

For example, if Nokia or Ericsson were subject to article 7 of China's national intelligence law, which requires Huawei to support, assist and co-operate with China's intelligence activities, the Government of Canada would arguably treat it in exactly the same way. Therefore, Huawei is not being singled out for special treatment here. If any other company that provides this kind of 5G telecommunications networking equipment was subject to article 7 of China's national intelligence law, it too would be subject to the same restrictions that four of the Five Eyes have placed on Huawei.

This motion that we have presented in the House, and the position of the Conservative Party that the government should ban Huawei, is entirely consistent with the Canada-China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and does not single out Huawei for special treatment any more than it would any other company, regardless of the nationality of its ownership.

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Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my experienced, knowledgeable and principled colleague for clarifying for all members, to a comprehensive and detailed degree, the claims that we are hearing from other opposition members in the House and for refocusing everyone's attention on the point of this motion, and in particular why Conservatives are calling for action and a deadline of 30 days.

It has been over a year since the government said it would be introducing a new framework on China. It said that plan would be publicly introduced this fall by December 21 of this year. Of course, no new framework on China can be complete without a decision on Huawei and a comprehensive plan to counter China's foreign influence operations on Canadian soil.

Once again, I would urge all members of the House to support this Conservative motion and hold this Liberal government to account.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to speak today to such an incredibly important topic.

Today's motion is so important because when it comes to Canada's approach to China, we, like many other western democracies, have simply gotten it wrong. Now, 50 years after establishing diplomatic relations with China, we must collectively, soberly and urgently rethink our approach to the People's Republic of China.

That is why today's motion is so critically important. It represents a long overdue first step to changing that approach. The motion calls for the government, within 30 days, to make a decision on Canada's use of Huawei in our 5G network and to develop a robust plan to combat China's growing foreign operations in Canada and its increasing intimidation of Canadians who live here.

Let me be clear, before we get too far, that this is not about Chinese citizens, it is not about the people living in China; it is about the People's Republic of China, the Communist Party of China.

How did we get our approach to China so very wrong? Overall, we collectively, as western nations, Canada included, made the assumption that China would eventually liberalize, uphold the rules of international order and co-operate with the democratic world because it saw the benefits of capitalist economics. However, we were wrong.

Instead, China has emerged as one of the most powerful, authoritarian states in history and a major challenger to the liberal world order. Oppression in China is intensifying. It has imposed drastic and far-reaching national security law in Hong Kong. It continues to exploit people in Tibet. It has re-education camps where Uighurs are interned. Those are just a few of various, numerous examples of oppression.

Probably the most disconcerting thing is that these increasingly oppressive acts, once hidden, are now much more blatant and out in the open. The CCP, the Chinese Communist Party's ambitions are not confined within China's borders. They represent an integrated approach across the world, employing social, economic and military means to achieve its ambitions.

That is why today's motion is so important. Our response in Canada must be an integrated and comprehensive approach that recognizes that the threats are not only on foreign soil but they actually happen right here.

Once upon a time Canadians believed that foreign policy was something we did on distant shores. We believed that because we were on this side of the Atlantic, protected and had not really seen drastic or dramatic wars on our shores, foreign policy was something that happened somewhere else, that we were not threatened here at home.

However, that must fundamentally change. The CCP looks to legitimize authoritarianism and seeks greater acceptance of that authoritarianism. It is using means to achieve that end by undermining and eroding democracy right here at home. Many of our democracies, as a result, are hanging in the balance.

Exactly what means is it using? We know about cyber espionage, where it is using social media to influence and to change the minds of our citizens. The People's Liberation Army is hacking and we see intellectual property theft from everything from private corporations to the National Research Council.

• (1225)

We are now aware of Operation Fox Hunt, which is just a simplistic term for saying that Canadians of Chinese background and others are being intimidated and threatened by Chinese agents in Canada. We know of the united front work department, which brags in its training videos about how it has been able to influence elections and find pro-Beijing candidates who take positions in our democracies.

We also know that the Chinese government keeps a list of those people in other countries whom it is able to influence and have power over. We should know whether CEOs of companies or, ourselves, elected officials, and what exactly the Chinese government is thinking where we are in terms of our favourability and susceptibility to Chinese influence.

It is also using powerful economic means by expanding its economic imperialism, or what we call "debt-trap diplomacy", through the one belt and road initiative, where it makes major strategic investments in critical infrastructure like ports, roads, airports and oil and gas industry assets. Then, when countries cannot pay, it takes possession of those assets. Strategic assets allow it to bolster its economy, hold the economies of those countries hostage and ensure it can get goods, people and potentially military assets anywhere in the world.

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It is also using Chinese companies in nations around the world, of which one is the centre of discussion today, Huawei. There is a national intelligence law that states that those companies are mandated to provide intelligence and information to the Chinese government and act in its best interest even when they are on Canadian soil even if that means going around Canadian law to do it. That is frightening and it is a threat not only to our national security but to the rule of law, to democracy and to our social and economic security.

Militarily, the Chinese government is expanding rapidly. We have seen one of its largest operations, where it partnered with Russia, in recent memory, with over 300,000 troops and 36,000 tanks. It has now considered itself a near Arctic state, putting in place a Chinese Arctic policy and targeting our Arctic in Canada. We know that there are Chinese submarines and that it has ambitions for the Northwest Passage, which will be a game changer in the next century. It will allow goods to get around the world by water much more quickly.

Economically, socially and politically we are vulnerable right at home and the Chinese government is working non-stop to place us under threat.

Therefore, what do we do about it? We need to urgently and absolutely rethink our approach.

The good news is we are not alone. Many western democracies around the world are recognizing that it is a greater threat and we need to do something urgently. That is why this plan today is so important.

First, we need a decision on Huawei and it must be banned. Second, and more important, we need a plan to get a plan. We need to be clear-eyed about Chinese ambitions. We need to get more intelligence on just how vulnerable we are. We need to have one integrated comprehensive plan to address these threats. Perhaps we even need a cabinet level position to do that.

The government is saying that it cannot give us a plan, that to get a plan in 30 days is unreasonable. This is an existential threat. We are running out of time. We must do something to protect the citizens on our soil and the values we hold dear at home and abroad to protect the international world order, our democracy, our security and our future.

• (1230)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague talked about the vulnerability we had at home, and I appreciate that. We know Canadians are living in fear here because of the Chinese government's effort to silence dissenting voices in Canada and around the world. We know Canadians are victims of cyberbullying, threats of sexual violence, threats of harm to their family members living in China, racist insults, intimidation and harassment for speaking out against human rights abuses and their advocacy for democracy in China. We see this in Hong Kong right now.

The member talked about rethinking our approach and urgently taking action. What would the member like to see the government do to actively protect Canadians who are being intimidated and harassed by foreign agents in Canada?

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Madam Speaker, I would like to take a moment to thank my hon. colleague for some of the critical work he has done in this area. He understands the sense of urgency, what we are collectively facing and why we need to take urgent action.

We need a comprehensive and integrated plan. The Chinese government has a war on multiple fronts to expand its ambitions. We, unfortunately, are divided here at home, because we have different functional stovepipes that prevent us from looking at this problem from a comprehensive and integrated approach. The first thing we need to do is to look at all the levers simultaneously and come up with a plan that will address it.

People in my riding are afraid to talk to me because of the threats that are coming from the People's Republic of China. It is my responsibility, all our responsibility, to do everything we can to protect them from that.

• (1235)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member's contribution today has been valuable. Obviously, our values and our democracy are extremely important to my constituents, so I want to side with her in speaking for her constituents.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs said that he took very seriously some of these troubling reports of intimidation of Canadian citizens by those operatives on behalf of communist China and that the Minister of Public Safety was seized with the issue as well as various agencies of government. However, the special committee with respect to Canada-China relations, on which I am a member, heard that when people made phone calls to their local police, whether it be RCMP or another authority, they were often told that it was not their job. CSIS has said, on background, that there is no one organizing this work.

The government is saying one thing and the government agencies, which are responsible for protecting our citizens, are doing something separate. What does the member believe needs to happen?

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Madam Speaker, we learned some incredible things when we worked together on the China committee, which is why the special committee on China is so incredibly important.

As parliamentarians, we have now been given that information and the government is lagging. It is long overdue and perpetuating a delegate-and-disappear approach: "Oh, no, that's not me, that's foreign affairs; or that's not me, that's public safety; or that's not me, that's the minister of industry and economic development."

That is why we urgently need a plan and we need that plan to be comprehensive and integrated. We need to look at this problem from all aspects soberly, urgently and do something immediately.

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Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I want to respond, and it is difficult in debate, but the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills put forward a “clarification” of the Canada-China FIPA that does not fit the facts unfortunately. No other foreign investment protection agreements between Canada and other nations include a six-month, secret phase of diplomatic arm-twisting, or sitting on us until we say “uncle”, which is another way of looking at it. We do not have any other agreements that are absent any trade benefits, but are solely investment implementation and promotion sections without benefit for Canadian companies. Nor do we have anything like the Canada-China investment and promotion agreement with respect to the level of secrecy throughout the process.

Does it trouble my hon. colleague that the Conservative motion includes reference to Australia, which is able to take the steps it has taken because it does not have an investment treaty with the People's Republic of China?

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Madam Speaker, no, it does not trouble me because, regardless of where we were in the past, this is where we are today. This is what we know today and we now have an urgent need to do something.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Don Valley West.

I also want to thank the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for bringing forward the motion because I think it is an important debate and an important motion.

I want to start by making a comment on the member's preamble to the action aspects of his motion, which I agree with and will get to in a moment. In point (i) of the motion, it states that:

- (i) the People's Republic of China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, is threatening Canada's national interest and its values, including Canadians of Chinese origin within Canada's borders....

I believe that statement, sadly, is increasingly true, but it was not always that way and I do not believe it has to remain that way. The motion is, in effect, calling out the Chinese leadership. Let us get back to normalizing our relationship and work together like we have done in the past.

I say it was not always that way and I will tell colleagues why. It was Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the former prime minister, who went to China in 1973 and worked to open up a relationship with China and then make that relationship important for both countries.

We have had some considerable background in China. It could be called a “leg-up”. In the country, when then prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau went there, Dr. Norman Bethune, a Canadian, was seen as a Canadian hero among the Chinese population for saving people's lives. Canada, because of Dr. Bethune, had a place in the Chinese culture and the Chinese mind.

An agency that I was involved with in the farm movement, the Canadian Wheat Board, was the first international agency that went to China to open up trade and did it on credit. The Conservatives, I know, during the former Harper government, destroyed the Canadian Wheat Board as a farm marketing board. It has now been bought out by Saudi interests, but that is beside the point. The fact of the matter is that we had an in with China, where that marketing agen-

cy provided credit so that China could feed its people. Eventually those loans were paid back.

Let us not forget the somewhat positive history we have had before this time, despite our relationship being considerably negative today.

I have been to China a number of times. In fact, I also hosted a former ambassador in Prince Edward Island and later hosted a group of Chinese legislators in P.E.I. Out of those meetings, and through some of Prince Edward Island's educational institutions, we were able to build a close working relationship with educational institutions in China. That relationship goes on to this day and is beneficial to citizens in both countries.

I say that because it was not always that way. We need to try to get back to a better relationship of trust. Certainly the arrest of the two Michaels, Mr. Kovrig and Mr. Spavor, and what is happening in Hong Kong gives us plenty of reasons to be concerned and to lose trust in the Chinese leadership. I say to the Chinese leadership that it is at the moment certainly going in the wrong direction.

Before I get to the key recommendations of the motion, I want to give the background of where the government is at on national security, because we kind of overlook that from time to time.

● (1240)

The government's priority remains to protect Canada and Canadians against activities that undermine democratic values, economic interests, sovereignty and overall national security. The government is aware that certain foreign states may conduct themselves in Canada in a manner that is inconsistent with our values.

This threat is not new and not limited to any one country. Governments worldwide have been engaged in efforts to mould public opinion and government policies in other countries to advance their own interests. When this is done in a transparent, peaceful manner within the law, it is called diplomacy or treaty negotiations. When it is covert or clandestine, employs threats or intimidation or consists of lies and disinformation aimed at misleading people, destabilizing the economy or society, or manipulating the democratic process, a red line gets crossed.

It could be the old-fashioned way, with certain intelligence services collecting or stealing political, economic, commercial or military information, but increasingly, the interference is higher tech. Social media has been used to build anxiety, and even hysteria, around sensitive issues. Fake news masquerades as legitimate information.

Several recent reports have highlighted the threat of foreign interference in Canada. For example, a 2019 CSIS public report released on May 20, 2020, states that espionage and foreign-influenced activities “are almost always conducted to further the interests of a foreign state, using both state and non-state entities.” Foreign powers have also attempted to covertly monitor and intimidate Canadian communities to fulfill their own strategic objectives.

Further, the annual report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians outlined foreign interference activities by a handful of states, like China and Russia, including the targeting of Canadian institutions by threat actors. The Government of Canada's security and intelligence community is combating these threats within their respective mandates.

As an aside, I was at meetings with a number of governors of states in the United States some time ago. It actually shocked me what the governor of West Virginia had to say. They were talking about attempts to hack into their security systems. The governor indicated that in the previous year, either 2016 or 2017, in the state of West Virginia, they had 82 million attempted hacks.

There are whole departments in some governments and that is all they do. They try to hack into intelligence systems or steal secrets from other countries. That tells us how serious the problem is with that one example. Canada too has to be prepared for that kind of intervention into its system.

From a law enforcement perspective, foreign interference activities can be investigated when criminal or illegal activity is involved. The RCMP, for instance, has a broad, multi-faceted mandate that allows it to investigate and prevent foreign intelligence, drawing on various legislation.

As part of its mandate, CSIS provides the Government of Canada with timely and relevant intelligence on these threats for actions as appropriate. The Communications Security Establishment works to monitor the cybersecurity environment and to use that understanding to identify, address and share knowledge about systematic threats, risks and vulnerabilities.

A key point of the motion is “make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network within 30 days of the adoption of this motion”. I am not sticky on the 30 days. There may be another option there. However, I can say the fact is this: Australia, the United States and the U.K. have all set restrictions on access to their 5G networks, not allowing equipment into national development.

• (1245)

We have a long history with these Five Eyes partners. We have to stand with them to protect our interests in common with each other, and that means we cannot allow a foreign interest into our security and intelligence system.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate this member's contribution to the argument today. He has a long history, not just in this place but also in serving to protect the public interest.

One area that concerns me is that I believe, right out, that the government should say “no way” to Huawei, and follow with our

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Five Eyes partners. By simply not making the decision, we have billions of dollars of potential investment to upgrade Canadians' access to 5G technology and the government has not done anything.

Does the member believe that the government needs to be clear on this question, and the sooner the better, to allow these investments to be made?

• (1250)

Hon. Wayne Easter: Yes, Madam Speaker, I do believe the government needs to be clear on this issue. What I tried to point out in my remarks is that, yes, we trade around the world but our most important relationship is with our Five Eyes partners. That is where we develop our allies, develop our trust and develop our confidence.

The government, in my view, has to be very clear about where it is at on this particular issue. I do not believe Huawei should have a place within our system, because our experience in the last few years has shown that it cannot be trusted, and that is critical. Yes, the government needs to make a decision.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

It is hard to talk about China without talking about human rights violations, and it is hard to talk about human rights violations without talking about Uighurs in China. On October 21, the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development asked the government to recognize that Uighurs are victims of genocide. We know that there are concentration camps and mass sterilizations. What we have been hearing is horrifying. Bob Rae, Canada's representative to the United Nations, said that some actions point to genocide against Uighurs.

Does my hon. colleague also think Uighurs in China are victims of genocide?

[*English*]

Hon. Wayne Easter: Madam Speaker, I read closely the remarks from Canada's Ambassador to the UN, Mr. Rae, and he made the point very clearly that this could be considered a genocide. I also listened to the Minister of Foreign Affairs as he has spoken out on this issue.

I believe that Canada as a country has certainly talked about human rights around the world time and time again. I have full confidence that, through the course of time, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister will make their comments very clear on this issue.

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Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, we have heard a fair amount of debate about the potential impact of the foreign investment agreement on the decision of whether to ban Huawei from our 5G network. Does the hon. member feel that the agreement puts us at risk of an expensive lawsuit if we were to ban Huawei from our 5G network?

Hon. Wayne Easter: No, Madam Speaker, I do not. I think we are dealing with two separate issues here. One is the whole issue of trade in goods and services, and the other is how we decide to move forward as a country in terms of our technology approach to 5G.

I have made it very clear in my remarks that I believe we should be in concert with our Five Eyes partners as we go forward with the 5G network in this country. That is the only way to protect ourselves in terms of national security and to continue to have the strong allies that we have in our Five Eyes partners.

• (1255)

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak with respect on this very important motion, which highlights concerns that many Canadians are having. I want to thank the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for raising this issue in the House. It is an issue that has occupied the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, and this motion will draw some attention in the Canadian imagination to it.

I also want to thank the member for Malpeque, not only for sharing his time, but also for calming down the discourse on this topic a little, saying that there is very little dissension or disagreement in this House about our concerns. We share the concerns that people have about their individual security and about the activities of China in the international world.

We share concerns about arbitrarily detained Canadians Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig. We share those concerns and are eager to work with opposition members to find a way to assert Canada's important issues with respect to foreign policy everywhere, particularly with respect to the bilateral issue when it comes to China.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and China. Indeed, the world has changed significantly in these 50 years. This milestone allows us to look back on 50 years of history, and even longer than 50 years, but also to look ahead. We can look at, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs has said, how we can do a restart. We can stop, look at where we are and recognize that we need to ensure we do not continue on in ways that could cause more difficulty for Canadians.

I am very glad that the member for Malpeque mentioned Dr. Norman Bethune because, when I have travelled to China, his name was mentioned everywhere. In only two years he established a relationship that is valued by Chinese people all over their country and is a matter of respect that Canadians hold.

I also want to mention another medical missionary, and that is Dr. Robert McClure. For over 25 years, from 1923 until 1948, Bob McClure was a medical missionary in China. In two years, Norman Bethune opened up the world's eyes to what was going on in China. What Dr. Bob McClure did was spend 25 years of his life establish-

ing a deep and abiding friendship and relationship between Canada and China.

Bob was a very close friend of mine. As I have reflected on Bob, his ministry and his medical practice, I am reminded that he talked about the basic desires and needs of the Chinese people as being the same as those of us living in Canada. They want healthy families, prosperity and respect for human rights. They want to be able to live with dignity in the world and to travel, and they want to be part of a global community. The Chinese people themselves are not different from us by nature.

However, as we look at what has happened in recent years, we have concerns. I do not think those concerns are on this side of the House or that side of the House. They are shared in this House. We are concerned about the erosion of human rights. We are concerned about the treatment of the Uighurs. We are concerned about the aspirations of Chinese people for their full rights and dignity. Even as we have seen a rise in the standard of living in China, we have seen a diminishing of human rights, and we are concerned about that. We should express that concern, and we will continue to express that concern.

We are also concerned about issues such as the arbitrary detention of Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig. It is absolutely inappropriate. This government has been clear right from the beginning that we will not tolerate this. We have spoken up about that individually with China at every opportunity, every day, as well as with like-minded people from around the world. We are not resting until Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor have been returned home.

We stand up also for Canadians in other forms of detention. We have called again and again for clemency for Robert Schellenberg, making sure that the death penalty, which we are opposed to in this country, is not imposed on Canadians in China. It is absolutely critical that we stand up for these rights.

Canada, through the former CIDA, spent 30 years engaging in agricultural development and humanitarian assistance, ensuring that the base was laid for prosperity in that country. That has deepened our friendship and, I think, has deepened the expectation that we think China will hold Canada in high regard. It would be an understatement to say that we are disappointed in the way Canada is being held by China right now.

• (1300)

We will strongly assert that for the good of the Canada-China relationship, for the good of Canadians and Chinese citizens, we need to restart. We need to stop and look at this issue. We recognize that we did that in 2016, but the Canada of 2016 was not the Canada of 2020. Canadians' patience has been sorely tested by what has gone on.

We are concerned about these issues, but we are also mindful that it is an important economic relationship. It is an important cultural relationship. We have important academic relationships. We have students who travel back and forth between our countries. We have trade in goods and services. It is our second-largest trading partner, with almost 5% of our exports going to China.

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We are mindful that this relationship is important. It is broken, but it is important. We want to dial down the rhetoric a bit to recognize that we are all on the same page in this House, and we have to find a way to restart and reclaim.

Getting to the particular motion on the floor today, I would say, very personally, I believe on this side of the House we are not against this motion. We recognize the concerns that have been raised, and the fears of Canadians and others in Canada, particularly since the imposition of the national security law. We recognize the concerns about Hong Kong and about people in Canada defending rights. We are concerned about interference.

We want to take the steps that are appropriate, not based on hearsay, and not throwing people out of the country because we hear something about them. We have due process in this country. We have courts. We have police procedures. We will do that, because we are a country of the rule of law.

However, we are mindful that interference by any foreign country, including China, is not acceptable. We are also mindful that Canadians are concerned about their cybersecurity, the Huawei 5G network and that decision. We are obviously concerned that we make that decision based on science, evidence and co-operation with other countries.

We recognize decisions have been made by our Five Eyes partners. We recognize that those decisions are important for us to understand, but we also recognize that we have an independent foreign policy in Canada. We do not just automatically do what even our like-minded partners want to do. We want to make sure that we have a thorough, thoughtful and careful process to make the best decisions for Canadians, making sure that security is foremost in our minds.

That is why I think we could come to an agreement in this House. We could drop the rhetoric. I am very glad that early on in this debate the member for Wellington—Halton Hills did indeed say he was open to discussion about how we could, perhaps in a small way, tweak this motion to find a way that we could all agree to it in this House.

I am hoping we have a chance to debate an amendment to this motion. That is why, at this point, I am putting forward an amendment to make a very small change to the motion that has been proposed by the member.

I move, seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, that we replace “make a decision on Huawei’s involvement in Canada’s 5G network within 30 days of the adoption of this motion” with “make a decision on Huawei’s involvement in Canada’s 5G network as soon as possible after the adoption of this motion”.

That would be my proposal to the House, to change that one instance, just to make sure we have time to do the best of due diligence. We want to make sure we have the time to consult the partners we should be consulting, appropriately, to make sure that we engage in an independent foreign policy that will be for the betterment of all Canadians, and to do it well and carefully.

That is my proposed amendment.

• (1305)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It is my duty to inform hon. members that an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion. Therefore, I ask the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills if he consents to this amendment being moved.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for proposing the amendment. I have had discussions with the foreign affairs minister, but I have also had discussions with my colleagues on this side of the House.

The consensus with my colleagues is to not accept the amendment as it is too vague and does not put a time frame in place for a decision to be taken on this matter.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Therefore, there being no consent, pursuant to Standing Order 85, the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

We will now continue with questions and comments. The hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully, and the parliamentary secretary returned throughout his speech to the theme of what would seem to be near universal agreement in this chamber over the concerns we have raised and the concerns they share, yet the motion is precipitated by the lack of action by the government.

The parliamentary secretary speaks for a government that has refused to make a decision on Huawei and that has just now tried to propose an amendment to give Liberals even more time to potentially not make a decision on Huawei. Why have they taken so long, despite all of the announcements, and despite all of the statements that have been made, to make a decision on Huawei? Why will they not support the motion as written to fulfill the commitment the minister made this fall to have a new framework in this fall session?

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Madam Speaker, I want to correct one part of what the member just said and that was that our government has done nothing. I would say he could more appropriately say that the perception is that we have done nothing.

I have been in opposition. I have sat on that side and on this side, and I know the difference. I know the way those on the other side of the House want to frame ideas, but believe me, this side of the House cares about Canadians' security. We care about Canadians' prosperity. We care about human rights, and we have a long history, far longer than anyone on that side of the House has in any of those issues.

We have been engaged in these issues since we were elected, and we will continue to be engaged in these issues, only we will not do it with broad rhetoric. We will not call people enemies with no evidence. We will not suggest that people should be thrown out of the country without due process of law. That is not the way we will work. We will continue to do this because the people of Canada have elected us to do our work, to do it carefully, to do it well and to not engage in that kind of work.

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[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, I think that we all appreciate the step just taken by the Liberals. We can believe that this compromise will lead to a positive solution.

That said, one thing has been bothering me since the start of our debate on this motion. Members will recall that our Chinese friends paid \$1,500 to attend dinners organized by the Prime Minister.

Are our Liberal colleagues currently feeling uncomfortable about that?

[English]

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Madam Speaker, that gives me an opportunity to talk about the danger of this kind of debate. What happens in this kind of a debate is people start vilifying people of a different ethnic nationality, a different ethnicity. When people start doing that based on foreign policy, I think every member of the House needs to stand up and say we need to be very cautious about the way we characterize any Canadian, regardless of their ethnic background.

It is very troublesome and very worrisome to me that people would start to raise issues about anybody, whether it is a Conservative, Bloc Québécois, New Democrat, Liberal or Green, having activities or events with people of any ethnic background because of some concern they have with the country that they might have come from at any other time.

● (1310)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, before I ask my question, I want to acknowledge my colleague for the work that he did and his tireless efforts to bring Canadians home during the pandemic. I know that many of my constituents appreciate it, because we were exchanging emails 24-7 for many days on end. I know that I am not the only MP in the House who wants to thank him for that work.

We know that when Canadians report incidents of foreign interference and intimidation, they are given the runaround. They get directed to their local RCMP or local police force, then to CSIS, then to Global Affairs and then back again. Will my colleague recognize that this is unacceptable, and that there needs to be one clear point of contact when it comes to those who are targeted by foreign agencies?

Mr. Robert Oliphant: Madam Speaker, I agree with that point. Very clearly, I think what the minister said this morning was that, indeed, the point of contact is the RCMP or the local police force if someone is being intimidated, if someone is being harassed, if someone is being forced. His colleague, this morning, raised another—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): My apologies, but we have to resume debate.

The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to join everyone today. I will be splitting my time with the member for Abbotsford.

I want to thank the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for bringing forward this motion. It is one that is timely and this is an issue we need to deal with immediately.

I want to recognize the communist regime in Beijing continues to abuse human rights of Falun Gong practitioners by harvesting their organs and denying them the ability to assemble and worship in their way. We know they are also denying those same rights to Uighurs and putting them into forced labour camps, and there are rumours of sterilizations. Let us also never forget the Tibetan monks who have been fighting against the Beijing regime for ages. Of course, all Canadians are too well aware of the human rights abuses being committed against the champions of democracy in Hong Kong by the Chinese Communist Party.

A lot of speakers today talked about Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. They have now been unlawfully detained for 708 days. I would just like to remind the House it was the Minister of National Defence who described it as “hostage diplomacy”. Both gentlemen deserve to be brought home and we need to do that collectively as quickly as possible.

The issue of intimidation of Chinese Canadians here by the Government of China has already been referred to, and it has been given the name Operation Fox Hunt. We know the ambassador to Canada from China has also made shocking threats about Canadians who currently live in Hong Kong. We have to take those threats seriously and we need to make sure the ambassador himself knows that was completely inappropriate. The government should be dressing him down and recalling its own ambassador from China because of those shocking revelations.

We are here to talk about Huawei, and the government has waited far too long. It has been over a year since the former public safety minister, Ralph Goodale, said that we would have a decision by the current Liberal government before the last federal election. This has dragged on and on, and meanwhile, all of our Five Eyes partners have already said no to Huawei. Allies in Europe under NATO have said no to Huawei and giving access to their 5G networks.

We cannot deny the fact that if we take those alliances and partnerships seriously in the areas of intelligence collection, the defence of our sovereignty and working in cohesion with like-minded nations, there is no way we should be allowing Huawei to even continue to speculate on having access to our future 5G network.

We know the Chinese Communist Party has great interests in Canada. It is buying up sections of our natural resources. Through its belt and road initiative, it has a strategy called the polar silk road. It has been building icebreakers and submarines with under-ice capabilities as both commercial and military vessels to transit the Northwest Passage. Because of that interest, because of its continued espionage and surveillance of Canadians here at home, we have to take measures now as a government to ensure we are protecting Canadians and our interests as best as possible.

As the shadow minister of National Defence, I have been following this debate for ages, and I have watched as one after another of our Five Eyes partners have said no to Huawei. A lot of that is bound in article 7 of China's 2017 national intelligence law, which says that Chinese companies must support, co-operate with and collaborate in national intelligence work.

● (1315)

It could not be any clearer that the People's Liberation Army and the Communist Party of China have nefarious objectives with respect to collecting as much intel as possible from Canadians, Canadian companies and the Government of Canada, as well as all our allies at all those different levels.

Just to demonstrate how Huawei has already been used for intelligence-gathering purposes, all we have to do is look at what has happened in Europe. Back in 2009, Vodafone, which is the biggest company in Europe, installed a bunch of Huawei equipment throughout Italy. It was found that Huawei had provided equipment that was faulty. Vodafone's security briefing documents, which were given to Bloomberg, reported there were a number of switches that could have been exploited by the Chinese government to ensure it was given access the network in Italy. Even Vodafone has lived through this. A lot of us who have travelled to Europe as well are familiar with that company. We have to make sure that does not happen here.

Actually, it has happened here. All we have to do is look at the Nortel campus, which is now home to the Canadian Armed Forces. If we look at the history of Nortel, we realize that there was a bugging of the Nortel campus by a Chinese organization called Faxian Corp. It hacked into the emails of Frank Dunn, the CEO, 100-plus times a day and was able to use those to undermine Nortel's success. It also took and reverse-engineered a number of Nortel's hardware and products, which it was able to use back in China. It was also reported that it largely benefited start-up tech companies in China like Huawei. It took years for the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence to ensure the Nortel campus contained no bugging or surveillance equipment before they finally moved into their new location.

We know the People's Liberation Army has an elite cyberwarfare unit, unit 61398. It has hackers working all day and all night long who have hacked into companies like Equifax and stolen hundreds of thousands of documents on Canadians. It has hacked into the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board, Nortel, plus many other companies here in Canada and around the world. That was one of the reasons why the United Kingdom reversed its decision to allow Huawei to have limited access to the 5G network. More importantly, it realized there were other options out there and it did not have to use just Huawei. There are other companies, like Nokia, Ericsson and others, that can provide 5G equipment.

I look at how our Five Eyes partners, as well as members of the Canadian Armed Forces, have been saying that we do not want to give the Communist Party of China and its regime in Beijing easy access to our 5G networks. The best way to say it was reported back in March in The Canadian Press, when Chief of the Defence Staff General Jonathan Vance was worried about anything that would give China easier access to the Canadian military computer

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networks. He said that the Five Eyes network is “monumentally important” to Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces. He also stated:

I've made it clear that I have concerns...[with] China and China's cyber efforts...and clearly if there was to be an avenue, an easier avenue, for China to get into our digital networks then I would be [very] concerned about that.

We know that China has maligned activities in the past, especially in cyberspace, and we should not be giving it that easy access. Even the Australian military, the U.S., New Zealand and the U.K. are calling Huawei a high-risk vendor. I reiterate this. Are we going to just continue to delay and dither, which is the Liberal way, or are we going to recognize—

● (1320)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): My apologies, but we have to go to questions and comments.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest to my hon. colleague. One thing I have noticed that the Conservatives are not talking about is that we are engaged, worldwide, in the natural resource sector with China taking major investments and getting control of key natural resources, particularly in Africa and elsewhere.

It was under the Stephen Harper government that Prime Minister Harper approved the Chinese-state takeover of Nexen in a \$15-billion deal. Then, the FIPA he signed with China gave China enormous rights to sue Canada in tribunals if we held China to any standards. These were rules that we could not get for any of our natural resources companies if they were working in China. We saw that Stephen Harper signed off on Petronas, the \$6-billion purchase of Alberta Progress Energy. We had HD Mining where, under Stephen Harper, they were flying in Chinese workers and not hiring Canadians, in Canada, at Chinese-owned mines.

Now we see the Conservatives taking a strong line on China. I find it interesting that when it came to the natural resource sector, they opened the door for Chinese-state intervention time and time again.

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I would just say that we have to remember that FIPA was a two-way street. It was put in place so that Canadian companies operating in China could actually have the same type of legal protections that they enjoy here in Canada. We have to address that first and foremost.

Second, I do have concerns over China's continued interest in our natural resource sector, especially critical and strategic infrastructure and resources. We have to put a whole new lens on how we look at China's continued attempts to purchase our companies, public ports, railways and anything that involves our ongoing infrastructure.

Business of Supply

When it comes down to the end of debate on today's motion, it is time to make a decision on banning Huawei. We are requesting, through this motion, that the government do this now rather than delaying it and dithering again and again.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question.

I will quote an article that appeared in *La Presse* last year. It read:

Hong Kong democracy activists who are studying in Canada say that their freedom of expression is threatened even here. They accuse students from mainland China of harassment on campus and believe that Ottawa is ignoring these abuses.

I will quote the activist in question:

I secretly campaign for democracy in Hong Kong. I cannot do so publicly because I could be persecuted at any time by the Chinese government, my parents could lose their jobs and, if I returned to China, I would be arrested.

The motion before us refers to a robust plan to combat interference and intimidation. That is clearly what it is about.

What are the measures? What are they doing to prevent a Chinese student, in Montreal or Toronto, from experiencing what was mentioned in this article?

• (1325)

[*English*]

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the question.

These nefarious influence operators that are controlled by Beijing need to be brought to account. We have to start taking this seriously, using sanctions and other measures that are afforded to us under the Sergei Magnitsky law, to ensure that we send a strong message back to the Communist Party of China that we will not tolerate any more of its influence operations within our borders.

We have to stand with the human rights and democracy protesters in Hong Kong, across Canada and around the world. I have met with them many times, such as the Hong Kong Alliance, and want to assure them that we will do everything possible—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am happy to hear my colleague reference the plight of Nortel. I have had the opportunity to work on Nortel's systems. I installed them and worked on them in the past. There was always a sense of pride knowing that it was a great Canadian story of a company that did so well here in Canada.

Given the track record of the Chinese government, the companies that are owned and controlled by it and its influence on Canada, using the example of Nortel, does the member not agree that the government has enough to go on to be able to ban Huawei and take decisive action?

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, as long as Chinese companies are controlled by the Communist Party of China and are obligated to serve Beijing first and foremost, we have to raise all red flags and make sure their objectives here in Canada are honest and truthful. Of course, we are doing that with Huawei.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have looked forward to trying to address what is a major failing on the part of the Liberal government. I am grateful to our leadership, our caucus leadership as Conservatives, for bringing forward a motion that challenges the Prime Minister to finally abandon his naive approach to doing business with China and take the steps required to protect Canada's national interests.

I believe that China, over the last decade, has become increasingly adversarial, confrontational and hostile, and increasingly a threat to our economic prosperity and national security. The bottom line is China is becoming an untrustworthy partner. Why do I say that? I would like to highlight six areas where I believe China needs to improve its relationship with the rest of the world.

First, the Chinese regime in Beijing, the communist regime, has failed to respect the rule of law and human rights. The plight of the Uighurs in east China is just one example, and the House has condemned the state of security of the Uighurs in east China. As Canadians, we have to see the human rights violations taking place in that country.

The second area is that China has failed to respect our national security as a country. Third, China has failed to respect our Canadian sovereignty. It has interfered in our domestic affairs. Fourth, the communist regime in China has failed to respect international treaties, norms and conventions. Its incursion in the South China Sea, which is contrary to international law, and its willingness to violate the treaty between China and the U.K. on Hong Kong, are evidence of that. Fifth, they failed to respect the international community in the area of trade and investment rules. Finally, the Chinese regime has failed to respect fundamental diplomacy and the transparency that we expect of our partners around the world.

I want to first deal with the rule of law and human rights. Today, our two Michaels, Spavor and Kovrig, are still in jail and are still not getting the benefit of the rule of law. The communist regime is holding them in retaliation for steps that Canada took in full compliance with our international extradition treaty with the United States. The communist regime in China simply does not share our value system. It does not share values such as openness, justice and tolerance. In fact, these values have been weaponized against us as Canadians.

China has also failed to respect our security as a country. The extent of its espionage in Canada and its theft of untold billions of dollars' worth of trade secrets and intellectual property over the years is still largely unknown, but we know we have paid a huge price. Nortel is just one example of how Canada has lost opportunities to grow our prosperity.

Our national security has been at risk for quite some time. Our national security agency, CSIS, has highlighted this regularly. Former national security adviser Richard Fadden has repeatedly warned Canadians of the risk that China represents to Canadian security. Even former ambassadors, like Guy Saint-Jacques and David Mulroney, have highlighted the fact that Canada has to be vigilant and protect itself on the security front.

As my previous colleague highlighted, our Five Eyes partners, the United States, U.K., Australia and New Zealand, no longer have confidence in us as the fifth partner because we will not ban Huawei from our networks. Even former BlackBerry CEO Jim Balsillie has expressed concerns about the risks to Canada's national security, especially if we allow Huawei to participate in the rollout of our 5G network across Canada.

● (1330)

I would like to also address the issue of China's failure to respect our sovereignty and its interference in our domestic affairs. It is becoming more and more well known that China is willing to bully and intimidate Chinese Canadians through organizations like the United Front and the Confucius Institute, and through Operation Fox Hunt.

My friend Anastasia Lin, who is a former Miss World Canada, has been outspoken about China's heavy-handed approach to using fear to intimidate Canadians to do China's bidding. That is wrong. CSIS, our national intelligence agency, has confirmed that Beijing routinely uses undercover state security officials and trusted agents, or proxies, to target members of Canada's Chinese community in an effort to silence critics of China's president, including threats of retribution against their families in China. The federal spy agency also says these illegal activities in Canada are “part of a global campaign of intimidation that constitutes a threat to [our country].”

Harassing members of our Falun Gong community in Canada is another example of a group that is mercilessly persecuted in China being intimidated here in Canada. People will say, “We know where your parents live in China and we are going to go after them. We are going to go after your siblings.” That is unacceptable by any international norm.

Fourth, let me address the failure to respect international law. China's incursions and breaches of international law are evident in the South China Sea, where it is looking to expand its footprint and push its territory further out by violating international norms. China failed to respect the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984, in which the Chinese government declared the one country, two systems principle for Hong Kong. That has now been violated. The Chinese had promised that Hong Kong would not have to practise the socialist system of mainland China, but would maintain Hong Kong's existing capitalist system and way of life for 50 years, until 2047. What happened? There is no commitment to living up to its international commitments.

There is the flouting of trade laws. I just met with one of our key stakeholders in the agriculture industry who said they can no longer rely on China to respect international trade laws, such as those under the World Trade Organization.

Business of Supply

There is also the issue of fundamental diplomacy and transparency. China's belligerent and bellicose treatment of Canada-China relations includes the imprudent rhetoric of its ambassadors to Canada. Rather than building bridges and exercising discretion, the last few ambassadors who have come to Canada have instead inflamed the rhetoric and inflamed the relationship between our two countries. It is totally unnecessary. Our diplomats are expected typically to be bridge builders, to seek common ground and to exercise the highest level of judgment and discretion. We just have not seen that from China's representatives in Canada.

China has also failed to share critical information about the coronavirus. It bought up Canadian PPE and hoarded it before Canada even knew the extent of this virus, and then sent a few token PPE items back to Canada, thinking that would curry favour with the government.

Finally, I want to address the issue of trade and investment. China is a non-market economy. It does not operate as a true free market. Its pervasive role in using state-controlled actors to do the bidding of Beijing is well known.

● (1335)

Its willingness to ignore World Trade Organization rules, including the dumping of Chinese products into North America on a regular basis—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I apologize, but the member perhaps may continue the presentation during the questions and comments. It is now time for questions and comments.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

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 would encourage the member to continue on with what he was about to say. At the same time, could he talk about the foreign investment agreement that was entered into by former prime minister Stephen Harper and his government? No doubt, he himself played somewhat of a role in that. It has been a part of the discussion and the debate today.

Could he then explain where the Conservatives came up with the 30 days? Why not 20 days or 40 days? What caused them to say 30 days?

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, the 30 days is simply the timeline the government had set for the end of the year to make a decision on Huawei.

Let me get back to the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement. That agreement between Canada and China is not a market access agreement. I should know as I am the former international trade minister. That agreement protects Canadian investors when they invest in China.

Business of Supply

Chinese companies already had protections under the Canadian rule of law, protections against the imprudent application of government power, the expropriation of property and the need for full and fair compensation. This agreement, the FIPA as it is called, was there to protect Canada's companies when they invested in China, where they did not have those kinds of protections against the government stepping in and treating companies unfairly.

• (1340)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my colleague, but I find it quite ironic that he cited things like China being a non-market economy, that it failed to respect our sovereignty and that it had trade secrets that created lost opportunities for Canadians. He was the minister of international trade who signed the FIPA. Not only was he the minister, but this motion could land Canada in secret tribunals, which were part of that agreement, and we could end up owing the People's Republic of China billions of dollars.

Does the member regret signing FIPA? It has allowed China trade in Canada, but it has not allowed Canada free trade in China. We know it is not playing out for Canadian companies.

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, with the greatest of respect, that is hogwash.

The investment treaty with China is an agreement that protects companies after they have made investments, that ensures expropriation does not take place without fair and reasonable compensation, that they are not treated arbitrarily by government and that investments are not taken away. That does not happen in Canada, but it does happen in China, which is why we want to have an agreement in place to protect Canadian companies against the arbitrary actions of government in China, and today that is what we have. We have an agreement that when a Canadian government invests in China and it is—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach.

Mr. Kerry Diotte (Edmonton Griesbach, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member for Abbotsford talked about the effect of the coronavirus from China. I would like to know, in his words, how the Chinese communist government failed Canada and the world on this absolutely horrific crisis.

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, the coronavirus is symptomatic of how the communist regime in Beijing does business. It covered up the scope, extent and seriousness of this virus until it was too late for the global community. In the meantime, it was already establishing itself to take advantage of that crisis. I believe that post-mortems that will be conducted on the coronavirus will lay bare the extent to which China has been complicit in allowing this virus to infect the global community.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

I appreciate having the opportunity to participate in the debate on the motion put forward by the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

Let me assure the House that the Government of Canada takes the security of our telecommunications infrastructure and establishment very seriously. This is clearly outlined in our digital charter, which is focused on building trust in a digital world.

The second pillar of our digital charter is safety and security and, thus, we take it extremely seriously. That is why we have been working diligently across the government in a review of 5G technology and associated security and economic considerations. This work crosses multiple departments and agencies: Innovation and Science and Economic Development Canada, Public Safety Canada, the Communications Security Establishment, the Department of National Defence, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and Global Affairs Canada. It is an important issue and we want to ensure we get it right. This review includes the careful considerations of our allies' advice, whose decision on this issue we are all well aware of.

We will ensure that our networks and our economy are kept secure and we will take the appropriate decisions in due course.

In the meantime, we are already collaborating with telecommunications service providers and equipment vendors to address cybersecurity concerns on an ongoing basis. This collaboration enables the public and private sector to exchange information on issues that may affect the resilience of Canada's telecommunications infrastructure. A safe and secure cyberspace is important for Canada's competitiveness today and tomorrow, for economic stability and long-term prosperity. Therefore, government, industry, academia and civil society must all work together to strengthen Canada's cybersecurity and make Canada a safer place to be online. Cyber threats are continually evolving. That is why collaboration is key.

The cybersecurity strategy, announced in 2018, made significant investments to centralize the governance of cybersecurity within the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security by bringing operational security experts under one roof to provide targeted cybersecurity advice and guidance. It is ensuring a better coordinated and more coherent government response to cyber threats.

At a more strategic level, there is also an important body called the Canadian Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee, or CSTAC. It allows senior government officials and senior telecommunication executives to exchange information and collaborate strategically to ensure the security of our networks. ISED co-chairs this committee along with a co-chair from the private sector. It also includes a representative from Public Safety Canada, the Communications Security Establishment Canada, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and all of the major telecommunication companies.

The industry's members of CSTAC have developed a set of best practices designed to provide a baseline of appropriate security measures to meet the needs of Canadians. It recognizes that one of the key ways to enhance customer safety and the stability of their portion of the Internet is to share cybersecurity threat information with one another. This sharing includes information about new threats as well as detailed technical information after an attack has been detected by standardizing how we log, share and disseminate information. CSTAC collaboration has helped to enhance the resilience of Canada's networks. In addition, CSTAC's working groups have helped investigate and respond in times of emergency.

By focusing on the executive level, CSTAC is able to ensure that a security culture permeates from the top down. Myriad working groups and incident response teams bring together cybersecurity experts to tackle specific, technical and technical issues. Face-to-face participation in groups covered by strong non-disclosure agreements to promote candour help ensure that Canada's security is put ahead of competitive issues among market players.

In addition to the work undertaken by CSTAC, the Communications Security Establishment does important work in running the security review program. This program mitigates cybersecurity risks in the context of current wireless networks. It has been in place since 2013.

• (1345)

This program has helped mitigate risks stemming from designated equipment and services under consideration for use in Canadian telecommunications networks, including Huawei. To date, this program has led to excluding designated equipment in sensitive areas of Canadian networks, mandating assurance testing in independent third-party laboratories for designated equipment for use in less sensitive areas of Canadian networks and restructuring outsource managed services across government networks and other Canadian critical networks.

The Government of Canada has other tools to encourage the security of our networks. This includes the idea of encouraging vendor diversity. Canada has already funded a number of 5G initiatives through the strategic innovation fund. Among these initiatives are specific partnerships on projects with Nokia, BlackBerry, Ranovus as well as Encore, the world-class 5G test bed in Ontario and Quebec.

One area that we are excited about is the development of open radio access networks, ORAN. ORAN could allow smaller players, including Canadian companies, to participate in network development. Increasing vendor diversity could lower barriers to entry for new players and lower costs for secondary incumbents to compete with dominant vendors.

We realize the importance of securing our 5G networks across the country as 5G will be a key driver of innovation. It will enable cleaner energy, smart cities, precision agriculture, autonomous vehicles and advance telemedicine. These new technologies will create exciting opportunities for Canadians, well-paying jobs, innovative new products and services. The 5G service will require that new spectrum or airwaves be made available.

Business of Supply

The government is committed to making spectrum available at the right time to support the deployment of 5G services. In June 2021, the government will be auctioning a key portion of the spectrum that will enable 5G. It is a 3,500 megahertz band, which has been identified worldwide as one of the key bands to be used for 5G.

This is the second of several planned spectrum releases to support 5G deployment across Canada. This mid-range band will support a broad array of 5G applications. The increased number of connections, indeed intensive applications expected with 5G, will require large amounts of spectrum in a variety of frequency bands.

The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that the spectrum is available for Canadians to take advantage of 5G networks and technology and we are committed to doing all we can to make these networks secure.

• (1350)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member's intervention today specifically spoke to the opportunities for telecommunications in Canada, for us to see greater energy efficiency and for many of our cities to jump on the opportunity for 5G offers. The problem is that we are talking about billions of dollars of investment. If the government is in a situation where it cannot tell a telecommunications company whether the equipment it would like to use is allowed in Canada due to national security concerns, it throws everything off.

The member has made a good case for why we need 5G developed in our cities and throughout the country, but he has failed to speak to why the government has dragged its feet when it comes to standing with our Five Eyes allies and being able to give clear direction to Canadian companies to build a safe, secure network that protects the privacy of Canadians.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, much like we have done throughout COVID-19, we have put the safety and security of Canadians first and foremost and we will continue to do that in relation to the technological infrastructure that we have in our country.

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, in 2018, the Liberal government committed to doing a review of 5G and Huawei. The former Liberal public safety minister promised a decision before the 2019 election, but when it was clear the government would break that promise, he promised that it would happen after the 2019 election. We are now approaching the end of 2020.

Business of Supply

Some companies have cited this lack of decision and uncertainty as a factor in their choice not to invest in Canada, companies that rely on 5G, like autonomous vehicle developers or those concerned that Huawei has an unfair competitive advantage because of the unfettered support it receives from the Government of China, making it nearly impossible for others to compete.

It has been two years. Does the member opposite believe it is reasonable for the government to take more than two years to release its review of Huawei and 5G?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, we are seeing investments by a number of companies here in Canada, whether it is in autonomous vehicles or electric vehicles or whether it will be in our 5G network.

As I mentioned in my remarks, the government estimates that we will be auctioning 5G spectrum next June. I expect and anticipate it will be much like in past years in my private sector career, and we will see a very robust bidding on this spectrum. We know how valuable it is for Canadians and how valuable it is for our long-term prosperity that we continue to make these long-term investments in our country and in Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to put this question to my colleague, the parliamentary secretary. I had hoped to put it to our former minister of trade, the member for Abbotsford.

The discussion of the Canada-China foreign protection and promotion of investment accord comes up a bit in this debate. We really do need to have it studied in committee. By virtue of the fact that it was brought through and approved as a treaty without a piece of legislation, never debated or studied in Parliament nor in any parliamentary committee, members do not recognize that it actually cemented in place unfair rules in the People's Republic of China vis-à-vis Canadian companies, and gives China access and punishment regimes in secret.

Would the hon. parliamentary secretary commit, as we are bound by it for 31 years, to actually studying what we are required to respect in the Canada-China FIPA?

• (1355)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, most of the House would agree that her intervention is very well warranted. I very much agree in terms of the content and extent of the member's remarks.

I will say that our government, first and foremost, will always put the interests of Canadians ahead of other countries and other states. We will continue to do that. Other governments will answer for themselves in terms of the agreements they went into. We will look at that, but our government is focused on ensuring that Canadians' interests are ahead of anyone else. I fully support that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Before he begins, I will just let the hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood know that he will be able to complete his remarks after Oral Questions.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Madam Speaker, may I say that I largely agree with the motion and welcome the opportunity for Parliament to weigh in on this debate. We

are a nation in a state of asymmetrical conflict with the world's emerging superpower and, about to be, the world's largest economy. The stakes actually could not be much higher.

The Communist Party of China has shown itself to be a collection of diplomatic and military thugs unworthy of a great nation. We have watched as the Government of China enslaves an entire population, then denies that it has done so and then argues that, really, this is an internal matter and not anyone else's business.

Reports by respected NGOs such as Amnesty International are dismissed out of hand and well-founded accusations by our own United Nations ambassador are ridiculed. The pattern is first denial, then distraction and then a fact-free counter-accusation.

We saw it again in Hong Kong. The one country, two systems agreement between Great Britain and China of 20 years' good standing was ripped up overnight when Hong Kongers robustly embraced their democratic rights. Now Hong Kong is a mere appendage of the Communist Party in Beijing and entirely dependent upon its political masters. Once again, the pattern is to deny the facts, ridicule and set up a distraction, and then develop a fact-free counter-narrative, all the while kidnapping activists and impeding the exit of those citizens of Hong Kong who feel they are no longer safe.

In Taiwan we watch a belligerent Chinese Communist Party fly provocative military missions in Taiwanese airspace. It is abundantly clear that the full and free expression of the democratic will of the citizens of Taiwan and the peaceful transition of power are an anathema to the Chinese Communist Party.

Then we watch the military buildup of bases on the shoals in the South China Sea, threatening the entire region, including the countries of the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, etc. It is again a full-scale demonstration of fact-free denial. The conversion of shoals from incidental islands to military bases goes from outright denial, as though the satellite photos are fake; to claiming it is an internal right and therefore no one else's business, international law be damned; to a counterfactual propaganda that these buildings are only for peaceful purposes, notwithstanding the menace that all the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand see.

We could circle the globe. Sri Lanka might surely have regrets over its Faustian bargain concerning its harbour. Many African countries rue the day that they let the Communist Party of China build local infrastructure. The belt and road initiative is a policy that seeks to strangle independent nations and bend their resources and sovereignty to China's purposes.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

KITCHENER-CONESTOGA YOUTH COUNCIL

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize the incredible work that the Kitchener-Conestoga Youth Council has done in these past few months. Every week, members of the youth council meet virtually to discuss their ideas and initiatives to help better our community. They have promoted blood donor drives, led discussions addressing climate change, reached out to and engaged with their peers and continue to work on new projects.

These young leaders always demonstrate creativity and passion to make a difference. Our youth of today are our leaders of tomorrow, and they have already made big changes in our community. I am proud to represent their voices here in Ottawa, and I look forward to seeing how their hard work helps shape our future.

* * *

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Madam Speaker, independent travel advisers across Canada represent 12,000 small business operators. They have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic. Their incomes have been devastated and in many cases reduced to zero. They work on 100% commission, with an average delay of 139 to 317 days before seeing a single dollar from any sale.

Without any global travel taking place, independent travel advisers and their families have been left in financial chaos. I was happy to see that WestJet will now offer ticket refunds, but these advisers are now concerned they will be forced to dig into their personal finances to pay commissions they earned nearly a year ago.

I call on the Minister of Transport to develop a plan for the aviation sector that protects our hard-working travel advisers.

* * *

JOHN WALSH

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there are very few in Montreal's English-speaking community who did not know Father John Walsh. His sudden passing last week was devastating news to the many thousands of people whose lives he touched.

Father John was a priest for 53 years. He served as a pastor, curate, chaplain, professor and biblical scholar. He spent decades serving local parishes, including St. Monica's in NDG and St. John Brebeuf in LaSalle, but in his lifetime he did so much more.

He co-founded the Procure Walk of Courage to fight prostate cancer. He spent years working to help Montreal's homeless. His 40-year association with the Nazareth Community led to the third Nazareth house being called John's House in his honour.

He was a champion of bringing communities together and devoted his life to building bridges between Christians, Jews, Muslims

Statements by Members

and first nations. He was a member of the Order of Canada, a great Canadian and a true Montrealer.

He will be sorely missed.

* * *

[Translation]

LOUIS RIEL

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was the 135th anniversary of the hanging of Louis Riel, who was executed at the insistence of the federal government for standing up for the Métis nation when Ottawa wanted to seize their land.

The Bloc Québécois moved a motion in the House calling on the government to exonerate Louis Riel as soon as possible, but the motion was defeated. It was an opportunity to right a wrong at a time when Canada wants to reconcile with the first nations. Instead, this House chose to defend its colonialist, racist legacy. It was an opportunity to respect the National Assembly of Quebec, which unanimously called on the federal government to exonerate Louis Riel last week. Instead, this chamber chose to defend the legacy of John A. Macdonald, who said that “[Louis Riel] shall die though every dog in Quebec bark in his favour.”

Clearly, 135 years later, the execution of Louis Riel continues to divide nations. The House of Commons chose the same side yet again, the side of the oppressors.

* * *

[English]

MINING INDUSTRY

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the significant contributions of Canada's mineral and mining sector. Labrador is one riding in Canada where mining contributes to sustainable growth, strong employment and remarkable community partnerships.

Minerals and metals are the building blocks of the computers we use every day; the smart phones we rely on; the vehicles and public transit that get us places; the buildings where we live, work and play; and the green technologies that help make the world a more sustainable place. Across the north and right here at home, the industry is leading in innovation and clean technologies, fostering indigenous partnerships and building cutting-edge infrastructure to support their operations and the communities they work in.

As we look to address the challenges of COVID-19 and build back better, our government will continue to work with the Mining Association of Canada, with PDAC and with industry leaders across the country to enhance practices and ensure the competitiveness of Canada's mining sector in the world.

Statements by Members

● (1405)

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as December 25 and Christmas quickly approach, I am reminded of the true meaning of Christmas: God sending his only son, Jesus, to save the world. Perhaps now more than ever we all need to be reminded of the joy of the very first Christmas:

Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

From my family and staff to everyone, may we remember the true joy and everlasting meaning of the season. Merry Christmas.

* * *

[Translation]

UNIVERSAL BROADBAND FUND

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize the importance of the announcement made by our government concerning the universal broadband fund. The enhancement of this fund will have a major positive impact on the quality of life of many Canadians and thousands of people in Châteauguay—Lacolle alone. The major lockdown brought to light how important high-speed Internet is to the vitality of our communities. Without high-speed Internet, telework, distance education, online appointments and even business promotion become impossible tasks. I would like to point out the excellent work and creativity of the mayors in my riding on this important issue. These well-connected people want everyone to be connected.

* * *

DIWALI

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Diwali, which is also known as the festival of lights, celebrates the triumph of good over evil. During Diwali, small clay lamps with wicks are filled with oil and lit.

In India, Diwali is celebrated in different ways depending on the region and traditions. Sikhs celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas, the day of liberation, when Guru Hargobind, who was wrongly imprisoned for two years, refused to accept his release unless 52 Hindu princes, who were political prisoners, were released with him. Bandi Chhor Divas is a day that reminds Sikhs of all the effort required to continue to fight together for freedom and human rights, fight against tyranny and oppression, and bring light into the lives of others.

At this complicated time, may light enter and continue to shine in all of our lives.

[English]

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like many other MPs elected just over a year ago, I have been getting lots of questions about how my first year in Parliament has been. I reply pretty much as expected, while highlighting that it is an absolute honour and privilege to serve the constituents of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound and that I view myself as one of the more non-partisan MPs in the House. Unfortunately, I find myself becoming more partisan every day. The main reason is the lack of transparency and openness from the government.

In my first question in the House last December on behalf of Canadian beef farmers, I asked why the government did not apply to the World Organisation for Animal Health for BSE negligible risk status in July 2019. I did not get a reply. I asked for a written response this past winter. I got a non-response. I tried again this fall and the answer this time was that Canada applied in July 2020.

The government likes to preach about building back better. How about just do better? Canadians expect answers. Just answer the questions.

* * *

● (1410)

GIVING TUESDAY

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on December 1, we will mark Giving Tuesday. It is the eighth year it will be celebrated in Canada. Giving Tuesday is a global movement for giving and volunteering that takes place each year after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. It is a day when charities, companies, community leaders and residents join together to support their favourite cause by fundraising, donating, volunteering and spreading the word.

We have seen inspiring Canadians across our country come together to support those in need throughout this pandemic. Across Canada, there are 43 movements celebrating Giving Tuesday, including in my hometown of Mississauga, where a group of volunteers lead Mississauga Gives, a campaign harnessing generosity to bring about positive change.

Whether someone chooses to make a financial contribution to a cause important to them, donates a gently used item, donates time, donates blood or chooses another way to give, I encourage everyone to join millions of Canadians this Giving Tuesday as we unite to make a difference.

RECOGNITION OF BRAVERY

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to rise in the House today to recognize two young constituents who showed incredible bravery in the face of terrifying circumstances.

Last month, Finn and Oliver Goddard were travelling with their family in my riding when the family's truck hit black ice, rolled over, landed on the passenger side and pinned all the occupants. Then 11-year-old Finn sprang into action: He unbuckled Oliver and helped him get out. Under Finn's leadership, together they were able to rescue the rest of the family from the vehicle. Finn was composed and calm, but decisive. He knew what he needed to do and just did it.

I want to say to Finn and Oliver that when others might have frozen, they took action and, in doing so, saved lives. They have proven themselves to be steadfast in the face of a daunting challenge. They have demonstrated to themselves and their community that they can do anything.

I am so proud of these young men and I know they have a bright future ahead of them. I hope all colleagues in this place will join me in thanking them.

* * *

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Natasha is a single mom in my riding who works as a server at a local Italian restaurant. When I talked to her last week, even though I could tell she is as tough as nails, her worry about being out of work because of future COVID lockdowns weighed heavily on her. Natasha wants to work, but in my province, which was already hit hard by the Prime Minister's devastating policies against workers in the energy sector, it has become nearly impossible. The Prime Minister has no understanding that Natasha and most people in Calgary cannot afford to spend two weeks at home to wait for test results if their kids get a runny nose. He also failed to get rapid tests for Canadians, which could have helped to prevent the second wave.

The Prime Minister has failed to take care of Canadians, COVID or not. He consistently puts Canadian interests behind his own or those of the cocktail set at the United Nations. He makes choices that continue to devastate the ability of Canadians to work and be healthy.

We must fight back when he says he wants to expand this devastating so-called reset of our nation. Women like Natasha do need a reset: a new Prime Minister.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a new report just came out naming Saudi Arabia and Canada as the worst performers when it comes to fossil fuel subsidies. Let us take a moment to let that sink in. We are topping the list with Saudi Arabia as the worst in the world.

Statements by Members

Canada promised to stop giving out fossil fuel subsidies, but like so many other empty promises, the government is actually increasing the amount of public money being handed out to big oil and gas companies. Let us not forget that the Liberals bought a pipeline. Why are we not investing that money in creating good, sustainable, low-carbon jobs?

Canadians are calling for a just and sustainable recovery. They want investments in clean energy, green infrastructure, energy-efficient housing and public transit. However, instead, the government is doubling down on the fossil fuel industry.

The Prime Minister claims to be a climate leader, but Canada is on par with Saudi Arabia, named as the worst when it comes to handing out public money to big oil and gas. It is time to put some action behind the empty promises and end fossil fuel subsidies now.

* * *

• (1415)

[Translation]

2 PIERROTS

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport-Côte-de-Beaupré-Île d'Orléans-Charlevoix, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for months now, the Bloc Québécois has been calling on the government to create a special status for the unique and wonderful sector that is arts and culture.

We use the term “the arts” to refer to the profoundly human connection between artists and the public in a welcoming and inspiring environment. However, curtains have come down, spotlights have gone dark and wonderfully talented artists are no longer able to earn a living from their craft.

We were saddened to learn that 2 Pierrots, a landmark music venue in Montreal, will close down for good in December. 2 Pierrots was a hallowed place, whose stage helped launch the careers of hundreds of Quebec musicians, some to stardom.

Culture is on the verge of extinction. Both CERB and the wage subsidy were unable to save 2 Pierrots, because the government needs an extensive, targeted, secure and permanent plan to save culture.

I want to congratulate and sincerely thank the owners of 2 Pierrots and all of the artists who brought so much joy to St-Paul Street in Old Montreal. Farewell, 2 Pierrots.

*Oral Questions**[English]***WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY**

Ms. Jag Sahota (Calgary Skyview, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister for Women and Gender Equality publicly guessed how much income she made per year. Not only was she wrong, she was wrong to the tune of almost \$20,000. For a CERB recipient, that is 10 months of benefits. For a person in the minister's riding, that is seven months of pay at the average income level.

It is particularly maddening coming from this minister because female entrepreneurs have seen their businesses decimated by COVID-19. Workers in the hospitality and tourism sectors are overwhelmingly women. They are among the hardest hit by the pandemic. They would love to have an additional \$20,000, and I bet most of them could tell us, down to the last red cent, how much they made on their last paycheque.

The minister cannot represent Canadian women in the COVID economy if she can forget about more money than most of them will make.

* * *

RAINER KARL-AUGUST DRIMEYER

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a picture that hangs in my Ottawa office. It is of a friend, a man called Dri. Dri is short for Rainer Karl-August Drimeyer.

I first met Dri in the mid-nineties. He lived in a tent on Lake Ontario in Toronto. When I met Dri, he had turned his back on the world. He found himself a quiet place to look at the stars, have a little drink and write some cosmic poetry by a fire. Eventually, other homeless people, new tents, then activists and politicians would gather around the fire he started. Tent city was born and Dri was its mayor. Tent city was eventually cleared. The residents were given housing, but Dri was Dri, and he chose to pitch a tent and sleep in that tent because he said it just felt right.

Dri was one of a kind and he passed away this week. He was a reluctant activist, but not only did he remain housed for the rest of his life, he also never stopped fighting to make sure other people were housed as well. We lost a good soul this week. His fight is our fight, and that fight continues to end homelessness in Canada.

To Dri I say, "Rest in peace, mate."

ORAL QUESTIONS*[English]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to China, the government is out of step with our allies.

Last week, the U.S. Treasury Department imposed sanctions on four more officials involved in the draconian security laws in Hong Kong. That makes 15 in total. The number of officials sanctioned by the Canadian government is zero.

Why is the government always hanging back when it comes to getting serious with China?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has a complex, multi-dimensional relationship with China that looks at challenges and engages with China with eyes wide open. Many international partners are also facing similar challenges and are actively engaging with them in order to evaluate best approaches together.

We have been clear about the principles and commitment to the rule of law, our deep concern for our citizens who have been detained, and our farmers and producers. We remain firm in defending our principles and interests, and always will.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to threats against Canadian citizens, our eyes have been wide open for years. Chinese Canadians have been subjected to intimidation, not just in Hong Kong but here in Canada as well. At committee, immigration officials admitted they do not track, nor do they try to stop, Chinese agents posing as students, tourists or workers.

Why is the Prime Minister failing to protect Canadians who speak out against the Chinese communist regime?

• (1420)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has among the best security agencies in the world. The folks who work for our security agencies work every single day to keep Canadians safe. Not all of it appears in the newspapers. On the contrary, a lot of the work that is done in important situations is never heard of at all.

We will continue to ensure we are supporting our security agencies and supporting Canadians who speak up, and protecting all Canadians from foreign interference or influence, because we know that to be free in Canada is the best thing in the world.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our security agencies know that Huawei cannot be in our 5G network, so I hope the Prime Minister votes with us on our motion.

When Australia realized it had a problem with infiltration by Chinese agents, it did something about it. It stopped infiltration on campuses, in business and in academia. The Prime Minister waves his finger and says that interference is inappropriate. Chinese agents are threatening Canadians on our soil, and all the Prime Minister has to say is that it is in appropriate.

Will the Prime Minister show Canadians that he has a plan to keep them safe from Chinese operations in Canada?

Oral Questions

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage said, “Our rights end where another's pain begins”. What I understand from this comment by the minister, who is responsible for arts and culture programming, the CRTC and CBC/Radio-Canada, among other things, is that we all lose our freedom of expression the minute someone decides to say they are hurt by what we are saying.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): No, Mr. Speaker. We will always defend freedom of expression, the freedom of our creators and artists to express themselves and to challenge our society and our authorities, as well as our freedom to challenge each other.

We need our creators to help us dream and think about a different world, a better world or a worse world. Our creators are the essence of our identity. We will always support them and defend their freedom of expression.

• (1425)

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, speaking of creators, who is in charge of censorship at Radio-Canada?

Because of a mere comment, not even a complaint, let alone a letter to the ombudsman, just a comment, Radio-Canada censored an episode of *La Petite vie*, no less. The censored episode was restored soon after, but with a warning added, just in case anyone might mistake *La Petite vie* for a BBC documentary.

Is there an expert in playing dress-up here who can tell me if Radio-Canada's censorship of the work of Claude Meunier, Guylaine Tremblay and Marc Labrèche would go so far as to condemn Normand Brathwaite, a Black man playing the role of a Black man?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will always stand up for freedom of expression. We will always stand up for our creators. We will always stand up for people's ability to express themselves freely in this country.

Radio-Canada's decisions are obviously independent of government measures. We expect everyone to act in a way that upholds our most fundamental rights.

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TAXATION

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Liberals, Conservatives and Bloc Québécois all voted against our motion to tax the ultra-wealthy and excess corporate profits.

While families are struggling to make ends meet, the ultra-wealthy are making record profits. Why does the Prime Minister always defend the interests of the ultra-wealthy at the expense of others?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our security agencies have worked with a range of Canadian institutions and universities to make sure that they are safe. Canadian universities, of course, work with a range of industry partners on research projects, so we created a working group with universities and those national security agencies to help Canadians safeguard their work and identify potential risks.

We will always protect data and intellectual property, advance science and ensure that international research partnerships are always beneficial to Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand have all said no to Huawei in their 5G networks. Those countries have put the interests of their citizens ahead of the interests of the Chinese state, but this Liberal government continues to admire China and ignore the security of Canadians.

When will the Prime Minister say no to Huawei in our 5G networks?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 5G technologies can meet the explosion in consumer and industrial demand for faster, higher-capacity networks.

We want to ensure that Canadians benefit from the latest 5G innovations, but we will always be there to protect the safety and interests of Canadians. That is why we are working with our security agencies, which will make recommendations on how to best ensure competitiveness while also protecting Canadians and Canadian businesses.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member for Saint-Laurent says that the decline of the French language in Montreal is a myth. The real myth is the Liberal government's claim that it is protecting the French language in Quebec.

We have been awaiting the modernization of the Official Languages Act since 2015. Nothing has been done, but there have been a lot of delays.

Does the Prime Minister agree with the hon. member?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Saint-Laurent has apologized for her insensitive comments.

As a Montrealer, I am concerned by the decline of the French language we are currently witnessing, and our government will always be there to protect French everywhere in Canada, whether in official language minority communities or in Quebec.

In the throne speech, we acknowledged that French has a special status in North America, and we will work hand in hand with the Government of Quebec to protect the French language in Quebec and across Canada. Above all, we will be there to protect francophones across the country.

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the first thing we did as a government in 2015 was to raise taxes on the wealthy and lower them for the middle class. Unfortunately, the NDP voted against that initiative.

We have been there every step of the way to help the middle class and lift Canadians out of poverty. During this pandemic, we have been there to support families, workers and small businesses. We will always be there to ensure that Canadians get through this pandemic and create a better world through their prosperity. We will be there for them every step of the way.

[English]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about what happened yesterday.

Yesterday the Liberals, the Conservatives and the Bloc voted against our motion to tax the ultra-wealthy and to tax the excess profits of large corporations. Let us talk about what excess profits look like. The Westons, who own large grocery stores across Canada, have received massive profits during this pandemic. What they are doing is increasing dividend payouts to their shareholders, while cutting the pay of front-line workers.

Why does the Prime Minister stand with the Westons instead of front-line workers?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the very first thing this government did in 2015 when we got elected was to raise taxes on the wealthiest 1%, so that we could lower them for the middle class. What did the NDP do? They voted against it.

Every step of the way we have been there to support the middle class, to support people working hard to join it and to make sure Canadians got ahead, whether it was with a million jobs created over the past five years or a million people lifted out of poverty at the same time. We will continue to fight for Canadians and for their success.

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[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has finally admitted that its China policy is not working. That is why it is going to introduce a new framework on China.

Meanwhile, China has been running covert operations here in Canada, targeting Canadians and jeopardizing Canadians' rights and freedoms. When will the government introduce a real plan to thwart China's operations here in Canada?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

Even with the Conservative motion moved today, we were prepared to propose constructive amendments to move forward. I have always said that we want to work with both sides of the House on matters of national security and foreign policy.

The new framework that we will be introducing is a natural evolution. China in 2020 is not the same as China in 2016. Therefore, Canada, like other liberal democracies, is developing plans to respond to that new reality.

• (1430)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I hope that the government will vote for our motion tomorrow.

[English]

In May last year, the government said it would make a decision on Huawei before the election, and then in July it said it would make a decision on Huawei after the election. It has now been more than a year since the election and still no decision. The government also says that it believes in multilateralism, but four of the Five Eyes have already made a decision to restrict Huawei from their networks. Canada is unilaterally alone in not making a decision.

When will the government join with its allies and make a decision on Huawei's participation in Canada's 5G network?

Mr. William Amos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry (Science), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is going to continue to ensure that Canadian networks are kept safe and secure, and we have been consistent on this point for many months now.

While we will not comment on any specific companies, an examination of 5G technologies and a review of security and economic considerations is ongoing. We are going to weigh these matters with allies and partners and with our security experts, and we are going to make the best decision for Canadians, not on the basis of politics.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister says he does not “tolerate hostile foreign actors threatening [Canadians]”, but China's Operation Fox Hunt continues without real action to charge and arrest state-sponsored bullies terrorizing Canadians. This morning, the foreign affairs minister said the public safety minister will bring forward measures to protect the safety and security of Canadians.

To the minister, and for all those being harassed and bullied by China's Communist regime, what exactly are those actions and when will they be implemented?

Oral Questions

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear that we know the activities of hostile state actors are prevalent in this country. They use their intelligence and security services to threaten and intimidate individuals outside their country, and when individuals in Canada are subjected to harassment, manipulation or intimidation by foreign states, these activities constitute a threat to Canada's sovereignty and to the safety of all Canadians. That is why I want to assure them that our security agencies and law enforcement agencies are actively taking steps to protect them, their personal information and their interests, both domestic and foreign, from the threat of foreign interference and espionage.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he recognizes this reality, but on China, these Liberals are clearly falling behind our allies and they are failing to protect the safety and security of Canadians. In one year, Operation Fox Hunt coerced 680 people around the world with stark options: return to China or commit suicide. Families in China are threatened or arrested to force compliance. Canada's national security committee report said that part of this operation is even carried out here at home in RCMP offices.

The U.S. has already made arrests, so how far does this go? How many Canadians will be harmed before the government, this minister, actually does something?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I would reiterate that we are taking a whole-of-government approach to protecting the interests of Canadians and the security of Canadians. Our security and intelligence community, including CSIS and the RCMP, are actively investigating threats of foreign interference and espionage, and where the evidence exists, we will take action.

In addition to that, we have undertaken a significant outreach campaign to sensitize Canadians, Canadian companies and other stakeholders involved in this activity or subject to this activity. We will take the steps necessary to keep Canadian interests safe.

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[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Chinese Communist Party is working relentlessly to expand its economic, military and diplomatic spheres of influence. The extent of its influence came into sharper focus recently as we confronted the global pandemic that originated in China.

The World Health Organization is being influenced by China, because WHO scientists are having a hard time conducting their investigation into the origins of the virus.

Why is the government blindly trusting compromised information?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is concerning to hear the member opposite talk about the World Health Organization being under the influence of China. Listen, we know that the World Health Organization, like every organization,

will have to conduct a review of how it managed the global pandemic, but we also know that the institution plays a critical role in beating back not only COVID-19 but diseases like Ebola, HIV-AIDS and the measles.

We need global action on disease. It is what protects us all.

• (1435)

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the forces of the Chinese Communist Party are at work and are threatening the Government of Canada.

By blindly trusting compromised information, the government is putting Canadians' lives at risk. It did not listen to Canadian experts, it cut funding for the Global Public Health Intelligence Network, and it cast doubt on the asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19.

Who does the government answer to, Canadians or the Chinese regime?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every step of the way, we have relied on public health experts and officials, people who have epidemiological advice and virologists to guide our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have worked with international partners. We have done the work that is needed to protect Canadians and we are going to continue that work. This is a global incident, a public health crisis, and we have to rely on science as the way out.

It is concerning to hear the member opposite not understand that science is the way out of this crisis. In fact, we will work strongly with all partners to ensure that we support provinces, territories and Canadians.

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[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have another quick question for the Prime Minister.

Canada has invested well over \$100 billion in a massive shipbuilding policy. Basically, two-thirds are going to Irving Shipbuilding in Halifax, and one-third is going to Seaspan Shipyards in British Columbia. Less than 3% is going to the Davie shipyard in Quebec City, which is bigger, more reliable and accounts for 50% of Canada's shipbuilding capacity.

Today, we learned from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that Canada could have saved between \$2 billion and \$3 billion by purchasing two supply ships, the *Asterix* and *Obelix*, from the Davie shipyard.

Oral Questions

What is the Liberals' problem with the Davie shipyard and the Quebec City region?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, there is no problem between the government and the Davie shipyard because we are the ones who began talks to have Davie become a partner in the national shipbuilding strategy.

We will continue to work with the Davie shipyard. To date, \$2.1 billion has been awarded. Other contracts are being negotiated. Davie is a very important partner for the Government of Canada. We are proud to work with Davie and proud of Davie workers.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government had a choice. It could either award contracts to the Davie shipyard at a cost of \$1.4 billion, or it could have the work done under the shipbuilding strategy at a cost of more than \$4 billion.

That is a difference of \$2.6 billion. That is how much the government was prepared to waste to avoid awarding contracts to the Davie shipyard. That is the cost of not doing business with Quebec. The government threw taxpayer money out the window, totalling \$150 for every Quebec taxpayer, to avoid giving business to the best shipyard in North America.

When will the government award Davie its fair share of the contracts, which would be 20% instead of 3%?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, we are, of course, very proud to work with the Davie shipyard, and we are proud of the *Asterix* and its work abroad for our Canadian Armed Forces.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, comparing the *Asterix* and the supply ship is like comparing apples and oranges.

We will continue building the supply ships in Vancouver, and other very promising projects are in the works for the Davie shipyard and its workers.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. James Cumming (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, days after Meng Wanzhou, the executive of Chinese giant Huawei, was arrested in 2018, two Canadians were arrested by a Chinese government in an act of retaliation. However, this government is still toying with the idea of allowing China to plant the seeds of digital control in our country and freely collect Canadians' data and personal information.

Will the government commit today to banning 5G Huawei?

Mr. William Amos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry (Science), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are well aware that emerging fifth generation technologies are a global phenomenon, and we are going to ensure that Canadians benefit from the latest and most beneficial 5G innovations, but we are going to do this in a way that accounts for all security, eco-

nomics and scientific considerations. We are going to listen to our experts, and will make a decision in due course.

Mr. James Cumming (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has underestimated the scale and ambition of China and its Trojan Horse opportunism for too long.

China's counter-espionage law says that in any case the CCP deems relevant, organizations and individuals must provide espionage evidence truthfully. They may not refuse. Even if Huawei says that it will not hand data to the Chinese government, it would not have a choice.

Does the minister recognize the security risk in allowing Huawei to operate 5G in Canada?

• (1440)

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member opposite understands that I am not going to discuss ongoing security or criminal investigative activities undertaken by our very able security and law enforcement agencies. However, I want to assure the member and point him to, for example, the work of the NSICOP committee, which released a report earlier this year making it very clear that China is a key and growing risk in this regard.

As has already been stated, the government has its eyes wide open. We work very closely with all of our Five Eyes partners. We are well aware of all the risks inherent to this, and we are prepared to take the action necessary at the appropriate time—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, until recently, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal was reviewing a contract between the Government of Canada and Nucotech for the installation of X-ray scanners in our embassies around the world.

Yesterday evening, the committee learned that the contract with this company, which is owned by the Chinese government, had been cancelled. I find it unfortunate that the contract was cancelled only after Canadians and the opposition put pressure on the government. We can hardly conceive of the threat it would have posed to the security of Canadians travelling to our embassies.

Why did the Minister of Foreign Affairs approve this transaction for the embassies under his authority?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the opportunity to clarify this matter for Canadians.

Oral Questions

• (1445)

The contract was never approved. At the time, we made it very clear that this was a call for tenders and that national security was our top priority. None of those products were purchased. As soon as we became aware of the issue, we asked for a new call for tenders and instructed officials to ensure that national security is always the number one criterion in our tenders for security equipment.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that the government is starting to understand that we cannot trust the Chinese Communist regime.

We saw this recently in the case of a contract that had been negotiated with CanSino Biologics for the development of a vaccine. The Chinese did not deliver; they backed out. This is actually good news for us. Now, with Nuctech, the government has realized that China cannot be trusted, especially when it comes to security.

My question is simple. Can the Minister of Procurement confirm to the House that Canada will never again do business with any Chinese-controlled companies?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles once again for his question.

I think I made myself clear. I think all members in the House have understood that national security is paramount for each and every contract considered by the Government of Canada. In response to all questions today, we have said that national security would always come first. It is our duty as a government to ensure the health, safety and security of Canadians.

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[English]

HEALTH

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba the provincial and federal governments have had eight months to fix health and safety issues occurring in federally owned long-term care homes. They failed. We now have outbreaks of COVID-19 at Maples and Parkview Place long-term care homes. Workers and residents are getting sick and losing their lives.

The federal government owns Revera facilities, and it is time it stopped playing jurisdictional games and honour its responsibility to keep residents and workers safe and alive. When will the Liberals own their part of the crisis and make sure workers and loved ones can survive the pandemic?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think every member in the House is concerned with the growth of cases and indeed the tragic deaths that are occurring across the country as a result of COVID-19. Our hearts are with all of the families that have lost a loved one. In this difficult time we all have to continue to pull together.

We need a team Canada approach and that is exactly what we have been providing, whether it is \$19 billion to provinces and territories, millions of rapid tests for provinces and territories, or additional supports, such as over 250 Canadian Red Cross people deployed into long-term care homes, including in Manitoba, we will continue to be there for all Canadians no matter which province they are in.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government promised supports to small businesses, and the House passed legislation on November 6, but businesses are still waiting, and they are incurring massive debt while they wait. Ultimately the Liberals should not have delayed. This should have been passed in the summer, but they prorogued Parliament, even though everyone knew a second wave was coming.

Time is running out for so many small businesses that are closed again to protect public health. The government needs to move quickly.

Why are the Liberals not asking the Senate to convene and pass these supports? Where is the sense of urgency to save Canadian small businesses?

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that urgency is what we have been dealing with right from day one. We are making sure we have supports to help pay for staff, pay for fixed costs and get that liquidity support in the small business loans. We have treated this with absolute urgency from day one.

We will continue to do that every single day so we can bridge them to beyond this crisis. I want to thank small businesses for all the work that they are doing for our country.

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HEALTH

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opioid crisis continues to be one of the most serious public health crises in Canada's history. Tragically, the impact of COVID-19 is only worsening this crisis and many communities, such as my riding of Davenport, are feeling the effects. Canadians cannot wait. Leadership on this issue will save hundreds of lives.

Can the Minister of Health share some of the work the federal government is doing to address the devastating impacts of the opioid crisis?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her passionate advocacy for people who use substances. Every person who uses substances deserves the right to treatment and deserves the right to compassionate care.

Oral Questions

As we fight COVID-19, we cannot forget about the epidemic of opioid overdoses that is happening in our country. That is why we announced nearly \$9.5 million for four safer supply projects in Ontario, including two in Toronto. That is a way to ensure that people have access to safer substances, less toxic drugs.

In fact, we will continue to tackle this epidemic by expanding access to a safe supply of prescription opioids, committing over \$700 million toward effective treatment and fighting stigma that prevents people from—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the foreign affairs minister has repeatedly said that he is disturbed by the treatment of Uighurs, but his feelings have not led to any action. In fact, the government remains complicit in the abuse of Uighurs by failing to put in place safeguards to address the sourcing of products made by Uighur slave labour and by funding the belt and road initiative through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Therefore, when will the government use Magnitsky sanctions to hold perpetrators accountable, protect the integrity of our supply chains and withdraw Canadian taxpayers' dollars from the AIIB?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct. We are gravely concerned on this side of the House, and I think all parliamentarians are, when it comes to the plight of the Uighurs.

I have raised this issue both publicly and privately with the Chinese authorities. We welcome the work of the committee. More than that, I did speak to the representative for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to look at what the international community can do in terms of action to assess the situation and report back to the international committee.

We are going to work with the international community to hold China to account for its international obligations.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he did not need to wait for feedback from the UN. Canadian parliamentarians have been suggesting real action that the minister could have been taking for a very long time.

Last year, the Conservatives asked the government about CPP investments in Chinese military affiliated tech companies playing a significant role in the surveillance and mass detention of Uighurs. All we heard back at the time was that it was looking out for the interests of Canadian pensioners.

Has the government done anything to prevent CPP funds from enabling grievous human rights abuses?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am really surprised to hear the member say that we should not work with the UN when it comes to investigating a serious situation.

What we said was that we had taken action. The member, for whom I have the utmost respect, always says, “take action.” We took action. We are talking to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, asking what the international community is going to do, and lending Canada's support.

I think Canadians who are watching expect Canada to work with the international community to hold China to account in terms of its international obligations.

* * *

● (1450)

HEALTH

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are 10 months into the COVID crisis and news of potential vaccines are starting to surface.

However, for months, immunologists, pharmacists and public health officials have been asking the federal government to table a transparent plan on where Canada is on the list to receive a vaccine, how the vaccine will be delivered to Canadians and who will get it first.

On what date will the Prime Minister make public this plan or does he even have one?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as scientists have been working around the world on their important work to uncover effective vaccines for COVID-19, we have been working to ensure that Canadians will have access and be able to get vaccinated when the time comes.

That is why we have secured a range of vaccines and hundreds of millions of doses for Canadians, so Canadians are safe and well served when they arrive. A few vaccine candidates have published some promising results and seem to be moving quickly. This is the light at the end of the tunnel.

I know we need to continue to work closely together to get through the next several months. We will continue to work with all our partners to ensure that Canadians have access to vaccines when they arrive.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for those watching, that is word salad for “We don't have a plan and we don't have details.”

Today we learned that the military might actually have to be deployed regarding the vaccine, but we still do not have details on who is going to get it, in what order, how it is going to be distributed and how some of the logistic details might be addressed.

Oral Questions

The health minister did not deliver rapid tests in a way that could have stopped the second wave. Is her incompetence or the Prime Minister's the reason why, 10 months into COVID, we do not have any details on vaccine distribution?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a whole-of-government approach. In fact, it is a team Canada approach. We will be working closely with provinces, territories and indeed local public health as we need to. This is an endeavour that will require all hands on deck.

I am so thrilled with the work of people like those on the vaccine task force, hard-working volunteer Canadians who have been helping the Government of Canada procure the most effective vaccines. That is resulting in ensuring that Canadians have access to promising vaccines to the number of doses we will need. We will continue that hard work. I know Canadians are looking forward to the light at the end of the tunnel.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois has long criticized the anglicization of Quebec supported by the federal government, which ceaselessly promotes services in English in Quebec.

Today, 200 people complained about Montreal businesses that were unable to serve them in French. Yesterday, the minister assured me not once but twice that she recognized the decline of French and that she would take action.

Can she announce just one concrete measure, other than the modernization of the act, to address Quebecers' concerns?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that we must be there to protect the language rights of francophones, both in Quebec and across the country. This is the first time that the Government of Canada has acknowledged that it must do more to protect the state of the French language. We know it is a minority language in Canada and around the world.

I will be pleased to work with my colleague when we announce a major reform of the Official Languages Act, which will acknowledge this situation and the need for the government to set an example from the top down, but which will also acknowledge that we must do more to protect access to the language—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is not hard to understand. There is an official language in Quebec: French. There is a language under threat in Quebec: French. There is a language being supported by the federal government: English.

In the Speech from the Throne, the government promised to protect French in Quebec, but the Official Languages Act encourages services in English and institutional bilingualism. That is why the federal government constantly guts Bill 101.

When will this government stop undermining French in Quebec?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely disagree with my colleague because the reality is that we are helping francophones in Quebec and we are helping the Quebec government get access to French training services, particularly with regard to immigration, through the Canada-Quebec agreement on immigration.

We are also here to support our artisans working in the cultural sector, for example by providing support to Radio-Canada across Quebec. This is a flagship institution for francophones and Quebecers. We also actively support culture and the French fact through Telefilm Canada and all the cultural institutions. We are there as allies to francophones, allies to those who—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, the member for Saint-Laurent said she needed proof of the decline of French in Quebec and Canada. I doubt she has read a single study or listened to anything in the media. She is an MP from the Montreal area, but I doubt she spends much time walking around Montreal or going to shops and restaurants, which would explain why she is so out of touch with reality.

Interestingly, not a single Liberal MP, and certainly not any from Quebec, have spoken out against her statements, which are disrespectful to all francophones in Quebec and across the country.

Will the Prime Minister or the Minister of Official Languages have the courage to stand up and repudiate their fellow MP's statements?

• (1455)

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that my colleague focus on his own MPs.

For our part, Liberal Party of Canada MPs vigorously stand up for both official languages. Every Quebec MP ardently champions French in Quebec and across Canada. We have worked hard in the past and will continue to work hard because we know that defending French in Quebec and across Canada is essential.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. The Liberals have been in office for five years and have a long list of failures to show for it.

The COVID Alert texts are in English only in Quebec. A \$1-billion contract was awarded to WE Charity, a unilingual anglophone organization. Government officials' conference calls are in English only. Labelling rules have been suspended during the pandemic and labelling is in English only. The government is refusing to give Quebec a clear answer regarding the application of Bill 101 to federally regulated businesses.

This government is in no position to lecture anyone here in the House. It needs to introduce its bill to modernize the Official Languages Act before Christmas, as called for by all of the organizations. That is what we expect from the government right now.

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government will take no lessons from the Conservatives.

The reality is that we had to clean up their mess when we took office. They made massive budget cuts to all official language services. Our stakeholders, our francophones, particularly those living outside Quebec, were in dire straits and condemned the actions of the Harper government.

We came with an action plan that changed the reality of our linguistic minorities on the ground and supported the French language. We also offered support to CBC/Radio-Canada because the Conservatives made cuts to this flagship institution. We were there to reinstate the court challenges program—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is all talk and no action. Consultations have been held with organizations, reports have been tabled, the Senate and the Commissioner of Official Languages have made their recommendations, and the Quebec government is still waiting. The Liberals have been in power for five years now. There are only four weeks left before the holiday break.

If the Prime Minister and the official languages minister would stop with the rhetoric and actually do something to defend the country's francophones and anglophones in minority situations, the work would be done. They need to introduce legislation immediately.

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems that my colleague needs a refresher. I would remind him that we are the ones who appointed bilingual judges to the Supreme Court because the Harper government and the Conservatives never did.

I could also remind him that we recognize the enumeration of rights holders through the census, or that we will be there to protect our linguistic minorities with the court challenges program. These are all clear and concrete measures we had to take because the Conservatives failed for so long on official languages. We are there for francophones and all linguistic minorities, and we will continue to work on modernizing the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the gun violence in our big cities is getting out of control. Last weekend, in my riding of Humber River—Black Creek, an innocent 12-year-old boy named Dante was killed as he was shopping with his mother. As we mourn the loss and honour the memory of this brave young life, we must resolve to end gun violence once and for all.

Could the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness please report to the House what this government has done and

what the government is committed to doing to keep guns off our streets and end gun violence in Canada?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Humber River—Black Creek and share in her condolences to the family and friends of Dante Andreatta for this tragic and senseless crime.

We have taken very significant steps. We have invested nearly \$327 million to assist law enforcement right across this country, to the tune of \$65 million in Ontario, to deal with gun violence and the activities of gangs, but we know that there is so much more that we must do. The tragic death of Dante Andreatta must deepen the resolve of every member of the House to reduce gun violence. That is why we will strengthen gun control and we will make investments of \$250 million as promised to build up resilience of the communities and invest in—

• (1500)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the backlog of 50,000 veterans' applications is impacting our veterans' mental health. Sanctuary trauma is deeply rooted in a veteran's sense of the government's lack of sacred obligation. In December 2018, Shane Jones wrote to the Prime Minister, documenting ways that he was being treated unfairly by VAC since being medically released in 2008. Yes, his concerns are with current and past governments. The Minister of Veterans Affairs replied personally in June 2020 to Shane, and ordered a departmental review of his file four and a half months ago.

When will his review be complete?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course, the backlog is totally unacceptable to this government. That is why we invested just under \$200 million to make sure we were able to hire 350 new employees and train them to deal with the backlog. Along with that, we have over 160 other employees who are in training to make sure they deal with the backlog. Along with that, we are digitizing the files and making sure that the people who approve the files are coordinated in an appropriate fashion. We have addressed and will address the backlog.

HEALTH

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Roger Foley was born with a severe neurodegenerative disease. He gave moving testimony last week on Bill C-7 at committee. Roger helped take care of his father, who is suffering with cancer, until his own disabilities got worse. The health care system has now failed him. It denied him the supports that provide him the dignity of living at home.

Roger would like to know if the Liberal government thinks it should be easier for him to end his life than to access the supports to affirm and enhance his life.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that people with disabilities deserve all of the supports to live to their full potential and with their full dignity, no matter where they live in this country. That is why we have worked so closely with the disability community and with our stakeholders at the provincial and territorial levels to make sure they have the capacity to provide that support.

We are going to continue that hard work. Everyone, including people like Roger, has the right to live with full dignity in the manner they choose.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, support for people with disabilities is inadequate. There is a problem when medically assisted death is easier to access than disability support. Krista Carr of Inclusion Canada, an organization that works with people with disabilities, called Bill C-7 “our worst nightmare”. Dr. Gallagher from U of T is concerned that Bill C-7 would single out our elderly and could lead to preventable deaths.

Why will the Minister of Justice not listen to these concerns and accept our reasonable amendments to protect the most vulnerable in Canadian society?

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the bill that is being studied, Bill C-7, in front of committee heard very compelling testimony from a series of stakeholders, including persons with disabilities. All of those submissions are being carefully considered by the committee and were also carefully considered by the Minister of Health, persons with disabilities and the Minister of Justice during the consultations that took place in January.

This bill is an important one. It balances the need to protect those who are vulnerable with ensuring the autonomy of Canadians who are making choices about their own bodies and their own capacities. We will endeavour to listen to all stakeholders to craft a carefully balanced bill.

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DIGITAL SERVICES

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how critical our digital communication capacity is. In a time where physical distancing is

Oral Questions

the new norm, countries around the world are supporting people and businesses with digital governments.

Can the minister tell the House what best practices Canada has learned from other nations, and what kinds of collaborations Canada is leveraging with our partners?

● (1505)

Hon. Joyce Murray (Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada recently hosted the 7th annual Digital Nations Ministerial Summit. It was a virtual gathering of international digital leaders. We discussed our responses to the pandemic and, in fact, our successes in using technology innovation to help serve people during this urgent time.

I am working to accelerate this government transition to provide all Canadians with digital services that are secure, easy to use and reliable, so they can use them from any device they choose.

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POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Abacus Data published a report this morning. It found that young people in Canada are among the hardest hit by COVID-19 and they must make fundamental shifts in their education, employment and finances.

Today, the Prime Minister reiterated the importance of young people taking this virus seriously. I find this particularly condescending considering his government has held nearly a billion dollars from students. It is stuck in a Liberal scandal limbo, and students are left to struggle on their own.

Is it the government's position that if their Liberal friends cannot get that money, then no one will?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the member's question and I appreciate her advocacy on behalf of young Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Our government will continue representing and supporting young people because we know that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all Canadians, disproportionately in certain segments, and young people and students are no exception. That is exactly why we came out with the Canada emergency student benefit. That is why we put a moratorium on Canada student loans. For young entrepreneurs, we increased funding to Futurpreneur Canada. Canada summer jobs are still open so that young people can obtain their Canadian work experience.

We will continue working on behalf of young people, and I look forward to working with the hon. member so that we can deliver for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

*Business of Supply***VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have had the honour of meeting with the presidents of two Royal Canadian Legions in my riding, and I have had countless conversations with veterans and advocates who brought critical issues to my attention. Right before Remembrance Day, we heard our government thank veterans for their bravery and their sacrifices. We honour them with poppies once a year and we fail them the rest of the time. A staggering number of backlogged cases and thousands of homeless veterans are ample evidence.

There is a distinct moral, social, legal and fiduciary covenant between Canada and the active and retired members of the Canadian Armed Forces. Can the Minister of Veterans Affairs say if these obligations are upheld by the government and, following the welcome announcement to support veterans' organizations, does he also plan to increase direct support to veterans and their families?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague is well aware, we fully intend to address the homeless issue with veterans. There are a number of groups who we did support with Bill C-4, in order to make sure that they had appropriate funding.

It is part of what helps to make sure that we have organizations with boots on the ground that find veterans who are homeless and out of work. Perhaps they need an emergency fund. There are a number of avenues for them to use, but of course the organizations themselves have to have appropriate funding. That is why we made sure that they have funding: so we can deal with the housing problem for veterans in this country.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD CHINA

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood has six minutes left in his debate.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think I left off on the belt and road initiative, which is a policy that seeks to strangle independent nations and bend their resources and sovereignty to the will of Beijing.

To say the pattern is not happening here would be naive. The most obvious initiative is the supply of Huawei geared to the building of our 5G network. Security analysts have consistently raised the alarm that any Chinese company operating abroad, be it Huawei, China Telecom, Comnet, etc., holds its first and foremost loyalty to Beijing. The obvious security threat is the exchange of sensitive security information among our allies, be they Five Eyes, NATO, etc., but it is actually much deeper.

The Government of China has learned that the new gold is data. Exchanges among and between companies of hugely valuable intellectual property can be, and are frequently, hacked, but the most in-

sidious use of the control technology is people. The Government of China, through its various affiliates, uses artificial intelligence capability and its control of networks to “scrape facial recognition data to control populations.” These systems are already operative in China.

Therefore, when all our allies, NATO, Five Eyes and Sweden, which is largely a neutral country, and companies such as Telus, Bell, Rogers, etc. ban Huawei and other Chinese companies, they are doing it for good reason. It is not only in our national security interest, but it is also in our interest to protect and secure corporate data. However, most important, it is the right of every citizen to expect that the Government of Canada will protect his or her basic freedoms of speech, movement, worship, etc. from the intrusions of a foreign government.

According to Global Affairs Canada, as of March this year, China had 163 accredited diplomats working in Canada as compared to a mere 146 for the United States, far and away our most important economic and political partner, and as compared to 22 from the United Kingdom, far and away our second-most important political partner. Interestingly, twice the number of Chinese diplomats are located in Toronto as American diplomats. Is this not curious? Should we all believe that these diplomats are fervently working to foster peaceful and mutually beneficial relations between our two nations or is there something else we should believe? What are 43 accredited Chinese diplomats doing proximate to the largest research university and health network in Canada? We have seen that some universities have felt it necessary to disinvite certain Confucian institutions from their campus.

I realize that all of this sounds slightly paranoid, but maybe I can, in closing, share a little experience I had in the last election.

A small number of Liberal candidates were invited to the campus that is proximate to my riding, the University of Toronto Scarborough campus. After the usual set of speeches and questions and answers, a young woman came up to me to describe her experience. Her name is Chemi Lhamo, and she was elected as the student president of the University of Toronto campus. She is Tibetan. After her election, her Instagram was flooded with literally thousands of complaints about her election, her person, her ethnicity, and many are not to be repeated in the House of Commons.

We have all been around student politics and we know that apathy is the usual standard for university elections. Is it not just a little curious that this young woman should generate so much online hatred and venom?

The reality is that the Chinese Communist Party is here and it operates both openly and clandestinely, and its ultimate goal is to turn Canada into a vassal state. The sooner we do something about it, the better off we will all be.

I thank the movers of this motion for this timely debate and I look forward to any questions my colleagues may have.

• (1510)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for raising the case of Ms. Llamo. There have been other similar cases involving, for instance, McMaster University, where students who have sought to raise important issues or who have simply existed on campus have faced intimidation.

The Conservatives raised some of these issues at the Canada-China committee yesterday in the questioning of the Minister of Immigration to see if in some of these cases there were any incidents of those involved in this intimidation, those who were not Canadian citizens, having their status revoked or any instances of charges laid or diplomats being expelled. There is just no indication that actions were taken by the government in response to these terrible situations.

I wonder if the member could comment on what action should be taken in these kinds of cases. Also, I want to ask him about supports to victims of intimidation. Amnesty International has highlighted the lack of support for victims of foreign intimidation. What can we do to better support people like Ms. Llamo who face these kinds of challenges?

• (1515)

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, a number of actions can be taken. I have considerable confidence in the ability of CSIS, the RCMP and border services agencies, etc. that would have specific and identifiable knowledge concerning the instances he raises.

I take the view that the Government of Canada is fully aware of many of the issues he raises. However, we could do better in offering refuge and support for those who find themselves as victims of this intimidating process. If this debate does anything today and moves that issue forward, we will have done something that is useful for all Canadian citizens.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I respect the member's views on many of these issues. He has been the chair of the public safety committee among other things.

The member raised specifically some of the research and development that happens on Canadian universities. I absolutely agree with the member that the intimidation of individual Canadians, whether on campus or anywhere in the country, is a non-starter.

I was touring a facility that any of us would jump at an opportunity to see. I asked if the government could do anything. It specifically said that it had asked its security apparatus and political leaders to tell it who it could partner with and under what situations. This is a lingering issue. It is causing not just the intimidation of our citizens but also causing issues with universities as to who they can partner with on research, particularly Chinese companies that may have national security legislation applied to them.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, my colleague hits on possibly one of the greatest dilemmas of Canadian life, and that is that we conduct our research in a relatively open fashion, that there is a

Business of Supply

free, full and fair exchange among colleagues. This is the way scientific knowledge is advanced.

The Chinese government, because of its actions, has brought into question that entire premise of our research. The real question for the universities and all research institutes is who to trust. We are all still feeling our way on who we trust and how we cope with a company and research funding that does not have the best interests of Canadian citizens in mind.

Mr. Kenny Chiu (Steveston—Richmond East, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the esteemed member for Kelowna—Lake Country.

Today, we have been discussing the harmful effects of foreign interference and influence in Canada. As we have heard from many others, foreign influence is an insidious practice that undermines Canada's integrity and national sovereignty. I would like to shed some light on how this practice harms individual Canadians as well.

Intimidation by foreign actors on Canadian soil is a very real and pervasive problem. In my riding, it has adversely impacted the ability of ethnic minority diaspora groups to fully participate in experiencing the rights we hold dear as Canadians. Despite being welcomed into our country, they are still unable to exercise free speech, free association and live freely for fear of repercussions taken upon them by bad-faith actors operating under the instruction of foreign government groups or repercussions against family members in their home country. I will highlight a few examples.

Protests organized by Hong Kong democracy supporters in Canada have been met by pro-Beijing counterprotesters who use aggressive, confrontational tactics and who expert observers believe may have been directed or organized by Chinese-state authorities. Face-offs between pro-democracy protesters and pro-Beijing protesters occurred in 2019 in Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa and Richmond, British Columbia, with a pattern of aggressive, threatening and intimidating measures employed by the pro-Beijing contingent.

Media reports indicate that communist China's united front work department has identified overseas students as one of the 12 target groups for ideological guidance and promotion of party policies, important for "consolidating and expanding" the party's base. A 2016 Chinese minister of education document similarly called for networks linking "the motherland, consulates and embassies, overseas student groups and the broad number of students abroad" in order to harness patriotic energy among overseas students.

Business of Supply

Certain experts have identified Chinese students and scholar associations as an example of UFWD involvement in the educational sphere abroad. These associations are purportedly tasked with monitoring the thoughts and behaviours of Chinese students on Canadian school campuses and have been central to stifling free speech on topics related to human rights and democracy that are sensitive for the Chinese government. This is further substantiated in the Canadian National Security and Intelligence Committee report released this spring.

In that report, it is mentioned that Canada is aware of an increase in similar cyber intimidation in ethnocultural communities. The report cites information from Five Eyes allies that are also concerned with Russia, Iran and Turkey as nations that deploy broad-based and high-intensity political interference. I have personally heard many more examples that could be shared on how diverse groups in Canada are being targeted, be they Iranians, Uighurs or Falun Gong practitioners. Foreign governments are harassing Canadian citizens and they are desperately seeking help.

I would like to draw attention to the aspirational words but lack of deeds by the government on this topic. During the August 12 sitting of the COVID special committee, the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs engaged in an exchange with the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill regarding acts of foreign interference. He stated:

The safety and protection of Canadians is paramount to this government. We will never allow any form of foreign interference in Canada by state or non-state actors. Every time there have been allegations, we have taken action with the Minister of Public Safety. We invite any Canadian who might be subject to any form of such actions as have been described to contact law enforcement authorities. We will always defend the freedom and liberty of Canadians in Canada from foreign interference.

• (1520)

In response to this statement, Amnesty International has called Canada's current efforts hapless, muddled and ineffective. Commentary from human rights groups suggests reporting acts of foreign interference results in no action, as agencies lack co-operation and victims find themselves confusingly referred back and forth between agencies that ultimately decide to drop cases for lack of evidence. They have put forward ideas for solutions, which include the creation of a hotline for complaints and the creation of a counterinterference law similar to the one in effect in Australia. The Australian legislation is well thought out and contains an important provision on communications activities that I believe Canada is sorely in need of.

Australia defends its citizens from the communications akin to propaganda through a proactive disclosure scheme. I have investigated this as an opportunity, but unfortunately I have been advised by our legislative counsel that such a rule would be impossible to apply or enforce in Canada. That is something we must work together to change.

I have written before to express the urgency of non-partisan co-operation on the issues of foreign interference and influence to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Public Safety. As parliamentarians, we owe Canadians assurances that their well-being is looked after. I humbly requested that the Minister of Foreign Affairs work with the Minister of Public Safety to provide a list of

Canadian authorities that adversely impacted individuals can engage with. I also stressed the need for confidentiality in the reporting process.

I will repeat that as Canadian parliamentarians, we must acknowledge that this clear and present danger should not be allowed to continue. We must show Canadians that Canada is paying attention to these issues and that the ministers themselves are able to act and provide assurances that concerns will be addressed. I have yet to receive such assurances, and Canadians suffering from coercive foreign influence have yet to see action or hear more than an unresponsive statement from their government.

• (1525)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate the member's contribution to this important debate, particularly regarding the intimidation aimed at Canadian citizens by foreign actors specifically.

When I was on the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, we heard from many people who have suffered this intimidation. One thing that was raised is what happens when someone complains that they are being intimidated or threatened by these agents. When this is raised with law enforcement, law enforcement says that it handles criminal cases. There is no one agency assigned to look at this, and that is one of the suggestions that was made.

Does the member believe that the federal government should designate an entity so that we can truly have a serious approach to foreign interference and intimidation against Canadian citizens?

Mr. Kenny Chiu: Madam Speaker, as the international human rights groups have suggested, this has been contributing to the confusion felt by the many citizens who are impacted in Canada. They do not know who to call, and when they look to the police department, it does not handle this. When they complain to other departments, they are sent back and forth. As I said in my speech, eventually these cases are dropped and closed.

Therefore, we in Canada need to work together to make sure that something similar to the Australian government's legislation is provided so that Canadians who are influenced by foreign interference can be helped.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague from Steveston—Richmond East for his speech. I agree with most of the arguments he raised in the House. I have worked with my hon. colleague a few times, including on the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. We made a statement concerning the Uighur genocide in Xinjiang, China. My colleague and I share many of our affinities.

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Right now I am asking myself this question: Why did the Conservatives absolutely want to include a 30-day deadline in this motion? We in the Bloc Québécois find that unrealistic. We agree with the motion, but there are often two angles when we table a motion in the House. There is the political angle, where the other parties vote against the motion because we included something in it that we knew they would disagree with; and then there is the other angle, where we try to get all the parties to support the motion because we really want it to be adopted.

Why did the Conservatives want to keep the 30-day deadline, which we feel is unrealistic? I would like my colleague to explain this to me.

[*English*]

Mr. Kenny Chiu: Madam Speaker, I believe the 30-day limit is important for imposing a goal on the systemically procrastinating government that is in place.

As we have said, we mentioned our concerns many months ago, and even years ago. There has been aspirational word salad and virtual signalling, with talk and words, but no action.

It is time for Canada to actually draw a line in the sand to make sure that the world takes notice and that Canadians can be protected. We cannot delay this any further. We must take action now. I believe 30 days is a reasonable goal for the government to act on.

• (1530)

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will pick up on the previous speaker's comments on virtue signalling. He was very passionate about protecting the rights of Canadians. I agree that, indeed, at McMaster there have been some really horrific crackdowns on Uighur support.

The member named some countries. I wonder whether he would extend support to Palestinians who are here and ethnic Sikh and Muslim Indian nationals who are here. They also suffer from foreign interference.

Mr. Kenny Chiu: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives believe in self-determination and believe in seeking global freedom and democracy in a peaceful, non-violent way.

As we are seeing, foreign interference is infiltrating Canada and the influence is being cast over Canadian citizens, who are our neighbours and friends. Therefore, it is time for Canada to act in protection of our own citizens.

As I mentioned, there are many groups in the country that have voiced their concerns, including Iranians, Saudi Arabians and many other groups around the world that are modelling the Chinese Communist Party's actions—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately time is up. I tried to allow for as much time as I could.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kelowna—Lake Country.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today for the motion brought forward in the House by my colleague, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills. This is an important motion on Canada's foreign rela-

tions and national security and I am glad to have the opportunity to speak to it.

In our increasingly digital and interconnected world, security concerns are growing, gaps are becoming more evident and governments are attempting to tackle them. As technology evolves, so do the new challenges of how to ensure it is secure and accessible for the individuals using it. This includes our mobile networks and Internet connections. An issue that goes hand in hand with this is national security.

Governments across the world are thinking more and more about the implications and interconnectedness of national security, infrastructure and trade. Taking national security seriously also means protecting Canada's national interests and our Canadian values from foreign interference. Unfortunately, the Liberal government has been slow to react, allowing foreign actors to go unchecked in our system.

The motion, if passed, would require the government to make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network within 30 days, fitting within the government's commitment to announce a policy and framework on China this fall, and develop a robust plan to counter China's foreign influence in Canada.

After years of talk, uncertainty for Canadian businesses and citizens, and our allies moving on this without us, the Liberal government still has not put together any plan or made a decision. We are not talking about the Chinese people, but about the People's Republic of China. The risk of allowing Huawei into our 5G networks is well documented, and the case is clear for why the government must ban it from our system.

Huawei's involvement in our telecommunications network poses a threat to national security, as, under Chinese law, Huawei must support, assist and co-operate with Chinese intelligence activities. Experts have stated that if the Chinese communist regime were to ask for it, Huawei would have to hand over the data that it collects.

When we talk about Huawei, we are talking about infrastructure that will be the backbone for other technology, as it is also well documented that Chinese regime enterprises are investing in critical infrastructure and asset projects all over the world. Allowing Huawei into our 5G network could mean allowing China's communist regime the ability to access Canadians' private and personal data, including potentially sensitive data that the Chinese regime could use for its benefit, for intelligence-gathering or to intimidate Canadians of Chinese origin within our own borders, which, as per reports, is occurring now.

Make no mistake. This data could be given, through Huawei, to a regime with a history of human rights abuses. It has jailed democratic and activist dissidents in Hong Kong and has persecuted and mistreated religious minorities, such as the Uighur Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists, including putting them into forced labour camps.

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We cannot have weak leadership and a naive approach when it comes to dealing with a regime committing these atrocities. We need consistency, a plan and action.

The former public safety minister, Ralph Goodale, was in charge of a 5G review in 2018-19, and decisions kept being pushed off. In May 2019, he said the government would make a decision before the federal election, and then in July 2019, said it would do so after the election. That was a year and a half ago, and now it has been over a year since the election.

The request in this motion is therefore very reasonable. The Liberals cannot say they have not taken action because no one else has or that they have not had the time to review and consult.

Canada is now the only member of the Five Eyes international intelligence organization not to either ban or restrict the use of Huawei 5G equipment. Australia, New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom, all like-minded allies of Canada, are our counterparts in the Five Eyes alliance. They have moved on this and Canada has not made a decision. We have heard no plan and we are delayed behind our allies.

We see a trend here where the Liberal government is lagging behind our allies on security decisions and trade negotiations.

In the United States, moving to ban Huawei from its 5G networks was a bipartisan effort, with members from both sides of the aisle coming together.

• (1535)

Last summer, the United Kingdom implemented a full ban on mobile carriers purchasing Huawei's 5G technology. The country's National Cyber Security Centre, a government organization tasked with preventing computer security threats, did a review of the system and agreed with this ban as well as recommending that full-fibre Internet operators transition away from purchasing any new equipment from Huawei.

It is time for the current Liberal government to act. At a time of much uncertainty, this is something the government has full control over and would finally give our citizens and business owners certainty. The motion simply asks for the government to take into account the review that it did two years ago, as well as all of the information at committees and with our allies, and include this in the government's announced China policy framework, which it is working on. The motion also calls upon the government to develop a robust plan, as Australia has done, to combat China's growing foreign operations here in Canada and its increasing intimidation of Canadians living in Canada and to table it within 30 days of the adoption of the motion.

The Australian model on this has shown to be a flag bearer of how Canada could also look to respond. According to Reuters, Australia came up with its own plan after its analysis showed that China's Communist regime was posing a threat to Australia's democracy and national sovereignty. The protection of democracy and national sovereignty is fundamental and, day by day, it is showing more and more that Canada must have its own plan in this regard. Another measure Australia announced was introducing a national security test for foreign investments.

Last summer, the committee I was formerly on, the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, undertook a study of the Investment Canada Act, including hearing from stakeholders and policy experts on how state-owned enterprises, including those from China, have been able to get into Canada for the purpose of expanding international influence.

Speaking at the committee as a witness, Dr. Charles Burton, senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute's centre for advancing Canada's interests abroad, as an individual, testified. Having extensive experience in the Canada-China relations sphere, he called Canada's relationship with China one of economic coercion. He went into detail at the committee, explaining the intertwined relationship between Huawei and its executives, the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party. In his assessment, Huawei and indeed all enterprises from China meet the Canadian definition of state-owned enterprises for the purpose of the Investment Canada Act. Many academics have called on Canada to work to limit and counter China's attempts in this realm, going so far as to say that those in China's Communist regime believe that our government lacks the conviction to push back.

Another academic, Dr. Duanjie Chen at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, wrote about concerns regarding the Chinese Communist state strategy to dominate through the acquisition of large companies in other countries. According to Dr. Chen, "[State-owned enterprises] form an integral part of China's national strategy for global expansion". Canada's plan to combat China's growing foreign operations, intimidation and influence must include looking at these state-owned enterprises and their involvement in investment in our country.

Another concern some have raised is that foreign state-owned enterprises acquiring Canadian companies can get access to sensitive Canadian intellectual property and reduce the competitiveness of Canadian companies. Mr. Tim Hahlweg, assistant director of requirements at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, also spoke at the industry committee. Mr. Hahlweg stated:

As discussed in our recent public report, state-sponsored economic espionage activities in Canada continue to increase in breadth, depth and potential economic impact. In order to fulfill their national economic, intelligence and military interests, some foreign states engage in espionage activities. Foreign espionage has significant economic ramifications for Canada, including lost jobs, intellectual property, and corporate and tax revenues, as well as competitive advantages.

Mr. Jim Balsillie, chair of the Council of Canadian Innovators, also spoke at the industry committee regarding the Investment Canada Act. Mr. Balsillie described how the act must change to ensure it remains fit for purpose. He stated, "What I see is our policy-makers inviting foreign companies to take our sovereignty and prosperity away."

It is not just economic intimidation. The federal government must look at the abuses conducted by this regime abroad and also at the influence and scare tactics that we have seen and heard of right on our own soil.

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• (1540)

I would like to wrap up today by reiterating my support for this important motion, which will signify to the rest of the world, including our like-minded allies, that Canada is serious about standing up for our national interests and values, as well as having a strong and principled foreign policy backed by action.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we have seen news over the past year or so that at least two of our major telephone companies have gone with non-Huawei providers of equipment. I think Nokia was one. I forget what the other one was.

Who is left? Is banning Huawei really necessary, in practical terms, to keep it out of our 5G network?

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Madam Speaker, when we look at it, there is spending that is happening now, but there are also future capital expenditures that are on hold, which we have heard from a number of organizations, because there is so much uncertainty as to what type of infrastructure they might want to put in. It is a matter of giving certainty to these different organizations.

We also have to look at the fact that we do intelligence sharing. We were talking about the Five Eyes members. We share a lot of intelligence. It is all about being a part of that group, so that we have consistent formats we are using and the ability to share safely.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her excellent speech.

Indeed, until very recently, we worked together on the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. She alluded to the work we did together, in particular when we invited companies like Huawei or when we examined the Investment Canada Act.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say. Is she concerned about security breaches exposing Canadians' personal information? Also, is she satisfied with the Government of Canada's response to this issue?

• (1545)

[*English*]

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Madam Speaker, yes, the member and I did sit on the industry committee together and we did some really good work.

The study that we did really opened things up. We had a lot of testimony. It was great to be on one of the committees that actually sat over the summer. We had some really good testimony that opened up the concerns we have, and I mentioned some of the comments here. We had the Privacy Commissioner there as well over the course of the summer. We discussed our privacy laws and the Investment Canada Act. It became very clear that a lot of these need to be amended and that we are very vulnerable in a lot of ways here in Canada, especially with respect to the Investment Canada Act. There was a lot of concern brought forth through testimony with respect to the mechanisms for these large investments.

There is also a lot of subjectivity left to the minister, which is concerning. We should have good regulations and policies in place and take decisions out of the political realm.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, listening to the member for Fleetwood—Port Kells ask the question suggesting that some of the telecommunications companies have already moved on and have ruled out Huawei, so why would the Canadian government bother to make such a decision, if we think about it, is that not exactly why the Liberal government is slow-walking this decision? It has been studying this issue for two years now and still has not made a decision. Big companies are moving forward. Industry needs decisions.

Do Canadians not deserve to know the government has their best interests at heart, is not afraid to make a decision and will tell Canadians where it stands on this issue?

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Madam Speaker, in the conversations I have heard with a number of the telecoms, and of course I cannot speak for them but just being around a lot of those conversations, they are always looking at investments and investments are always changing. There is a lot of different software and hardware, so they are making long-term investments. We know there is a lot of investment that will be happening here over the next 20, 30 or 40 years, and those decisions are made very long term. We can certainly tag on to that. We know with a lot of the infrastructure they can use multiple different formats, so I think this is a matter of giving certainty.

Again going back to our Five Eyes allies, we want to have some consistency so they feel secure in how we are managing our data and infrastructure here.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Outremont today.

I am pleased to rise in the House to address the motion brought forward by the member for Wellington—Halton Hills. Canada takes economic security issues very seriously. Gone are the days when security concerns were limited to national security. Increasingly, economic tools are deployed by state and non-state actors that can pose threats to security.

Our government recognizes such economic threats can affect not just traditional national security concerns but also Canada's long-term prosperity and economic competitiveness. Canada is increasingly subject to both of these types of threats to our economic security. Fortunately, our government has responded to this ever-changing environment by utilizing existing regulatory tools as well as creating new initiatives that will protect the integrity and robustness of Canada's economic security.

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Protecting Canada's economic security is crucial to ensuring we have a strong economy that provides good, middle-class jobs, provides revenue for important government services and keeps Canada at the frontier of innovation and technological development.

For decades, Canada has been a strong supporter and builder of the rules-based international order. We believe in and support these rules because we know that when companies compete in a predictable and level environment the positive outcomes are tremendous: rising living standards, improved choices for consumers and new technologies that improve quality of life, to name a few.

In short, the rules have helped to support both prosperity and security. For many years, Canada has benefited from these arrangements. China too has been a beneficiary of the multilateral trade system. After joining the WTO, China became much more integrated with the world economy, and in doing so was able to lift hundreds of millions of citizens out of poverty.

However, the success of this system is not guaranteed. It must be fostered. It can be undermined when some countries do not abide by the rules or disregard the reciprocity. As the Prime Minister has repeatedly said, Canada will continue to work with like-minded nations around the world to impress upon China that the approach of coercive diplomacy is not a productive path for itself or for all of us. At times, this extends to the economic field and in turn creates risks to Canada's economic security.

Canada takes a clear-eyed view to such issues. Protecting our market access against arbitrary or retaliatory actions remains paramount for this government. Even when times are good, there are asymmetries when it comes to the economic openness of our systems. Canadian companies have to compete in uneven foreign markets that can be at times tilted by discretionary administration and implicit and explicit favouring of domestic companies, both state-owned and private. Take, for example, China's made in China 2025 industry policy, which not only includes domestic market share targets in emerging industries but also explicitly seeks to substitute imports by favouring the domestic sector.

Canada supports a globalization that is equal for all partners. Canada's economic security concerns are not limited to the economic base. There are also economic tools that create threats to national security. China has a stated policy of civil-military integration, which seeks to reorient civilian technologies, in particular advanced emerging technologies, to dual-use and military ends as this policy is carried out by countless state and non-state actors. This can blur the lines of seemingly beneficial or neutral co-operation between Canadian firms, researchers and their Chinese counterparts.

Fortunately, Canada has robust tools to deal with these challenges. Our government has also responded with new initiatives to protect Canada's economic security. For starters, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry oversees and utilizes the Investment Canada Act to ensure investments coming to Canada are of net benefit and not injurious to national security. The act applies to all investors, regardless of their country of origin.

Further, our government is responsive to changing circumstances. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many com-

panies suffered declines in valuations putting them at risk of opportunistic investment behaviour, ISED responded with a policy statement on foreign investment review and COVID-19. This subjected all state-owned investors or private investors assessed as being closely tied to foreign governments to enhanced scrutiny under the act, among other areas.

● (1550)

Another important component of Canada's economic security tool kit involves support and guidance to Canadians engaged in research. Science and technology is an important domain that contributes to Canada's international competitiveness. The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on the intense competition and aggressive targeting of Canada's advanced research. Earlier this year, the Communications Security Establishment and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service published a joint statement assessing that it is near certain that state-sponsored actors have shifted their focus during the pandemic and that Canadian intellectual property represents a valuable target.

The government remains committed to the principles of open science, but espionage and foreign interference activities pose real threats to Canadian research integrity, intellectual property and business interests. Therefore, our government has launched a Safeguarding your Research portal to help Canadian researchers access helpful tools, information and resources to assist them in protecting the knowledge and innovations they are developing.

Through the trade commissioner service and our network of diplomatic missions in China, the government also continues to provide advice to Canadian companies and stakeholders doing business in China to equip them to pursue opportunities when beneficial, while mitigating risks and troubleshooting where necessary. This co-operation helped Canada weather some of its darkest hours during the pandemic, as was the case when our government worked with Chinese authorities and manufacturers on addressing supply shortages in the health sector. China is a key supplier of personal protective equipment in the global supply chains and has accounted for a significant portion of medical supplies procured by the Government of Canada.

These are just some of the actions our government has taken to respond to the threats to Canada's economic security. Despite current difficulties, Canada continues to work with China and industry stakeholders to resolve bilateral commercial challenges. We are not losing sight of the fact that China is and will remain an important commercial partner for Canada while, at the same time, always defending Canada's interests when it comes to economic security.

• (1555)

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am sure my colleague knows that Telus and Bell invested in Huawei at loss-leader prices, far below real market value of the other 5G manufacturers, such as Ericsson or others, just to penetrate this sensitive Canadian sector. We also know that Telus and Bell want as much as \$1 billion each to compensate for their losses due to their unwise investment, should the government ban the 5G technology they have already installed.

Is that one of the reasons the government has delayed for so long doing what is correct?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, the member would know that I am certainly not privy to the information to be able to give a factual answer to that question. However, I will say that it is my interpretation and my strong belief that the government wants to weigh all of the information before making the decision that it eventually will come to, not being overly influenced by political agenda, but more by having the facts, the data, the intelligence to be able to make a decision. That is why I firmly believe that we will see that information come forward.

I will say that my main concern with this particular motion today really has to do with the timing. I find it unfortunate that when it was presented earlier, the mover of the motion was not open to adjusting the timing to ensure that the proper amount of time was given for the government to be able to complete this work. That leads me to question whether the opposition is just putting this forward in the short time frame that it is in order to score a political win or is it genuinely interested in seeing a fruitful outcome in this and getting the information it is looking for.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, exactly on that point, the government actually has undertaken a study. It has been two years in the making now and Canadians still do not know what the results are.

Why is it that Canadians are still kept in the dark? How much longer do they have to wait? Why will the government not release the information from that review so that everyone is in the know? The other allied countries have moved on with their decisions and Canada is lagging behind. It is not acceptable.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I am certain that the government has not chosen to not make the decision in order to just tie up Parliament and to force the member to ask these questions. I am sure that there is rational decision-making that is going into this. As she mentioned, the other four nations in the Five Eyes have already come to their own conclusions based on using their own intelligence and the information that they need to make decisions on their behalf.

We are an autonomous country and we make our own decisions based on the information that we collect in a timely fashion that demonstrates that we are doing the due diligence necessary in order to make that decision.

• (1600)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Boudrias (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, in this matter, which is a major national security concern for both

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Quebec and Canada, there is the issue of industrial and commercial competition in the deployment of the 5G network in Canada.

I understand that there are significant inherent technical, scientific and industrial challenges, but, when it is a matter of national security, why does Canada not invoke the national security clause to foster greater development in high tech, aerospace and telecommunications right here in Quebec and Canada? After all, we are already a major international player in these fields.

I do not understand why we are still at this stage, two years later, when the chief of staff of the armed forces said in January that Canada was behind in finding solutions and in engaging enormous resources here in Quebec and Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I do not think that anybody in this House disagrees with the seriousness of this. Everybody takes this very seriously. I was very happy to see earlier on that one of the very first questions that the Bloc members asked was about the timing of this. I think, before it was even raised on this side, they questioned whether 30 days was long enough.

I do not disagree with the member that this is extremely serious. I think that everybody is taking this very seriously. On this side of the House, it is just with respect to the timing of it, which goes to the amendment that we tried to propose. Unfortunately, the Conservatives were not supportive of that.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on the motion by my colleague from the Conservative Party, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, for whom I have great respect. He has intervened on numerous occasions with respect to our foreign policy on China.

I do feel that, though there is some daylight, on many levels we are very much on the same page. Our Prime Minister has already, on multiple occasions, stated that our government will continue to push back on China's coercive diplomacy, and will work with our allies to push China to respect the multilateral rules-based order.

We will continue to stand up for our values, and continue to insist on the respect of human rights and freedoms in China. We will not back down from raising our concerns regarding China's repeated violations of human rights, whether in Hong Kong, Xinjiang or elsewhere. We do all of it while demanding the immediate release of our two arbitrarily detained Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor.

We know that a concerted international or multilateral approach is the most promising track. I am personally optimistic that starting on January 20, we will have a new like-minded administration at the helm of our ally and neighbour to the south, who believes in this type of multilateralism and rules-based order, and who believes that our interests on the world stage align closely. There is opportunity to work with our allies on a strong multilateral approach to China. Canada is well positioned to harness that opportunity, and we should not lose sight of that.

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However, allow me to now point out, in response to this motion, what Canadian parliamentarians and our government have already done and continue to do.

In response to China's imposition of the new national security law in Hong Kong, legislation that threatens the one country, two systems agreement and endangers the freedoms of those living in Hong Kong, Canada has suspended our extradition treaty, banned exports of sensitive materials and announced sweeping new and expanded pathways for residents of Hong Kong to immigrate here to Canada.

Only a few days ago our Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke out against the removal of Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers, noting that China's move was in disregard of Hong Kong's Basic Law, and a further assault on Hong Kong's freedoms. He qualified these actions as a break of China's international obligations.

Last month, the subcommittee on international human rights, in the context of its important study on the situation in Xinjiang, tabled a scathing report on the persecution of the Muslim Uighur minority there. The report noted mass detentions, forced labour, state surveillance and population control measures. The report concluded that these were violations of human rights and that these measures were meant to eradicate Uighur culture and religion. This same parliamentary subcommittee also detailed the forced sterilization of Uighur women and girls, forced abortions and forced use of contraceptive devices in a systematic attempt to persecute and possibly eradicate Uighur people.

As a result of all of the evidence before the subcommittee, both in 2018 and 2020, the subcommittee concluded that it was persuaded that the actions of the Chinese Communist Party constitute genocide as laid out in the genocide convention.

Our Parliament has not been silent, and no amount of coercive diplomacy will silence us. It is not only in Parliament and through parliamentarians that Canadians have heard our voice, indeed, the world has heard our voice. Canada's ambassador to the United Nations has been among the most vocal on the international stage in recent weeks. Ambassador Rae is not known to mince his words.

Whether at home or on the highest of international and multilateral venues, Canada has been vocal, and China has noticed. China has been very quick to respond, indicating that it will retaliate against Canada for our position. Still, we have not wavered, and we will not waver.

• (1605)

[*Translation*]

The Conservative Party's motion before the House today underscores the fact that we all agree, regardless of our political affiliation, on the importance of adopting a strong foreign policy in conjunction with our allies, based on principles and supported by measures.

I will therefore remind my hon. colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills and every other member in the House that that is exactly what Canada is doing.

In addition to our committees' and subcommittees' reports, findings and conclusions, which are public, and which China has obvi-

ously noted and commented on, last month, we joined with 38 other countries in speaking out strongly against China's human rights violations. Along with the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, Australia and many other countries, we demanded that the UN be given immediate broad and unfettered access to Xinjiang province.

In June, Canada was one of the 27 countries to speak out against Beijing's so-called national security law, threatening the freedom of Hong Kong residents. We recently saw the impact of this freedom-destroying law, with the expulsion of four pro-democracy representatives from Hong Kong's legislative council. The remaining pro-democracy members resigned.

We are not naive. China is the second-largest economy in the world. Access to its enormous markets and the opportunities they offer is a must for our producers, but Canada will nevertheless continue to defend our values.

[*English*]

Let me now address the aspect of the motion that I do find highly problematic, which stipulates, in fact dictates, that the government must make a public decision on Huawei within 30 days. I certainly understand and appreciate that colleagues on all sides of this chamber may hold reservations and concerns about any involvement of Huawei in Canada's 5G networks, but we cannot substitute our personal views for the professional analysis of our national security agencies. We as Parliamentarians cannot murky the waters of our national interest; we cannot compromise national security because of political reasons.

There are numerous factors at play. There are experts at CSIS studying this question. There are ongoing negotiations for the release of the two Canadians being held in captivity in China as we speak. Significantly, it is a poison pill to indicate in this motion that we should choose an arbitrary number of days in order to make a decision public on this matter. I would not want the debate, or any of the arguments that have been raised today by members of the Conservative Party or otherwise, to mislead Canadians.

Canada has not granted Huawei access to our 5G networks. If you look at our industry, on the ground right now in Canada, Bell, Telus and Rogers have all announced they will not use Huawei 5G equipment. I will repeat that. Our major Canadian providers have already stated publicly that they will not use Huawei infrastructure for 5G. I understand that what this motion is requesting is that the Government of Canada issue its decision, but to give a 30-day deadline is simply arbitrary and artificial.

It is our national security agencies, CSIS and our Communications Security Establishment, that are studying the question, and as much as I appreciate that their study is taking time, I do not think it is in our national interest or the interests of Canadians to place an arbitrary deadline of 30 days in order to issue this decision.

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This is not the first time I have stood in this House to speak out on China, and I fear very much that it will not be the last, and though I may be one of the more hawkish members of our caucus on this issue, I urge my Conservative colleagues to accept the invitation to discuss amendments to this aspect of their motion with our government. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs said this morning in debate, China poses some of the key foreign policy challenges of our time. I would suggest humbly that we, together in this House, rise above to address them.

• (1610)

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I wonder whether the member thinks the FIPA that was signed in 2014 by Stephen Harper, signed without any input at all from Parliament, really restricts what Canada can do in terms of fettering Chinese business activities here in Canada, and whether that agreement has had any impact on why the government has taken so long to make a decision on Huawei.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, I believe there are numerous factors going into that decision, which is currently under review. As I mentioned in my speech, there are security agencies evaluating this aspect of the question.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs indicated that, above all, we must consider our national security here in Canada. I believe that is what is guiding the decisions of this government. It is absolutely necessary for all Canadians to keep that in mind.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite and congratulate her on her speech.

I too want to come back to the question of Huawei. In her speech, the hon. member talked about the importance of respecting and defending our values. It is true that with a trade partner as important as China, we sometimes walk on eggshells and we have to learn to bite our tongue at times.

In the case of Huawei in particular, our Five Eyes partners and most telecommunications companies have chosen to turn their back on Huawei technology.

I wonder why it is so hard to follow suit. I do not see how we could come out looking like the bad guys in this story if we decide to join our partners when it comes to Huawei.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I agree that some of our allies have made up their minds and others have not. I should remind hon. members of the House that we are in a very different position here in Canada. Not only are two Canadians being arbitrarily detained in China, but there are also other internal considerations that do not exist elsewhere.

I firmly believe that we must continue to work with our allies, as my colleague suggests, but we must also consider the specific situation of Canada and Canadians.

• (1615)

[*English*]

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, we have heard that the government is announcing this framework by the end of the year, working on China and putting a plan together. If the government is not including Huawei 5G, or how to combat China's growing foreign operations and increasing intimidation within Canada, which is what the motion is, what is included in the framework?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, as I believe it is the first time I am responding to my colleague opposite, I would like to congratulate her on her new critic role for international trade.

Let me be very clear. The government is not saying that it is refusing to make a decision regarding Huawei now or 30 days from now. It is saying that the world is changing at an extremely rapid rate. We cannot predict where we will be in 29 days from now. Putting an arbitrary 30-day limit on this important decision does not make any sense.

We will see what will be included in the realm of possibilities on our framework between now and the end of the year. It is possible that this decision will be included, but it is possible that the world will change 100 different ways between now and then. I do not think it is in anyone's interest, not in any Canadian's national interest, to put an arbitrary deadline of 30 days on this decision.

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to start by letting you know I am splitting my time with my fantastic colleague, the member for Lethbridge.

Most of my comments are concerned with the last paragraph of the motion, which I will address first. I would like to give members a bit of background about myself. I have had the privilege of accompanying former Prime Minister Stephen Harper to China three times to meet Chinese leaders and Canadians who were working or doing business in China. Those visits were very fruitful. While we were developing a closer bilateral relationship, the Harper government never hesitated to bring up issues or concerns in a respectful way.

Before joining politics, I worked as a volunteer in Chinese universities training teachers and students in entrepreneurship. I also brought international aid from Canada to remote and second-tier cities to help the poor and needy. My field experiences in China enriched me with an understanding of the people, the culture and the places I visited across China where my parents were originally from.

I represent Richmond Centre. According to the 2016 census, provided by Statistics Canada, my electoral district contains the second largest population of people of Chinese ethnic origin in the nation. It is very important and always important in any debate to distinguish between ethnicity and nationality. While my ethnic origin is Chinese, my nationality is one of being a very proud Canadian. To be exact, I was born British because I was born in Hong Kong when it was still a British colony. I started with a British passport when I came over as an immigrant over 40 years ago. Of course, I am now a proud Canadian.

Business of Supply

While some ethnic origins are linked to a single country, many are linked to multiple countries. For instance, many of the ethnic Chinese in Richmond came from the People's Republic of China. A good number came from Hong Kong when it was still a British colony. Others came from the Republic of China, otherwise known as Taiwan. Let us not forget those who came from China in the 18th century to build the Canada Pacific Railway and their descendants who stayed in Canada.

Finally, we have a significant number of people born in Canada, informally known as CBC, which is not the broadcasting company, but Canadian-born Chinese. There are also other ethnic Chinese immigrants who came from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and so on. Many came here to become Canadians, including myself.

My duties as a member of Parliament are focused around the Canadians who make up Richmond Centre and the issues that concern them first and foremost. I am continually grateful for them sending me to Parliament to be their voice, and it is their concerns that I have in mind. Many, if not a majority, of those residing in Richmond are immigrants. It is understandable that affairs in their place of origin get brought up in discussions. They typically have family members abroad and, sometimes, business interests and ties.

While every member of Parliament has their own policies regarding overseas events, or even those across the U.S. border, mine has been to focus my energy on the concerns of Richmond.

• (1620)

Many of my constituents came from Hong Kong, both before and after the July 1, 1997, handover as per the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Over the past year, some have written to me about the domestic state of affairs with protests regarding democratic freedoms in the Special Administrative Region. Indeed, with China's imposition of the national security law on Hong Kong, we have seen predictable consequences: jailing of those who dare to speak against the government and, most recently, the expulsion of democracy-supporting legislators in the legislative council. Perhaps most important has been a chilling of free speech: one of the most important elements of a functioning democracy. To those non-Canadian Hong Kongers who are interested in making a life for themselves in our great country, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship has moved a bit forward in this direction, and my colleagues and I will encourage further progress.

There are numerous other stories involving Canadians who are jailed in China. The two Michaels, Kovrig and Spavor, are well known. Lesser known is the case of John Chang and Allison Lu, two Canadians who operate Lulu Island Winery in Richmond and have been detained in China since 2016 for economic reasons. As early as 2017, I brought their challenge in China to the attention of the Liberal government, but nothing seems to have been done. I bring this up because China's operations are international and affect Canadians domestically and abroad. Canada has limited power to influence affairs overseas. Given this, we must protect Canadians on Canadian soil to the extent possible, as it is clear we are not well equipped to protect Canadians abroad.

In Richmond, we also have a large population of immigrants from mainland China who wish to make better lives for themselves

in Canada. Many have become Canadian citizens and, because China does not recognize dual citizenship, they gave up their Chinese nationality in the process. However, this does not cut their links to China as most have relatives up, down and across the family tree still living on the mainland. There are many stories involving coordinated Chinese state operations on Canadian soil and in other western democracies. One of these operations is the so-called United Front, which facilitates state coordination of foreign associations that consist of mainland Chinese-connected immigrants.

Another issue of foreign influence is the impact of industrial espionage. The other part of this motion talks about Huawei, but one does not need to look very far to read stories about technology being taken away from Nortel by Huawei, which used to be a Canadian contract manufacturer for Nortel. In a different age, we could build a Canadian telecommunications network with purely Canadian technology, but no more.

The most disturbing issue on an individual level is how democracy is threatened by the oppression of speech. It is very likely that any immigrant of Chinese descent who has any connection to China will be under the watchful eye of the Chinese Communist Party. If there is anything in the open that opposes the interests of China or causes embarrassment for the Communist Party, there are known examples of family members in mainland China receiving a knock on the door from the police instructing the offender to stop, or else. Both in Hong Kong and around the world, this again has a chilling effect on open and free speech.

• (1625)

For Canadians, especially those in Richmond, who came to Canada to enjoy our democratic freedoms, this intimidation—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, the member's time is up. She will be able to add through questions and comments.

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

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, the member and I share something in common. We not only have an interest in the very important debate taking place right now, but we also have a very strong love and passion for the Philippines.

One of the things I wanted to bring up to my colleague is that there is no doubt that, on all sides of the House, we recognize the many issues between Canada and China. When we look at resolution, one of the things we suggested is that opposition members look at ways in which maybe they would be open to amendments dealing with the 30-day issue.

I am wondering if my colleague could provide her thoughts on the fixation of why it is felt we need to go with the 30 days.

Business of Supply

Hon. Alice Wong: Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary and I worked on many things and, as he mentioned earlier, in the Filipino Canada friendship group.

Allow me to finish the last part of my speech regarding Huawei, because that is probably exactly what the parliamentary secretary wants to comment on. While I am not as savvy with technology as some of the younger members in this chamber, I am still a keen user of mobile devices. Needless to say, I believe the security of mobile communications, including who we communicate with, should be kept within Canadian borders if at all possible.

The decision to involve Huawei in our next-generation mobile networks has undoubtedly been studied for greater certainty. This decision should be made known so providers can better prepare. The ambiguous approach currently taken by the Prime Minister is not helping.

I understand the parliamentary secretary is asking about the timeline. It is my understanding that, yes, we are open to amendments on—

• (1630)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have to interrupt to allow for other questions.

The hon. member for Terrebonne.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Boudrias (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is really interesting that the House is finally dealing with this national security issue, which is a major concern in the world in which we live.

One thing is for certain, our society today does not have enough technical and technological resources to counter any type of foreign influence, whatever it may be. Here we are talking about competition and international markets again when, in the circumstances, Canada should act on national security grounds.

As I said earlier in the House, I think that our society could quickly come up with a design and construction plan to keep our aerospace industry going and produce everything we need. We are talking here about satellites and relay antennas for telecommunications.

I do not understand why our government does not take the bull by the horns and force an existing industry to remedy a technical situation that is threatening national security. I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that because her party moved this very worthwhile motion this morning.

[*English*]

Hon. Alice Wong: Madam Speaker, the member is definitely right. It took the government two years even to come up with an answer to look at this very challenging issue. Some of my technical friends told me that by the time the government makes a decision it will no longer be 5G. It could be 6G technology, or even higher.

Canada will fall behind if the government does not make up its mind and do something really concrete to help our providers move on for a better future and for our future generations.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, Canada is standing on the precipice. Inaction and appeasement will no longer do us good. The government must take a stand and defend Canadians instead of the interests of the communist party, known as the Chinese government. Already too much time has passed. Words have been minced, and numerous promises have been made and broken, by the current government.

With this motion, the Conservatives are calling on those across the aisle to take urgent and necessary action to do two things. The first is to decide on Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network going forward: is it allowed or is it not? The second is to develop a robust plan to combat China's negative influence in our country, in particular using threats and intimidation to go after members of the Chinese community who live here. The status quo is no longer acceptable. Leadership is now required, and action is a must.

The new standard for broadband cellular networks is 5G. It is unique in that hyper-connectivity will not only link cellphones and computers through a local antenna, but will also connect a wide array of devices that can transmit a signal. These include self-driving cars, fancy fridges, fire alarms connected to the Internet, a plethora of medical devices and even baby monitors. If access to this network was freely granted to a foreign state that did not respect the rule of law, and therefore human rights, the potential ramifications could be absolutely disastrous. That is exactly the place we find ourselves in today: on the precipice of potential disaster.

Canada is the only member of the Five Eyes alliance that has not banned or restricted the Chinese telecom giant Huawei from its 5G network. The Five Eyes, consisting of the U.S., the U.K., Australia, New Zealand and Canada, is an alliance of like-minded nations that works together to share intelligence and signal possible security threats in order to protect one another. Every other country in this alliance has flagged Huawei as a threat and has taken action that is necessary, either by limiting access to Huawei or banning it altogether. Why has Canada not done likewise?

Business of Supply

In May of last year, when questioned about when his government would decide or take action on this, the public safety minister at that time said, “We understand the importance and the urgency of the question.” We are here, more than a year and a half later, asking why action still has not been taken. He promised he would decide before the 2019 election whether Canada would join its Five Eyes allies in banning Huawei access. He promised that he would make that move. More than a year has passed and still absolutely nothing has happened. This is why we are here today. This is why we are demanding action. Canadians deserve a government that will act in their best interests, even if it requires hard decisions to be made. I believe that is exactly the nature of government. Governments exist to make the difficult decisions and to lead. To sit idly, as the government currently is, is to embrace and perpetuate weakness and therefore put Canadians at risk. After all, a government's first responsibility is to ensure the safety and security of its citizens.

With its long-term plan of becoming the world's economic superpower, China is developing what we are calling the “new silk road”, which is now the belt and road initiative. China is using an approach that is nothing short of global economic imperialism. The Chinese Communist Party has not been shy in enacting its plan to take over industry, ports, mines and infrastructure projects in other countries. The execution of this long-term game plan has been termed “debt-trap diplomacy”. Let me explain.

In 2018, I had the opportunity to spend some time in the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, where I saw first-hand how China was engaging in this very practice. It was building infrastructure, putting in ring roads, tall buildings and the like to help with economic prosperity. In the end, it actually results in great harm. China propositions developing nations with a deal that sounds too good to be true.

• (1635)

China will make a massive investment in national resource projects, build a port for cruise ships so tourism can be expanded and build major infrastructure so it will boost the local economy. However, once the deal is signed, the Chinese government brings its own people to do most of the work rather than employ locals. If the massive loan is not paid by a set time, China actually takes ownership of the land, the resource, the port or the bridge and thereby exerts its political and economic dominance.

It is important that our leaders do not mince words when speaking of a government that is operating under false pretense for the purpose of destabilizing foreign countries to accrue more economic power.

Despite our best wishes, of which we have many, Canada is not immune to the infiltration both technologically and economically that China threatens. It is time to wake up and it is time to exercise courage. As Churchill said, “Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision.” It is decision time.

Naively, Canada has assumed that if we play nice and seek to appease the dragon, it will not bite us. However, in what world does that work? We have to open our eyes and see the reality that is before us. I want to emphasize that appeasing a hostile actor does not result in a trusting or functional relationship. In fact, on the con-

trary, it creates an imbalance where one party becomes dominant and the other submissive.

The Chinese regime has proven that it only acts in the interests of itself. It does not respect international treaties and it does not share our values in Canada. Instead, it has demonstrated behaviour that is vindictive, controlling, misleading and altogether domineering. There is concrete evidence of Chinese espionage, infiltration, systematic interference in Canadian companies and the federal government.

CSIS, our national intelligence agency, has said that Beijing uses undercover agents to target members of Canada's Chinese community to silence critics of China's regime. These agents use threats of retribution against their families in China to coerce and control.

Let us not forget that the Chinese government has illegally imprisoned two Canadian citizens, Michael and Michael, and has held them captive for nearly two years in retaliation for Canada's arrest of Huawei CFO on an American extradition warrant. This type of behaviour is simply not acceptable.

A reasonable fear in dealing with a bad actor who does not play by the rules, however, is retaliation. It is undeniable that China holds economic leverage in almost every country, including our own. Last year, we saw China flex its muscles when it decided that it would stop buying certain agricultural exports, including canola products, again because it did not like that we arrested its tech executive. These retaliatory actions drastically hurt Canadian farmers. Therefore, we must work together to mitigate this backlash when China's communist government does not get its own way. One of the best ways we can do that is by joining forces with the other four allies.

Agriculture is also a Canadian superpower and we can use this sector to broaden our global reach, seek out new markets and minimize the amount of leverage that China currently holds over us. We need to join our allies to show that we and they are not alone. Australia has stuck its neck out, so to speak. Canada must not stand by while our allies are fighting the good fight.

Today we are calling on the government to follow in Australia's footsteps by putting together a concrete plan to stop China's actions, which are threatening Canada's national interests and our values. As a free and democratic nation, we have an obligation to continually push other countries in the direction of freedom and democracy so our fellow man can live with basic human rights.

Business of Supply

We cannot turn a blind eye to the horrendous human rights violations, the silencing of political dissidents or the estimated million Uighurs being detained in prison camps today. We cannot ignore the plight of those sufferers in order to protect our own economic advantage.

We are currently in a faceoff with a growing economic superpower. Now is the time to stand our ground, to push back against this communist regime whose political ideology is rooted in the philosophy that preaches world domination. This is an opportunity for Canada to show leadership on the world stage, as we once did.

• (1640)

I urge my Liberal colleagues to take a firm stand against the Chinese Communist Party and to support this motion today. As the saying goes, “If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything.”

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.): Madam Speaker, toward the end of the member's speech, she concluded by saying that Canada should take a strong position against China as we have done before.

I wonder if she could clarify that. It was my understanding, and I was not here at the time, that under the Conservative government of former prime minister Stephen Harper, Canada concluded a FIPA agreement on foreign investment and that Prime Minister Harper went to China on three occasions in order to continue to deepen his relationship with China.

Ms. Rachael Harder: Madam Speaker, we are talking about more than 20 years of history. A finger cannot be pointed at any one government or any one political party.

Today, I am not bringing forward a partisan motion; I am bringing forward a motion on behalf of the Canadian people. I am standing up for their best interests. I am standing up for the safety and security of this very country. That is the first role of government, and it is time for the Liberal government to take action.

• (1645)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member has spoken up about the way the Chinese government aggressively takes its own initiative throughout the world.

We have been saying to the Liberal government that more must be done to protect our citizens in Canada. One of the things that I heard at the special committee on Canada-China relations was that when foreign agents were intimidating our citizens or were trying to impose the will of the Chinese government, there was no central agency or phone number to take their information. Many law enforcement agencies will say that they handle property crime, theft and some other acts of violence, but we do not handle intimidation by a foreign state.

There is a role to be played by the Canadian government. Does the member believe that more needs to be done so our intelligence agencies can act on this intelligence to force these agents out in the open?

Ms. Rachael Harder: Madam Speaker, at the end of the day, individuals of Chinese ancestry have chosen to call Canada home. Many of them are Canadian citizens. Many of them have been here for generations. These individuals are receiving intimidating phone calls, intimidating emails and other forms of communication from the Chinese communist government. These intimidations are being used against them to try to silence them. That is wrong.

Canada and the government can play a role by putting in place a central agency where these individuals, who come under these threats from the communist party, are able to then report those actions and then counteraction by authorities in Canada are able to respond. However, if we do not give that opportunity and provide those outlets, then the government is actually misstepping in its role and responsibility with regard to the safety and security of Canadian citizens. That is wrong.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will be frank with my Conservative colleagues. This is an excellent motion. It is a very fine motion that is very well worded. I probably would have even been happy to move it myself with one difference: the 30-day deadline.

If we want this motion to have a major impact, why set an unrealistic deadline? Earlier, we were asked to draw a line in the sand. I think that, if we want this motion to work and have an impact, then we might need to think about removing the 30-day deadline.

What does my hon. colleague think about that?

[English]

Ms. Rachael Harder: Madam Speaker, I said in my speech that the former public safety minister promised in May 2019 that action would be imminent. He said that action would be taken before the 2019 election. The 2019 election took place in October of last year. That is more than 380 days ago. Thirty days is no problem. Let us come up with a plan. We have been waiting more than 380 days. A plan in 30 days? The government should get to it.

[Translation]

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 Edmonton Strathcona, Seniors; the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, The Environment; the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable, Official Languages.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am always pleased to rise in the House on behalf of my constituents of Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia and also on behalf of the Bloc Québécois as the critic for public safety and national security. Furthermore, I would like to thank my colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills for all the work he has done on the matter before us today.

Before I begin, I would like to inform you that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean.

Business of Supply

I will start with a number: 708. Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor have now been arbitrarily detained in China for 708 days. These two men have not been able to hold their respective families in their arms for 708 days. During that time, Ottawa has not done much. Since these two Canadians were unfairly detained without cause, relations have continued to deteriorate. Now, everyone is paying the price for Ottawa's lack of vision.

China's foreign policy became particularly aggressive with the arrival of the Communist Party of China's new leader. One example is that more than one million Uighurs were imprisoned in concentration camps, which was recently described as genocide by the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. I also want to commend my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean for his work on the subcommittee.

In addition, a law was passed, forcing Chinese businesses to help collect intelligence, and then there is the Hong Kong national security law, which radically diminishes the political freedom and freedom of expression of residents. Furthermore, this aggression is not reserved for territories that China considers its own.

Take, for example, the use of economic blackmail to force businesses and individuals to conform to China's vision of the world. Canadian companies like Air Canada must now write "Taipei, China" instead of "Taipei, Taiwan", after China threatened to cut off access to Chinese airports. Another example is China's repression against Hong Kong, in violation of international commitments taken during the handover of Hong Kong in 1997.

Over the past few years, China has been very aggressive and expansionist toward its neighbours, including with the development and military occupation of an archipelago near the Philippines and everywhere else in the South China Sea.

We have to face the facts. The Chinese Communist Party will continue to assert itself more aggressively and its influence, backed by its staggering economic weight and massive investment in its military capacity, will continue to grow and become more dangerous than ever for the national security of Quebec and Canada.

The wilfully blind strategy of Ottawa is not working. Doing nothing in the hope that the situation improves is futile. We need a government that takes China seriously. We need a government that will govern with strong principles and defend its citizens against the repeated attacks of communist China.

On September 10, an investigation by the Journal de Montréal showed that even Quebecers here in Montreal were victims of espionage and intimidation at the hands of Beijing. What is the government doing? It is doing nothing. People here at home are being targeted by the communist Chinese regime and Ottawa is asleep at the switch. It is unacceptable.

There is still no plan to protect us apart from allowing Huawei, a Chinese company, to work its way deep into our telecommunications network, thereby jeopardizing national security. This company has been involved in numerous spying scandals, even spying on the African Union. In 2012, China gave the African Union a fully equipped ultramodern building. China supplied everything: networks, computers and telecommunications systems.

In 2017, African computer scientists realized that the servers were sending out huge amounts of data at night, when nobody was working in the building. They discovered that the data was going to servers in China that were being used to spy on political leaders and staff. Who was the main supplier of the infrastructure? Huawei.

Here is another example of the threat the Chinese government poses to Quebec. Three years ago, China adopted a new national intelligence law. All Chinese companies are obligated to contribute to Chinese intelligence work, be it military or civilian intelligence. Nothing is left out.

For example, a company could be told to spy on behalf of another Chinese company to give China an advantage on the world stage. China has always denied that its companies are required to conduct espionage in other countries, but western intelligence services agree that Chinese law applies abroad.

For these obvious reasons, which only the Liberal government stubbornly refuses to acknowledge, experts worry about including Chinese components in essential infrastructure such as telecommunications networks. The British are phasing in a Huawei ban and will shut the company out completely by 2023.

● (1650)

Everyone agrees: intelligence services, the CIA and CSIS consider the threat too great and believe that the company should be banned.

The United States has banned Huawei from developing the 5G network in that country and is pushing for its NATO allies to follow suit, which Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain have done.

Australia, which became a victim of China's growing influence, adopted its foreign influence transparency scheme in 2018. All individuals and companies acting for the benefit of a foreign country in the political sphere must register and provide details about their activities in a public register. The law also prohibits overseas donations. The most important aspect of this Australian law is that it criminalizes all hidden foreign influence operations, in other words by an individual or organization that is not registered in a public registry. Any attempt to engage in covert propaganda for the benefit of a foreign state is illegal and could result in a five-year prison sentence.

All of Canada's allies have taken a clear stand against Huawei in the development of 5G technology, yet this Liberal government continues to create uncertainty. However, our response should be unequivocal and aligned with that of our closest allies. I sincerely wonder what the government is waiting for to act.

I will take this opportunity to say a few words about the issue of artificial intelligence. In an article that appeared in *La Presse* last January, we learned that Canada is a real hotbed for Chinese spies. Many have moved to Canada to gain better access to the United States and to steal all kinds of civilian and military industrial secrets, such as genetically modified corn seeds, technical documents on fighter planes, composite materials used in the construction of vehicles and anti-submarine equipment. The FBI estimates the theft of intellectual property in the United States to be between \$300 billion U.S. and \$600 billion U.S.

If they can do it in the United States, they can certainly do it in Canada. According to Wesley Wark, professor of international relations at the University of Ottawa, the time has come to make a radical shift, and major investments and to really step up our counter-espionage efforts. It is imperative that we protect Canadian and Quebec companies that continue to earn international renown for Canada.

Let us be very clear: China intends to become the greatest artificial intelligence power in the world. In 2017, China implemented its artificial intelligence development plan as part of a project of unprecedented scale: the brand new silk road, which now includes 70 countries in a connected infrastructure plan. Once again, let us be clear. With this project, China plans to become the largest economic power in the world, and the project will protect its economic, military and diplomatic interests.

Why must we talk about artificial intelligence and the silk road? I bring it up because the Chinese industry will be fully connected through artificial intelligence within five years. It will produce goods and control companies by balancing supply and demand. On top of controlling the entire Chinese industry, artificial intelligence will monitor and control the Chinese people very tightly.

Let us not fool ourselves. This technology will not be limited to China. China has already exported its technology to authoritarian governments around the world, which will allow them to control their own people. For example, Chinese telecommunications company ZTE is rolling out a system to control the people of Venezuela through the brand new fatherland card, an ID card that records information about citizens.

China is not just strictly monitoring and clamping down on its people's political freedoms and freedom of speech. It is exporting its model, and that is worrisome. We could continue talking about this for a long time, but I will close by saying that I will support my Conservative colleague's motion.

I do, however, want to express some reservations about this motion, as my colleagues did before me. It seems unrealistic and counterproductive to me to ask the government to adopt a plan to fight interference from China in Canada in 30 days. I realize that the legislative and parliamentary process is always too long, but we must not exaggerate either. We are asking the government to resolve a problem that is currently being examined by various committees, including the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations and the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, of which I am currently a member.

Business of Supply

We would likely end up with an incomplete and ineffective plan that would be created hastily and would not help improve things very much, if at all. I think that a longer, more reasonable deadline would enable the committees to participate in developing that plan in a constructive manner.

• (1655)

Honestly, I have a hard time understanding why the Conservatives are not waiting for the findings of the committee that they themselves created before coming to their own conclusions. The Liberals seem open to this proposal and they wanted to amend the motion, but now the Conservatives do not seem to agree. We need to stop encouraging—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I am sure the hon. member can finish her remarks during questions and comments.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

[*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, I appreciate the number of thoughts the member stated this afternoon.

I have followed the debate throughout the day, and I think parliamentarians on all sides of the House share many of the concerns expressed within the motion. The government did attempt, as the member referenced, to make an amendment to the motion so that we do not get fixated on the 30 days and we take a look at the bigger picture. The member made reference to other standing committees that are dealing with this, so let us not prejudge things. Let us try to continue to move forward on this very important file. It would be a whole lot better, I suspect, if we saw unanimous support for a motion dealing with the substance of this motion.

Why is there a fixation on the 30 days? Could the member indicate to the House whether she would fully support the motion if it were amended as suggested by the government?

• (1700)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I agree with him 100% on that.

I think we could be a bit more flexible and take more than 30 days. As my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean was saying a bit earlier, we are in full agreement with this excellent motion, which is a necessary one. I shared plenty of facts, and the Chinese situation is worrisome.

Yes, the legislative process always takes too long, but 30 days seems a bit tight to me. I think we can set aside the partisan sparring and get Liberals, Conservatives, the Bloc and the NDP to sit down together. I think that is the best way to agree on a reasonable deadline and a good solution.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Madam Speaker, there has been a lot of discussion today about the idea that the motion may be getting rushed. I could point to a few pieces of legislation from over my short term here in the House that have also been rushed.

I wonder if the member would agree with me that it is very important for us to get this motion passed quickly. As my colleague alluded to, some of our greatest allies have said absolutely no to Huawei. I believe doing otherwise would be exposing all Canadians. Would my hon. colleague agree with me?

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague that we should head in the same direction as our allies, who seem to have taken a stance on the issue. However, a few months ago, we debated a Conservative motion to create a committee on Canada-China relations. The idea was that it would study this very issue. I apologize for not having kept tabs on the committee's work, but I wonder why a motion to speed things up was moved here when a committee is already on it.

I think we should let the various committees come to their own conclusions before we rush the issue, as my colleague said. I think it deserves more attention.

[English]

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Madam Speaker, I agree that this is an important motion coming forward.

We have heard previous speakers talk about experts coming to the industry committee to talk about the Investment Canada Act. I would like to see hearings on the Canada-China FIPA and get Gus Van Harten to testify at Parliament, because he says that this is a FIPA like no other.

Australia and the other Five Eyes partners do not have the kinds of investment treaties that lock them in, and we could be paying billions to Huawei. I wonder if the hon. member would support having hearings into the Canada-China FIPA to see what the implications of this agreement, which was set up by the Harper Conservatives, are having on this country.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

As I said, I believe the creation of the Canada-China relations committee is very important. It must keep hearing from people directly involved in this issue. I believe it has a lot of issues to look at in connection with Huawei, the 5G network and spying.

I want to come back to the 30-day deadline, which seems unreasonable to me. A little more time is needed to look into this. There are already committees looking at the issue, so I think we could take a little more time. However, honestly, I welcome the Conservative motion.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean will have time to give his speech, but probably not enough time to respond to questions and comments. The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, if the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills had not moved this motion, I probably would have done so myself.

Obviously I have some reservations, but I want to take a few minutes today to share my thoughts and explain why I think this motion is a step in the right direction.

The constitutional role of the House and the government is to address international challenges and ensure the general security of the distinct states that make up Canada. I say this because it is clear to me that the motion before us today touches on the very concept of state sovereignty. It is a sensitive issue, but one that we need to discuss, and we must do so in an entirely non-partisan way.

Obviously it is my hope that Quebec will become a country that manages the international relations of the Quebec people according to its own values and interests. However, when it comes to the Huawei and 5G issue and, more broadly, Beijing's growing influence on Canadian soil, Ottawa must act, and act quickly.

In many ways, China's approach under the Chinese Communist Party has been to shine across the world. Clearly its appetite for power is now only limited by what others will tolerate. In that regard, the west has been particularly tolerant of an objectively brutal, controlling and increasingly expansionist regime.

In a world where economies are past the point of no return in terms of interdependence, international political action has become much more complex. However, the facts remain simple. The Minister of Foreign Affairs will not be my biggest fan today, but at the risk of adding a layer to the embarrassment that can sometimes be brought on by facts, I will make a connection with the parliamentary business that happened over the summer.

As hon. members of the House know, the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development conducted a study on the situation of the Uighur people in Xinjiang. It will come as no surprise that the findings of the subcommittee are rather clear about the existence of genocide in China. I know it because I am deputy chair of the subcommittee.

What may surprise some people is that the Chinese state is using technology to spy on and intimidate people, right here in Canada, in connection with this genocide. The Chinese Communist Party is literally tracking families and nationals who speak up for Uighurs abroad, and this is being done with absolute impunity.

As my colleague pointed out right before me, Chinese technologies are often suspected of being used for industrial and political espionage. Let's be clear: Technologies that are used to surveil Chinese citizens could very well be used to surveil our own citizens.

Business of Supply

It has been documented that Chinese companies play a role in the police state, in China and elsewhere. These often proven suspicions should make us very cautious, with emphasis on “cautious”. This means being careful to avoid risks and act calmly, based on the facts. We must absolutely not cut corners here.

I have heard the arguments about the impending critical importance of 5G technology to communications infrastructure. It represents an immense technological leap that will potentially transform the economy. The implementation of 5G technology is the equivalent of switching from the telegram to the fax while still getting around in a horse-drawn carriage. It is very simple: 5G technology is a train that is already moving and we have to get on it safely.

That is why I support the motion, and I also want to continue our parliamentary work by studying the issue at committee. If I am so very pleased that we completed our study of the Uighurs, it is for two principles that apply to any issue.

First, even though it was apparent that atrocities were being committed, we went ahead and verified the facts. We did that because we have a duty of diligent care, which puts us firmly on the side of serious democracies and sets us apart from tyrannies and dictatorships, which have no such duty.

• (1705)

Second, our actions are legitimized by this process of seeking out the truth. Our truth and the truth are the same thing. That is not the case for tyrannies and dictatorships. That is why the Chinese government reacted to our conclusions by insinuating that we made a mistake. I was not at all embarrassed by our comments. We did our job, we assessed the facts and we can defend them. I will repeat that these principles also apply to 5G, Huawei and Chinese interference.

I would add that we have a certain duty of conscience in this matter. This may seem righteous, but given that we take our democracy seriously, it is imperative that we condemn acts committed by totalitarian regimes. In my view, condemning barbaric acts is just as important as condemning the tools with which they are committed.

We need to uphold the standards that give us the right to speak out and then act. It is true that many allied countries have taken action. The motion that we are currently debating mentions Australia, but there is also New Zealand, which has a very individualized approach, as does the United Kingdom and the United States.

It is critical that we adopt an approach that addresses our concerns and our own specific realities. The best way to do that is for us, as parliamentarians, to choose the path to follow. Requiring the government to comply with the motion in 30 days would mean skipping a number of steps and is unrealistic, in my humble opinion. To put this deadline into perspective a little, the government has more than 30 days to respond to the petitions that we table.

I will end my speech because I think I am running out of time and I would like to answer my colleagues' questions. I think that the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations needs to have the time to submit its report. We have time, but the most important thing is that we need to be able to justify our actions.

• (1710)

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciated listening to the member's speech. I want to comment on the issue of the Five Eyes and how all of our allies have come out very strongly against Huawei, yet the member for Outremont, from the Liberal side of the floor, indicated in her speech that she is excited about the potential of having a different administration in the U.S. That caught my ear a little bit. I am trying to figure it out.

Could the member comment on why he thinks that the U.S. would change its perspective on the importance of not engaging Huawei?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question.

Unfortunately, I am not in the oval office and I cannot speak for the new President of the United States. I would have been pleased to do so, but I do not want to think or speak for him.

However, I can say that my nine-year-old daughter was born in the United States and that she is a U.S. citizen. In a few years, she will be running for office in the U.S. because she told me so.

[*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, the complications of the relationship between Canada and China are dealt with in a number of different ways. A multitude of ministers, from the Prime Minister to several other cabinet ministers, deal with them. A number of standing committees also deal with them, and I believe we are moving forward. My concern, as has been expressed and we tried to address, is to get the official opposition to recognize that, while the principle of what is being talked about within the motion is good, the issue is why there is a fixation on a specific date.

Could the member provide his thoughts on how that takes away from the motion itself?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Madam Speaker, the member opposite and I rarely agree on anything, but I do agree with him on this.

Private Members' Business

I think setting a date like that is arbitrary. It could prevent us from going further. Committees have been set up, and our Conservative colleagues are on those committees. They want to go further and make real change happen. As parliamentarians, it is our duty to make real change, not to do things just for partisan reasons. Above all, we have to represent our constituents. They are the people we should always be working for. We should constantly be asking ourselves who we work for.

• (1715)

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forth with every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the motion.

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

Mr. James Cumming: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, September 23, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 18, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass the House you might find unanimous consent to call it 5:30 p.m. at this time so we could begin private members' hour.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Accordingly, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

EXPROPRIATION ACT

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC) moved that Bill C-222, An Act to amend the Expropriation Act (protection of private property), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Madam Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, I am honoured to rise today to discuss my private member's bill, Bill C-222, an act to amend the Expropriation Act with respect to the protection of private property.

We acknowledge that Parliament is on Algonquin Anishinabe territory, which is subject to an ongoing land claim process.

I am pleased to recognize that the current movement to protect private property landowners' rights in Ontario started in my riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Renfrew County Private Landowners Association, the Renfrew Landowners Association, and the North Renfrew United Landowners chapters of the Ontario Landowners Association. I thank them for keeping me so well informed on issues of importance to landowners.

There has been a disturbing trend in Canada toward what is referred to as regulatory, de facto or constructive taking of private property. This happens when a government uses its statutory powers to regulate or restrict the property rights of an owner without acquiring the title of the land being adversely affected. The landowner feels the impact of the regulation as though the land had been expropriated.

In the United States, the fifth amendment of the American constitution protects private property rights. In Canada, a government acquisition of land without owners' consent is not subject to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Private property rights were excluded from the Canadian Constitution when it was repatriated in 1982.

Bill C-222 is concerned with expropriations under federal jurisdiction. At all levels, governments require the power to expropriate private land. Expropriation laws set out a clear step-by-step process to resolve conflicts between private real property rights and the public's need for that same land.

Peter Bowal and Rohan Somers, in "Expropriating Land: A Balancing Act", wrote:

Governments [should] want to limit expropriations, and approach them carefully and sensitively so as not to be perceived as being unfair or abusive in any way... [I]n the...majority of cases [that follow the common law], there are...collaborative...negotiations and offers on the part of the public authority behind the scenes in an expropriation. Accordingly, the strict formal steps in the process, including a public hearing, are rarely needed. By far, most expropriations...[are] satisfactory, [with] resolutions on both sides when they are negotiated in good faith in the shadow of the legislative framework.

I will quote Elizabeth Brubaker of Environment Probe, who wrote, "The courts' long history of strictly construing statutes means that simple legislative changes — in particular, those more clearly defining public purpose — [are] effective in limiting governments' discretion over expropriation." Bill C-222 is such a proposal.

In Canada, landowners' rights are found in the expropriation legislation. The government must follow the law as to what land may be expropriated and must observe procedures set out in the legislation. In Canada, the government can strictly regulate land, limiting its value and what a landowner can and cannot do without triggering the procedures in the legislation. That is why it is time to modernize the Expropriation Act.

I introduced Bill C-222 to provide some protections from the government's taking of people's property without notice, a hearing or fair compensation. Private property is defined as property "...over which the owner has exclusive and absolute rights...". Private property is different from public property. Public property is defined as "state- or community-owned property not restricted to any one individual's use or possession."

The federal government has the authority to expropriate such property under the act, specifically provincial lands.

● (1720)

By explicitly limiting its scope to private property, the proposed exception in Bill C-222 would allow the federal government to expropriate public property, including provincial lands, for a public purpose that solely relates to the restoration of historical natural habitat or climate variability.

Concerns about climate change must not be used as a cover to confiscate value from private property. Agricultural producers in particular should not be required to subsidize someone else's environmentalism without compensation. The same must be said for all private property owners.

It would appear that the recently signed Canada-U.S.-Mexico agreement on trade addresses the issues raised by my private member's bill, Bill C-222. As a result of signing this trade agreement, it would appear foreign investors in Canadian property are afforded more protection than Canadian owners of Canadian property.

The source of this incoherence is article 1110 of the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA, which has been carried over into CUSMA under article 14.8 on expropriation and compensation. Article 14.8 in the new agreement provides:

1. No Party shall expropriate or nationalize a covered investment either directly or indirectly through measures equivalent to expropriation or nationalization (expropriation), except: (a) for a public purpose; (b) in a non-discriminatory manner; (c) on payment of prompt, adequate, and effective compensation in accordance with paragraphs 2, 3, and 4; and (d) in accordance with due process of law.

2. Compensation shall: (a) be paid without delay; (b) be equivalent to the fair market value of the expropriated investment immediately before the expropriation took place (the date of expropriation); (c) not reflect any change in value occurring because the intended expropriation had become known earlier; and (d) be fully realizable and freely transferable.

3. If the fair market value is denominated in a freely usable currency, the compensation paid shall be no less than the fair market value on the date of expropriation, plus interest at a commercially reasonable rate for that currency, accrued from the date of expropriation until the date of payment.

4. If the fair market value is denominated in a currency that is not freely usable, the compensation paid – converted into the currency of payment at the market rate of exchange prevailing on the date of payment – shall be no less than: (a) the fair market value on the date of expropriation, converted into a freely usable currency at the market rate of exchange prevailing on that date; plus (b) interest, at a commercially reasonable rate for that freely usable currency, accrued from the date of expropriation until the date of payment.

5. For greater certainty, whether an action or series of actions by a Party constitutes an expropriation shall be determined in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article and Annex 14-B (Expropriation).

The language here was rolled over from the 1992 NAFTA and it refers to the indirect nationalizing or expropriating of a measure as being tantamount to nationalization or expropriation. The language clearly exists to ensure that compensation will be owed for both de jure and de facto expropriation by the expropriating country.

Private Members' Business

The scope of article 14.8 is indeed wide. "Measure" includes any law, regulation, procedure, requirement or practice, and the definition of "investment" is expansive. James Beaton, writing in *Expropriation without Compensation*, states, "Moreover, there is no allowance, as there is in Canadian common law, for express statutory language to extinguish the right of compensation."

How the previous NAFTA article 1110 has been treated in arbitration among the parties of NAFTA, Canada, the United States and Mexico, has, or at least should have, bearing on expropriation law in Canada generally.

● (1725)

This is particularly so given NAFTA's, now CUSMA's, constitution-like status as a document that cannot be amended without the consent of all signatories. Expropriation in NAFTA, and now CUSMA, includes not only the open, deliberate and acknowledged takings of property but also the covert or incidental interference with the use of property that has the effect of depriving the owner, in whole or in significant part, of the use or reasonably to be expected economic benefit of the property.

With the ratification of CUSMA, where that leaves expropriation law and Canadian property rights in the future is uncertain. CUSMA is not the only international agreement signed by Canada where foreigners are afforded more private property protections than Canadians.

This is from the "Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Plan 2014: Protecting against extreme water levels, restoring wetlands and preparing for climate change", which was signed by president-elect Joe Biden in 2016 when he was Obama's VP and the current government:

The Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Study concluded that an estimated 25,000 privately owned riparian properties are located on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River upstream of the Moses-Saunders Dam. More than 3,000 shoreline property parcels are located below elevation 76.2 m...and could be at risk of flooding on Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence River.

...The restoration of more natural water level regimes in Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River is not a traditional wetland restoration project, which typically includes harvesting and planting, physical transformations of the wetlands, or cleanup of pollutants.

The federal government, in addition to being fully aware that plan 2014 was intended to flood residential properties, has obligations in accordance with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, article VIII:

...interests on either side of the International Boundary which are injured by reason of the construction, maintenance and operation of the works shall be given suitable and adequate protection and indemnity in accordance with the laws in Canada or the Constitution and laws in the United States respectively....

Private Members' Business

While flood victims in the United States are being offered compensation for properties confiscated by flooding as a result of government policy, Canadian flood victims have yet to see any recognition of their losses. The time has clearly come to give equal, if not more, protections in the law to Canadians than what is now given to foreigners in Canada.

In a recent United Nations study, countries with stronger property rights were more economically advanced. It is time to modernize expropriation law in Canada to be consistent with international law.

In conclusion, the ownership of private property is not constitutionally protected in Canada. The Crown can take private land for the public good. It is a general principle of expropriation law that the Crown must compensate landowners when it takes their land. In reality, this does not always occur when the expropriation occurs outside a legislative framework.

Bill C-222 would clarify that restoring natural habitat and addressing the consequences of climate variability do not constitute special circumstances. Bill C-222 recognizes expropriation may be desired for these purposes, but that due process must be followed and private landowners should not be forced to give up their land without notice, without a hearing and without fair compensation. Flooded properties due to government policy should be treated like an expropriation. This would trigger the legal process for compensation contained in the Expropriation Act.

I welcome a vigorous discussion regarding Bill C-222.

● (1730)

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows the policy of the Government of Canada is to always hold hearings. Hearings have always taken place in the context of expropriations. Willing buyer and willing seller is the policy of the Government of Canada, and expropriation of course is always a last resort. Those to whom she seeks to appeal should be well aware of the fact that expropriation is always the last resort of the Government of Canada.

However, I have a specific question for the member. She stated on her website that the bill seeks to amend the Expropriation Act to amend private property protections for Canadians and that it would set out exceptions that seek to “remove some uncertainty from the existing legislation as to whether owners must be compensated for certain types of de facto takings.”

To be clear, the bill would not accomplish this goal. Why does the member pretend the bill would accomplish a goal that it would not?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, there are two types of expropriation, as the hon. member alluded to, de jure and de facto expropriation. My private member's bill is focused on the first type.

The private member's bill would clarify that restoring natural habitat and addressing the consequences of climate change do not constitute a special circumstance, and thus would be brought through that specific identification into the legislative framework and be a basis upon which the affected landowners could take it to court.

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, Bill C-222 is a rather odd bill. In our opinion, all it does is deny that climate change can lead to disasters that require emergency action.

Accordingly, if Bill C-222 is passed, the government could never invoke the emergency of the expropriation for the purposes of restoring a former natural habitat or the direct or indirect management and variability of the climate.

Expropriation comes from the Latin *ex proprium*, which means dispossess or deprive of property ownership. Unlike in the United States, the right to property is not enshrined in the Canadian Constitution, as the hon. member noted. However, in Quebec, that right is protected by law.

The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms stipulates that, “Every person has a right to the peaceful enjoyment and free disposition of his property, except to the extent provided by law.” What is more, the civil code stipulates that, “No owner may be compelled to transfer his ownership except by expropriation according to law for public utility and in return for a just and prior indemnity.”

Does the hon. member understand the difference between the civil code that is applied in Quebec and common law?

● (1735)

[English]

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to make sure that the hon. member interprets my proposed legislation correctly. The bill, by clarifying that climate variability is not a special circumstance under which the government can declare an expropriation, specifically would put it into legislation and confirm that it exists.

Second, it is interesting that the member mentions expropriation in Quebec, because I understand that, in the city of Montreal, letters are going out to certain property owners asking them to sign away the title to their land. It makes it sound something like business as usual, but if they sign this letter or get tricked into signing these forms, they relinquish their title to this land. Therefore, it is a different type of expropriation wherein, again, the government is not paying compensation to the landowner but rather tricking the property owner into giving title to the municipality.

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, we heard the hon. member speak at length about property law and the dispossession of land. I would like to have her comment on the original expropriation by the Crown, which is the Crown's dispossession of land from first nations people and, in particular, the ongoing case that is happening today with the Haldimand tract under the proclamation of 1784 from the Haudenosaunee people.

Private Members' Business

I wonder if the member might comment on the ongoing disposition of land by the Crown from indigenous peoples across these lands. She mentioned it in her opening remarks, but she never clearly defined it.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, in my opening remarks, I referred to the fact that there is still a comprehensive land claim going on with the land where Parliament is situated.

In terms of expropriation as it applies to first nations, the Expropriation Act actually excludes matters dealing with first nations' land. There are specific exclusions referring to those types of situations, but I thank the member for his interesting question.

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 was interested in hearing what the member had to say about the bill because when I first heard about it, I was a bit miffed. I wondered what the member opposite was trying to accomplish. Honestly, after listening to the member, I am still not convinced about what she is hoping to accomplish.

With the many things she talked about, a question comes to my mind: Where is the example? When has the federal government, in the last 50 years, done the type of thing the member is hoping to stop it from doing? Does she anticipate that future Conservative governments might change the way we have been doing things over the last five decades or so? I am not perfectly clear on this.

These opportunities we get to debate a private member's bill or a motion are very rare, which I know the member opposite is aware of. I looked at the substance of this bill and listened very closely to the member. I must say that it is the first time I have heard her make a presentation in a kind of legal format with details. Still, I did not get the kind of clarification I was hoping to receive.

When I think of the issues of expiration and expropriating properties, there is always a willing buyer or a willing seller. That is what we have seen throughout Liberal administrations. The member talked about wanting to mandate hearings. Hearings take place. There is a great deal of consultation that takes place as well.

The member seemed fixated on the climate change issue. Many of her Conservative colleagues are what we would classify as climate change deniers. They do not recognize the reality of how the world is evolving with regard to climate change. She has incorporated that into the bill.

She talked about climate change and restoring natural habitat. These issues are no doubt relevant, but I do not see any connection between this and what the member is hoping to accomplish with the bill.

Whether it is in national governments, provincial governments, municipal governments or elsewhere, dealing with indigenous-related issues, property issues and these types of things takes place on an ongoing basis. Generally speaking, it is usually for very admirable reasons that this takes place.

To what degree are the concerns expressed by the member somewhat misplaced? I am trying to figure out where there might be that national example that has made the member so upset that she felt it

was necessary to bring in legislation about it. I could not think of anything. As the member can see, there is a limitation to the number of questions she is able to provide answers for. She has my email address. Maybe after the debate she can email me and cite an example in the last 50 years where the bill would have been applied. I think that would be very helpful.

As a society we continue to move forward, and one of the things we have witnessed is huge investments in infrastructure. Even Stephen Harper at times recognized the value of infrastructure, and land was designated. We saw large patches of land taken into consideration for building a highway. In this regard, the former administration looked at building Canada Way. No doubt there would have been issues regarding the land, but we always find there is a willing buyer and a willing seller.

• (1740)

Discussion and hearings do take place. I think of the municipalities. My city has plan Winnipeg. People sit around a table and talk about what they envision the city will look like many years from now. The National Capital Commission does a fantastic job in Ottawa as do councillors. We can talk about the billions of dollars that the government has committed to building infrastructure, supporting our economy and communities and recognizing the value of doing so.

No doubt there will be opportunities for different types of discussions. People will witness individuals selling their land and different levels of government will end up purchasing it to accomplish something either in the short term or long term. I do not see what the member seems to be so concerned about.

When we talk about natural habitat, hundreds and thousands of acres in the Prairies have returned to that natural habitat. The member might be surprised to know that nothing has really changed in legislation to accommodate that. It is almost as if the member is trying to get a fear out there but it is just not there. I do not quite understand why she would want to do that.

When it makes sense and when there is that willingness to make it happen, why would someone oppose it? More and more, society as a whole is recognizing that different levels of government have an important role to play when it comes to our environment.

It seems to me that the member, and possibly the Conservative Party, needs to be more sensitive to the issues of our municipalities and provincial jurisdictions. Even those Progressive Conservative provincial jurisdictions have to overcome these issues along with the federal government. We, and I will concede it, have a very ambitious plan when it comes to developing our economy. When we talk about our economy, we also recognize that we need to talk about issues such as our environment, sustainable development, and work with indigenous people, leaders and other stakeholders, including provinces and municipalities.

Private Members' Business

No doubt there will be opportunities well into the future for us to have that forward-thinking plan for where Canada as a nation will be in 20 to 50 years from now. I do not share the same concerns the member opposite has, based on what we have seen in the past. In fact, if we were to have a generalization from the population as a whole, we would see a wide spectrum of support for issues such as recognizing the reality of climate change and the importance of restoring natural habitat where we can.

I would encourage the member to send some specific examples from the national level to my email account. I can assure her, I will read them very carefully.

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to speak on behalf of the Bloc Québécois about Bill C-222, which would amend the Expropriation Act.

The concept of expropriation is not new in the history of humankind, nor is it new to Canada. Expropriation has been used since ancient times and has led to the development of organized societies. In Quebec, the right to property is protected by section 6 of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, which states:

6. Every person has a right to the peaceful enjoyment and free disposition of his property, except to the extent provided by law.

Quebec civil law has its roots in French law, which, since 1789, has recognized the right of the state to expropriate in the interests of the public, under certain circumstances.

This principle was later incorporated in the Napoleonic Code. It was then adopted by the Civil Code of Lower Canada and then taken up in article 952 of the Quebec civil code.

Canada's first expropriation law dates back to 1886. It was followed by the Expropriation Act of 1952, which was in force until 1970. This act did not contain any provisions for compensation and did not require the Governor in Council to provide reasons for the expropriation. This is unacceptable. It reeks of past imperialists imposing their views with no regard for anyone. This disregard for the public was rectified in 1985.

Expropriation is not a pleasant thing to go through or, I would imagine, to enforce. Mistakes were made in the past. For example, expropriations made to create Forillon National Park caused a great deal of suffering. Then there were the expropriations made to create the Mirabel airport, which also caused significant trauma.

Government of Quebec expropriations in the 1960s shut down villages in the Lower St. Lawrence and the Gaspé. My grandmother, Cécile Gagnon Vignola, worked for Operations Dignity to support the victims of these expropriations.

This is not about unfounded expropriations. It is specifically about expropriations caused by natural disasters or by the need to protect the environment, especially the most fragile areas. The bill before us today does not deal with compensation procedures, but rather with reasons that can be given for an emergency expropriation. Two sections would be amended in much the same way. Sections 10 and 19 have a subsection added to limit the Governor in

Council's emergency expropriation powers. To my knowledge, these powers, although limited, have not been used in recent years.

These added subsections stipulate that the Governor in Council will no longer have the right to order emergency expropriations in the very specific case of restoration of former natural habitats or climate variability. In other words, the Governor in Council may make emergency expropriations except in cases involving the environment and climate change.

Accepting such changes would be as irresponsible as saying that the environment is not important, that climate change is not having an impact, or worse, that it does not exist. Some will argue that it is not up to the government to decide where people should move or resettle. In some cases, however, it is clear that government intervention is necessary. People, who are only human, sometimes cannot see past their personal interests and have no long-term vision, no intergenerational vision.

It is time to relearn how to take care of our environment, the place where we live, and to do so not only for ourselves, but also for the people who will live after us.

I have two examples that illustrate why this bill is unacceptable.

• (1750)

Because of record flooding in 2019, the Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac dike collapsed, resulting in the emergency evacuation of 6,000 of the village's 18,000 residents. A total of 800 homes had to be evacuated. It is important to point out that the municipality is largely built in a flood zone and protected by the dike because, as humans, we think that we can stop the force of nature. It was necessary to act quickly to raise the height of the dike, limiting the view of the lake from some homes and thus decreasing their property value.

Had Bill C-222 existed in Quebec in 2019, the height of the dike could not have been raised. As a result, the municipality would have flooded year after year for the simple reason that some residents would prefer to have a view of the lake rather than be protected. That also means that, year after year, the homes of these residents would have flooded and the government would have had to take action to move them out of the flood zone, house them, compensate them and so forth. All these costs are paid out of taxpayers' money, so this is not just a problem for the owners. It is the entire population that has to pay more taxes to cover such costs.

Then there are insurance premiums that go up every time there is a natural disaster and not just for the people affected, but for the entire population too. Protection of private property, which is an important right, also has repercussions for the entire population. It is therefore important to allow the government the right to legislate or make emergency decisions in the interest of the entire population and not just in the interest of certain individuals.

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What is more, in the 1960s, if we had tried to see beyond the end of our noses, no one would be living in a flood plain. This would have been banned from the start. Disasters like the one in Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac or the big storm that went through the Lower St. Lawrence in December 2015, if I am not mistaken, where homes and garages were carried away by the river because they were built too close to the water, would not have happened. Building homes in those locations would have been prohibited.

Caring for our environment means caring for our food sources and for our economy in the long term. Looking beyond our immediate needs means thinking about future generations. The bill includes an indirect element that would allow the Governor in Council to decide that a person cannot build a house in a given location. That is indirect expropriation. It is important that we keep this possibility.

I am thinking of marshes in particular. When a builder sees a marsh, he fills it in, builds condos and thinks that everything is great. However, without an understanding of the geology and geomorphology of the area and the structure of marshes, we may not realize that marshy areas still sink even after being filled. Consequently, foundations crack, then owners turn to the city or the builder for compensation. Add to that the legal bills. Once again, the entire population pays.

Therefore, it is not just an environmental issue. It is also an issue of fairness for the entire population. We should not have to pay for the decisions made by one or two individuals who make personal choices.

● (1755)

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-222. In the summary of the document for the bill, it states:

This enactment amends the Expropriation Act to provide that the power of the Governor in Council to waive the requirement for a public hearing in respect of an objection to the intended expropriation of an interest in land or immovable real right may not be exercised in certain circumstances.

Further on in the bill, the Expropriation Act cites two examples of where that right to waive the requirement for the public hearing may not be exercised. It is in “restoring historical natural habitats or addressing, directly or indirectly, climate variability.” That, in essence, is the bill before us this evening.

I have enormous respect for the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. I disagree with her vehemently on many issues, but I certainly respect her hard work in the House of Commons. She is one of the deans of the Conservative caucus. That being said, I will not be supporting this bill.

I am going to cite the two reasons given in the Expropriation Act for why there should be an inability for the Governor in Council to waive the public hearing requirement. The first, as I mentioned earlier, is the restoring of historical natural habitats.

The origin of this is of course the devastating floods that took place in 2017 and 2019 in Renfrew County. I think all of our sympathies and thoughts are with the many people in that region who suffered losses during that time. Hundreds of homes were damaged

and many were destroyed. The 2017 and 2019 floods were absolutely devastating for the region.

That is why this legislation purports to waive the Governor in Council's ability to override public consultations. When we look at the reasons behind the flooding, often cited as a result of IJC actions, we can actually see that there is a difference between what is promoted by the bill and what actually happened on the ground.

Doug McNeil wrote an independent review of the 2019 flood events in Ontario. This was commissioned by a Conservative government. A Conservative member of course would agree with the recommendations and the conclusions in that regard.

Doug McNeil said, “some believe that the International Joint Commission’s (IJC) operation...has a negative impact on...Ottawa River flooding.” He goes on to cite in the report that was filed with the Conservative government that the IJC actions had absolutely no bearing on flows of the Ottawa River. There are indeed, though, things that had an impact on those devastating floods. They are cited in the report as climate change and impacts of a changing climate. Those are cited repeatedly in McNeil's reports.

The first item that is cited in the Expropriation Act simply does not hold water, if members can excuse a pun in that sense. The reality is that the IJC, very clearly from the report of the Conservative government, did not have an impact of the devastating floods that impacted so many people in Renfrew County and in other areas.

There is a second item that is cited in the bill and that is climate variability. Climate variability, as members are well aware, is not the same as the climate change crisis and the climate emergency that the House has already ruled on and that we are currently in. I will come back to that in just a second.

The member, who I respect but who I disagree with vehemently, has stated in reports that she has actually filed with her local riding that there are alarmist claims about man-made global warming. These are scientific facts about the impacts of climate change and the impacts of the climate emergency. The good people of Renfrew County are not immune from the climate emergency we are seeing around the planet.

● (1800)

As I cited earlier, we saw two devastating floods that impacted hundreds of homes and hundreds of homeowners in the area around Renfrew County in 2017 and 2019.

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In British Columbia, in two of the last four summer seasons, we have literally not seen the sky. The impact of forest fires due to climate change completely shrouded the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. When I was a child, I can remember incredibly blue skies throughout the summer in the Lower Mainland of B.C. This has been impacted by climate change. The reality is that climate change has not just had an impact on the quality of life for the people of Renfrew County or the people of British Columbia. We have seen the devastating impacts of climate change around the world. These are undeniable. We cannot talk about climate variability. We cannot make, as the member has said, alarmist claims about man-made global warming. The climate emergency is upon us. People around the world are living with it, and people around the world are saying that governments need to step up now to stop the climate emergency. They need to step up and make the transition to clean energy.

The impacts of two of the last four flood seasons in Renfrew County are very similar to impacts of two of the last four summers on the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. Many other regions of Canada can cite similar impacts. This summer we saw the western United States ablaze. The impact of that smoke was even felt in southern British Columbia. The many forest fires that were ravaging the western United States, because of the impacts of climate change, blew that smoke right into the Salish Sea, the Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island as well.

We know that those impacts are being felt. We know that the economic impacts are also being increasingly felt. The cost to the Canadian economy this year will be \$5 billion. We know that amount is going to increase each and every year. Within a couple of decades, projections say that the cost to the Canadian economy from climate change will be \$50 billion a year.

We have to take action. I would suggest it is not by adopting Bill C-222, which talks about climate variability, but it is actually by taking action to help people in Renfrew County and to help people across Canada and around the world. That means we have to stop the incredible support of \$12 billion that is given to the oil and gas sector. Canada now is in a very sad race with Saudi Arabia, in terms of the egregious amount of support that is given to oil and gas CEOs, yet we have not seen any investments made for energy workers. I am part of the energy sector. I came out of the Shellburn Oil Refinery in Burnaby, British Columbia, so I have worked in the oil and gas sector. There have been no provisions made, either by the Conservative governments in Alberta and Saskatchewan or by the federal government, to actually transition energy workers from the fossil fuels that are helping to provoke climate change to clean energy that would help to address the climate emergency and bring down the egregious levels of greenhouse gas emissions we are seeing literally burning our planet.

Those are the actions, and that is the kind of bill, that I would certainly be willing to support. These would tackle the efforts that many people are undertaking around the world to address the climate emergency. That is what I would be prepared to support. That would be something that would address the concerns of the very good people of Renfrew County. I know the area well and I know they understand that there is a climate emergency and that our governments, both provincial and federal, have to take action. I will be

voting against Bill C-222. I believe that we need to take action in the climate emergency, and I hope that we will see further private members' legislation that will actually address something that the government at the moment seems unwilling to address.

• (1805)

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Madam Speaker, if the last speaker were to come to Alberta and Saskatchewan, there would be an opportunity for him to look at the great work being done there to combat greenhouse gases and all the other things that are happening within the industry. That would be helpful. Perhaps then the rhetoric would be a bit more logical.

My family fled oppression in the disputed area of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, in 1870 to come to America, a land healing after having just gone through a devastating civil war. Because of issues arising from one of the Oklahoma riots, two of the sons ventured north to Canada's Northwest Territories to farm in what was eventually to become Alberta. As members can imagine, the issue of property rights and freedom runs deep in my family.

Other pioneers in our central Alberta community arrived from the far reaches of the world. Many of these new neighbours were from war-torn communist countries and cherished the fact that once and for all they could breathe freely, knowing their hard work and commitment to their family and community would be respected and that their ownership of property would be honoured.

Each of us, all 338 members of Parliament, need to remember the dedication and sacrifice that those who came before us showed and endured. Sadly, there are still some situations where governments have extraordinary powers that are easily abused. This is why I am so honoured to speak to Bill C-222, an act to amend the Expropriation Act regarding the protection of private property. I want to congratulate the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke for bringing this important legislation forward. I know she is also a passionate advocate for the defence of property rights in Canada.

We play several roles as elected members. I cannot think of many functions that are more important than working to safeguard the property rights of our constituents. Property rights form one of the most important cornerstones of our society and our economy. There are some among us who like to equate the notion of rights with individual liberties or freedoms to do whatever we want. Property rights are not only paramount as part of our tradition, but are essentially the foundation for all other rights as well.

We often like to equate the notion of free speech with the ability to say whatever we want, which is true to an extent, but as we know there are limits to this axiom. The possibility of severe harm because of hateful views is but one example. This right to free speech does not apply when we are trespassing on someone else's property. There must remain a fundamental degree of respect for the owner of that property. We have seen situations like that in the past. In the same vein, the right to freely associate is not the right to associate anywhere we want to. We do not have the right to freely associate on private property. We can do so in a public space or a space we own. The bottom line is that there are generally no such individual rights or liberties beyond the property rights that a person may have.

This is why I say that property rights are so vital. It is certainly one reason why standing up for the property rights of our constituents is such an important part of our job.

In my riding of Red Deer—Mountain View, we know about the value of property and the importance of property rights. Many of my constituents are farmers or ranchers. They put food on the table for their own families, as well as for millions of families across Canada and around the globe. In many cases, they grew up on a farm, as did I. They know the value of a hard day's work. They understand the importance of taking care of what they own, of living frugally and responsibly, or of saving hard-earned money to make a down payment on a house, a new farm building or to expand a herd or the size of their farming operation.

• (1810)

The same is true for our local business people. They work hard for years so that they can save enough money to expand their business, look for new clients, hire more workers to keep their business growing and hopefully have something left for their family in retirement.

As elected members, we must stand up for and proudly say that we will help protect the property and the property rights of our constituents. This is why the bill that we are addressing here today has such significance.

We have always heard that property rights are not protected under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This is different from other countries, such as the U.S. where property rights are constitutionally protected. Under the Fifth Amendment of the American Constitution, no private property may be taken for public use without just compensation and without the due process of law.

In contrast, what we are seeing here in Canada is a disturbing trend towards what is referred to "regulatory", "de facto" or "constructive" taking of private property. This happens when governments use their statutory powers to regulate or restrict the property rights of an owner without acquiring title to the land as being adversely affected. The landowner feels the impact of the regulations as if the land had been expropriated. Put another way, the government can strictly regulate land, limiting its value and what a landowner can do with it, without triggering procedures in the legislation.

A "de facto" or "regulatory" taking means that a property owner is normally not entitled to compensation. What is worse is that we

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see many examples in jurisdictions across Canada where the government has actually misled the owner and the public about the intended use of a property in order to circumvent the need to pay a landowner compensation, choosing to follow the regulatory taking route rather than following the rules under federal or provincial expropriation laws.

If a government changes the designation of a property to avoid compensation under expropriation statutes and then subsequently redefines the designation for future use, this avoiding of higher compensation is an abuse of power. Bill C-222 seeks to remedy this type of situation and remove uncertainty from the existing legislation as to whether owners must be compensated for certain types of takings.

The goal is to protect private property by ensuring that governments follow the rules of due process. Bill C-222 seeks to remove uncertainty from the existing legislation as to whether owners must be compensated for certain types of so-called regulatory takings.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, one of the most important functions that we perform as elected members of this place is to protect the property rights of our constituents. I know that I want to leave a legacy for future Canadians where property rights are protected. We have come too far as a free and caring nation. We have been the beacon of hope for immigrants from all over the globe. We must continue to ensure that property rights are treated honourably.

Bill C-222 would take us one step further in working to protect the property rights of our constituents by ensuring that the government follows the rules of due process when it comes to expropriating land. I therefore encourage all hon. members to support its speedy passage.

• (1815)

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

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

SENIORS

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canada has over 11,000 deaths from COVID-19. It is the equivalent of a jumbo jet filled to capacity crashing every single week since the pandemic was declared in March. While some people, like the Premier of Alberta, have dismissed these deaths because those dying from COVID-19 are mostly seniors, I would like to remind the premier and everyone in this House that our seniors are not disposable.

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If a jumbo jet crashed today, we would be shocked. If another went down next week and the next and the next, we would not just shrug our shoulders and say, "Oh well, they were old." We would be outraged. We would demand change. I am outraged and I am demanding change.

The thousands of seniors that we lost to COVID-19 did not have to die. They are dead because we failed them. How many more thousands of seniors must die before we finally fix our long-term care system, before we finally decide to actually care for our elders?

Our long-term care system was already in crisis before COVID-19 hit. Decades of privatization have shifted the focus from caring for our seniors to creating profits for shareholders. Care and profits are two oppositional forces. The only way to wring profit from long-term care is to cut the care itself, to cut the people providing the care, to cut their wages, to cut the time spent providing care and to cut money from the design and maintenance of the homes themselves.

This is not news to anyone. Over the summer, we had study after study reveal exactly what went wrong in long-term care during the first wave of the pandemic. Was anyone surprised when those studies concluded that for-profit homes had larger COVID-19 outbreaks and more deaths of residents from COVID-19 than non-profit and municipal homes?

From the Royal Society of Canada to the Canadian Armed Forces, we heard about the horrific conditions in long-term care homes that led to military interventions in Quebec and Ontario. This information should have allowed us to prepare for the second wave of the pandemic, but it did not. We are now deeply into the second wave of COVID-19 and we seem to have learned nothing.

In my riding of Edmonton Strathcona, 83 of the 90 residents at the South Terrace Continuing Care Centre have tested positive for COVID-19. Fourteen of those residents have now died and 80 staff members are sick with COVID or have tested positive for the disease. The list goes on: 61 have died at Carlingview Manor, 31 have died at the Montfort Long-Term Care Home, 51 have died at Forest Heights Long-Term Care Home, 39 have died at Maples Personal Care Home in Winnipeg, 36 have died at Humber Valley Terrace and 21 are dead at McKenzie Towne Continuing Care Centre in Calgary.

All of these long-term care facilities are owned by one very large corporation: Revera. In fact, Revera owns more than 500 long-term care facilities worldwide and it is not the only for-profit with large COVID-19 outbreaks and daily deaths now numbering in the hundreds. Revera is unique because Revera is owned by the Canada pension fund and its board is appointed by cabinet. Revera homes are being ravaged by COVID-19—

● (1820)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, that is a very important question.

All Canadians deserve access to high-quality health care that is safe and effective. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has revealed longstanding issues in long-term care facilities that have prevented some of Canada's most vulnerable populations from accessing this level of care.

COVID-19 outbreaks in long-term care facilities have led to a high number of infections and deaths across Canada. Canadians in long-term care deserve better. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada has been collaborating with provinces and territories to support and protect vulnerable Canadians, including those in long-term care facilities.

At the beginning of the pandemic, Canadian Armed Forces members were deployed in long-term care facilities in Ontario and Quebec to help control the spread of COVID-19. In the summer, the Canadian Red Cross transitioned to take on this role, and it is now supporting provinces and territories facing outbreaks in long-term care facilities.

To support front-line workers, including those in long-term care, up to \$3 billion in federal funding was offered to provinces and territories to provide wage top-ups for low-income essential workers. Long-term care employees have been prioritizing the health and safety of residents through a very uncertain time. This needs to be recognized.

In order to help restart the economy while making Canada more resilient to COVID-19, a safe restart agreement was reached with the provinces and territories. This agreement included \$740 million in federal funding specifically aimed at infection prevention and control measures for vulnerable populations in long-term care, home care and palliative care. It is clear that the impacts of COVID-19 are far from over. The number of outbreaks and infections in long-term care facilities continues to increase across the country.

This emphasizes that while we have taken many actions to support vulnerable Canadians throughout this pandemic, it has not yet been enough. We must, and we will, do more.

While we will continue to take every action possible to protect Canadian residents in long-term care facilities, we must also look into the future and commit to making changes so that all vulnerable Canadians are protected, and are receiving the health care they deserve well after this pandemic.

This commitment has been supported through the Speech from the Throne delivered in September, and our government has announced the target of creating new national long-term care standards. These standards will support vulnerable populations in long-term care facilities, helping to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care no matter where they reside across this country.

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We will also examine additional measures for personal support workers who do an essential service by helping the most vulnerable in our communities.

Finally, as we know, many seniors and vulnerable Canadians wish to receive home care services so that they can stay in their homes longer. We will, therefore, take additional actions so that this also can be possible. As long-term care is primarily a provincial and territorial responsibility, our government will work closely with provinces and territories to implement these commitments.

No matter the level of government, we all have a common goal. That is to support the health and safety of our vulnerable Canadians. We must explore all measures to increase the resilience of those facilities and to help prevent these tragedies from reoccurring.

• (1825)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, with all due respect, I appreciate the member's comments but we still have seniors who are lying for hours or days in their own feces, who are developing bed sores, and who are dying alone of COVID or dehydration.

We need more than just words. We need more than just a throne speech. We need a long-term care act that guarantees standards of care for our seniors: an act that holds provinces accountable, that provides funding for long-term care, that takes profit out of care, including with Revera, and that ensures that the workers who are caring for our seniors earn wages that reflect the value of their work.

Will the government finally lead and finally act instead of just talking? Will the government do the right thing now and create a national long-term care act to protect our seniors?

Mr. Darren Fisher: Madam Speaker, I have outlined many actions that we have taken to respond to the issues in long-term care facilities, but I want to take a moment to describe just one more.

In order to better support long-term care facilities, during the fall of 2020 the federally funded Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement and the Canadian Patient Safety Institute launched an initiative called "LTC+", which aims to spread promising practices in preventing and mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on long-term care and retirement homes.

Participating teams received seed funding from CFHI to support needed improvements, access to training sessions and materials, and coaching on the implementation of the program's key components. Currently, there are about 300 long-term care and retirement homes participating in this initiative or in the process of registering.

Now and in the future, we are committed to helping to ensure our most vulnerable Canadians receive high-quality health care that is safe and effective.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am raising an issue today in our Adjournment Proceedings that I originally raised on October 2 in question period and again on November 5.

Tragically, in that intervening time the government did nothing to address the concern I was raising and it is a matter that has now

had a significant change for the worse, in that the U.S. government has now approved seven years of naval testing activities in the habitat of our southern resident killer whales. We are now in a position where I am not asking the government just to take action, but to remedy its failure to take action when the comment period was open.

Here, in brief, are the facts: The U.S. Navy proposes to run off-shore testing throughout the extent of the Pacific offshore from Alaska to California, of course including the waters of the Salish Sea and the critical habitat of one of our most iconic endangered species. The southern resident killer whale population is now down to 74 individual animals, and they are threatened by many things.

They are threatened by lack of food supply and from the failure to take action. It was 14 years, just to make note, between when the species was identified as endangered and when a recovery plan came out. We know we need to protect their supply of chinook salmon. That is their favourite food. They are starving.

We know they need to be protected from ship strikes and increased shipping activity, yet the current government is pushing ahead with the now taxpayer-owned and funded Trans Mountain pipeline with an increase in tankers in their waters. We know they are threatened by ship strikes of other vessels, including not just ship strikes but the intrusive activity of whale-watching vessels. We created a sanctuary zone for the whales but we have not enforced it. That is in the area around Saturna Island, Mayne Island and Pender Island. It is not being enforced and their so-called sanctuary, which is the size of a postage stamp, and their habitat are being intruded upon without penalties and without fines.

Here is what a responsible government would do. I am going to quote from a letter from an elected official who said, "Simply put, [this jurisdiction] considers the level of incidental takings of marine mammals in [these naval exercises] to be unacceptable." The governor of the State of Washington, Governor Jay Inslee, wrote those words in July 2020, urging the U.S. government not to approve these naval tests.

In response, Canada has said nothing. Every time I have raised it on the floor of the House of Commons, every time anyone in the media has asked any minister in the current government, we are told, and this is the talking point and I am sure we will hear it soon, that the southern resident killer whales are important to Canada and we will work with our partners, that being, I guess, the U.S. Navy, while they conduct sonar tests, while they use torpedoes, while they detonate bombs and they use underwater drones. These activities could not make matters worse for our population of southern resident killer whales.

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We should have been taking a strong stand, telling the U.S. Navy what the governor of Washington told them: This is dangerous for our whales. What they call “incidental takings”, as many as 243 incidental takings of key requirements for the southern resident killer whales over seven years, are completely unacceptable.

Therefore, I put this to the minister in debate tonight: What will we do to take this up with the incoming president-elect? Can we put this on the list of things where Canada needs action from the U.S.?

● (1830)

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Madam Speaker, our government is committed not just to the protection of our southern resident killer whales, but to actively investing in restoring their populations.

This endangered species has cultural significance for indigenous people as well as for coastal communities in British Columbia, all British Columbians and people right across the country. Obviously it is completely unacceptable for any harm to come to our precious killer whales. It is important for British Columbians and all Canadians to understand the significant measures and investments we are making to restore this species and to improve their habitat.

With 74 individual southern resident killer whales remaining and a population that has declined, despite the recent addition of a new calf, it is more essential than ever that we work in collaboration with all stakeholders to recover the species. I had the opportunity to work directly with some of Canada and the United States' top experts in this field when we held our southern resident killer whales symposium only a couple years ago, and this has led to many strong initiatives.

For the last five years our government has taken unprecedented steps across many different ministries to aid in this recovery. This includes regulatory changes, such as those seen in the Fisheries Act and the Oceans Act, which have to date increased our total marine protected areas by more than 14 times since 2015.

Building on the \$1.5-billion oceans protection plan and the \$167.4-million whales initiative, our government has committed an additional \$61.5 million to help deliver on further measures to protect and recover the southern resident killer whale. These investments contribute to additional research, monitoring and management measures to support the mitigation of the primary threats to the southern resident killer whales.

As well, in May 2020, the Government of Canada announced enhanced management measures to further support the protection and recovery of the southern resident killer whale. These management measures build on efforts from past years. They focus on increasing prey availability, reducing physical and acoustic disturbance and addressing contaminants through a variety of initiatives.

Measures introduced this year reflect advice from first nations, the southern resident killer whale technical working groups, the indigenous and multi-stakeholder advisory group and from public consultations. As a transboundary species, the need for cross-border collaboration is critical. The Government of Canada appreciates the ongoing close co-operation with the governments of the United States, Washington State and British Columbia. Through this co-

operation, we have reinforced our commitment to work together to mitigate the threats to the survival and recovery of the southern resident killer whale and to maintain a long-term strategic plan for their recovery.

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration led the review of the proposal by the United States Navy to conduct training and testing activities in their waters, from November 2020 to November 2027. Fisheries and Oceans Canada is engaged with our U.S. counterparts on this matter to ensure a common understanding of the planned activities and mitigation measures, with particular attention being paid to the southern resident killer whale.

NOAA has indicated an adaptive management component to the final rule that was issued and has demonstrated a willingness to work collaboratively on this file. This allows for the consideration of new information over the course of activities and the consideration of modifications of mitigation and monitoring measures. Our close partnership has proven successful in the past and it will remain important that we continue to work to help ensure that we both protect and restore this endangered and iconic species.

● (1835)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, I am afraid, as predicted, that was a pathetic response. I am very sorry the parliamentary secretary could not find it in his talking points to say that the government would raise this with President-elect Biden, that it would take up the fact that the State of Washington thinks that what the U.S. Navy is proposing to do and what NOAA has shamefully signed off on is acceptable. It is unacceptable.

We have recent evidence, which the parliamentary secretary should know because I have raised it in the House, that the tests by NATO off the coast of Scotland last month also led to the death of whales stranded. Bottlenose whales were found along the shores, affected by the sonar from the testing of the NATO military.

With 74 animals critically endangered, we should know that we are not doing enough. The government needs to stop patting itself on the back and start protecting our southern resident killer whales.

Mr. Terry Beech: Madam Speaker, the assertion the member has made that our government is doing nothing is simply incorrect. Our government is not only committed to the protection of our southern resident killer whales, but fully dedicated to the recovery of this iconic species. We have taken significant steps to address key threats to their survival and recovery, and have invested more than a quarter of a billion dollars in protections, habitat restorations and legislative changes.

As it is a transboundary species, I believe the co-operation of the United States will be critical to our shared efforts, and of course we are engaged in those conversations. The department is engaged with NOAA on this matter to ensure a common understanding of the planned activities and to ensure that our whales are kept safe.

* * *

[Translation]

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill, to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-1001, an act respecting Girl Guides of Canada.

This bill is deemed to have been read the first time and ordered for a second reading at the next sitting of the House.

* * *

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, this evening I would like to raise a very important matter with respect to official languages. I raised it on October 29, when the Commissioner of Official Languages sounded the alarm about Canadians having difficulty obtaining services in their language in a crisis situation, that is to say during the pandemic.

It was not the first time that the Commissioner of Official Languages spoke about this situation. Unfortunately, we heard a lot of talk about finding solutions, but saw little action from the Liberal government.

That day, the minister told me that the purpose of the report was to provide more information and that the Commissioner of Official Languages noted that the government reacted quickly at that time. However, we see that little was done, and shortly thereafter, we regrettably learned what Liberals in government think of the French language in particular. I will say it in French because it is important.

A Liberal member said in committee, before the Commissioner of Official Languages, that she had heard on several occasions that the French language was declining in Quebec. She said she did not want to call it a myth, but she had to see proof to believe that.

That might have been said by a member from another province, but no, it was a member from Quebec who made that statement in committee. She even asked the Commissioner of Official Languages what he thought was contributing to the decline of French in

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Quebec. However, when she used the word “decline”, she used air quotes, suggesting that there was no decline of the French language in Quebec. This raises many questions about the importance this government places on the protection of minority languages in this country.

If we take a closer look at the shortcomings Mr. Thériault pointed out in his report of October 29, we can see that he was quite critical. There were shortcomings attributed to the federal government and others to certain provinces such as Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The Liberal government was lambasted by the 100 complaints related to COVID-19 that the commissioner received.

At the beginning of the pandemic, francophones noticed that, during the press conferences given by the Prime Minister of Canada and the Minister of Health, information was mainly shared in English. Although the commissioner believes that the government finally struck a better balance between the two official languages in its press conferences, he still felt there was reason to sound the alarm. He said that he was sounding the alarm with regard to the failure of federal institutions to respect their official language obligations in emergency situations. He said that these institutions operate mainly in one official language, with the other relegated to secondary status.

That is very worrisome, particularly since we are in the midst of a pandemic and the situation is urgent. It is important that all parliamentarians be aware of this issue and that we contact every department to ensure that everyone can obtain—

• (1840)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages.

Mr. René Arseneault (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Official Languages), Lib.): Madam Speaker, it goes without saying that official languages are at the heart of who we are as a country and that respect for our official languages is vitally important to our government, including in times of crisis.

[English]

Our commitments aim to deliver federal services in accordance with official languages obligations, as well as to create and maintain a work environment that is conducive to the use of English and French.

[Translation]

Our government's commitment to official languages could not be clearer, as evidenced in the most recent throne speech. We are working as quickly as possible to find appropriate solutions to any shortcomings that have been identified.

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For example, I would like to remind my colleague across the way that in the early hours of this pandemic when we saw some gaps, such as in the labelling of certain essential products, our government made sure that crucial information was available to Canadians in the official language of their choice. The Commissioner of Official Languages did acknowledge that.

[Translation]

One thing is clear: The COVID-19 crisis exposed a number of challenges we need to overcome, especially when it comes to communications with and services to the public. The federal public service adapted, and practices evolved very rapidly.

Innovative practices were introduced, and we expect them to remain in place and have a more permanent influence on how the public service does things. These include decentralized work organization, new communication needs, the use of digital collaboration platforms, and so on.

As the way we work changes dramatically, respect for official languages is not just the Government of Canada's obligation; it is a priority on which hinges the effectiveness of our pandemic response.

[English]

As our government pursues its commitment to modernizing the Official Languages Act, we will need to consider these evolving dynamics in order for the act to remain relevant.

[Translation]

I commend my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable, and I want to assure him and all members of the House that we will keep working closely with the Commissioner of Official Languages and his officials to protect the language rights of Canadians and public servants in this unprecedented time.

We believe Canadians are proud to know that they have the right to learn and speak their official language and to make it a part of their identity. The same goes for the public service. As Canadians and as Acadians, we also recognize that French and English are at the very core of our identity and that they are tools we can use to build bridges between us all.

[English]

Our government and public servants are taking proactive measures to ensure respect of our two official languages. We react quickly and firmly to compliance issues and remind federal institutions of their official languages obligations.

● (1845)

[Translation]

Our government took note of the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages and will look at it with great interest.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his response. He is obviously very active in the official languages file.

There is no shortage of problems. As a member of Parliament, I have sent a request to a minister's office and got a response in English only. I had to fight to get a response in French.

The Commissioner of Official Languages reported that every complaint having to do with emergency situations under his purview since 2014 stemmed from a failure to provide communications and services in French. One MP patently trivialized the fact that French is in decline in Quebec.

I think it is time to make amends. Can my colleague tell us when the new version of the Official Languages Act will be tabled, as promised in the Speech from the Throne, which he mentioned a few moments ago?

We are waiting for this legislation to find out whether the Liberal government is serious about protecting French in Quebec and official languages across the country.

Mr. René Arseneault: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable for that good question.

For starters, I remind my colleague that this is a historic first. In the throne speech, the government said that it wanted to protect official language minority communities and also acknowledged that it has the responsibility to protect and promote French not only outside of Quebec, but also within Quebec. Never before in the history of this country has a government made such a commitment.

In response to my colleague's question, a bill to modernize the act will be coming soon. It will be strong and robust, it will deliver on all of the expectations of language communities and it will also follow the recommendations of the throne speech. I also hope to see this happen as soon as possible, but there is a lot of work to be done and we are in the middle of a pandemic.

Everyone is waiting on the edge of their seats—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order.

The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:47 p.m.)

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