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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



## **CONTENTS**

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

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 22, 2022

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)  
[English]

### PETITIONS

#### CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise today to present a number of petitions.

The first petition is from Canadians across Canada who are concerned about the Liberals' promise in their last election platform to politicize charitable status. These people are concerned that the jeopardization of charitable status may affect hospitals, houses of worship, schools, homeless shelters and other charitable organizations that do not agree with the Liberal Party on matters surrounding abortion. Many Canadians depend on the benefits of these charitable organizations, and the government has previously put a values test on the Canada summer jobs program. The petitioners are concerned that this may similarly be placed upon charitable status.

Therefore, they are calling on the Government of Canada to protect and preserve the application of charitable status rules on a politically and ideologically neutral basis, without discrimination on the basis of political or religious values and without the imposition of a values test. They ask us to affirm Canadians' freedom of expression and association.

• (1005)

#### FORCED LABOUR AND CHILD LABOUR

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition I am presenting is from Canadians across Canada who are very concerned about the issue of modern slavery. It appears that today, more than 50 million people are caught up and enslaved in modern slavery, and many of the products we buy here in Canada are affected by this form of slavery.

Approximately 20 million people are in forced labour today, and it is estimated that over 1,200 companies operating in Canada are at risk of selling or using products that are produced by child labour-

ers or forced labourers. Approximately 20 billion dollars' worth of goods are imported each year that are at risk of being produced through modern slavery. Large companies at this point are not required to report measures taken to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains. Canada has committed to target 8.7 of the 2030 United Nations goals to eliminate all forms of child slavery by 2025.

The folks who have signed this petition are calling on the House of Commons to quickly pass Bill S-211, an act to fight against forced labour and child labour in supply chains and to amend the Customs Tariff. I note that this bill is at committee right now and is in its final stages. The petitioners are calling for Parliament to quickly pass it.

#### AGE VERIFICATION SOFTWARE

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the last petition I am presenting this morning is from Canadians across Canada who would like to draw the attention of the House to the following.

Sexually explicit material, including demeaning material and material depicting sexual violence, can be easily accessed on the Internet by young people. The petitioners are concerned that a significant proportion of sexually explicit material accessed online is made available for a commercial purpose and is not protected by any effective age verification method. They are concerned that the consumption of this material is associated with a wide range of harms, including the development of addiction, the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and the development of attitudes favourable to harassment and violence, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, particularly against women.

The petitioners are calling on the government to recognize the harmful effects of the increased accessibility of sexually explicit materials for young persons. They want this to be recognized as an important health and public safety concern. They also want the government to ensure that meaningful age verification technology is being used to prevent young people from gaining access to sexually explicit material. They want anybody making sexually explicit material available for a commercial purpose to have a responsibility to ensure that young people are not gaining access.

*Routine Proceedings*

Therefore, the people who have signed this petition are calling on the House of Commons to adopt Bill S-210, the protecting young persons from exposure to pornography act, which I note is on its way here from the Senate as we speak.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition signed by 2,054 people.

The petitioners are calling on the House of Commons to recognize the genocide that was declared in the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry, and the lack of urgent action from the government. They note that the root cause of this is colonial violence against indigenous women, men, children and two-spirit people.

The petitioners are calling specifically for the government to take immediate action on the calls for justice recommendations related to police services. They are calling on the government to develop a national action plan in partnership with news media to address the lack of coverage of missing persons cases of indigenous women, men, children and two-spirit people, including the vulnerable. They are also calling on the government to organize search parties for missing indigenous women, men, children and two-spirit people, and to work with all levels of government to fund the expansion of community-based security models that include indigenous perspectives and people such as local peacekeeper officers, or programs such as the Bear Clan Patrol and Butterflies in Spirit.

ADDICTION RECOVERY

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House to table a petition on behalf of dozens of Canadians adding their names to those of thousands of Canadians across the country who have called upon the House of Commons to designate the month of September every year as national recovery awareness month to recognize and support Canadians recovering from addiction and to demonstrate that recovery from addiction is possible, attainable and sustainable.

Connecting people to community is key to long-term addiction recovery, and recovery service providers across Canada are working together to overcome addiction. In my community of New Westminster, over 40,000 people came out for Recovery Day this September, and I am pleased that this petition has a happy conclusion to it. As members know, on September 28 of this year, the House of Commons voted unanimously to declare September national recovery awareness month in Canada.

HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present today.

The first petition deals with the ongoing genocide of Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims in China at the hands of the Chinese Communist Party.

The petitioners note various reports showing, for instance, forced sterilization, forced abortion and a campaign of systematic sexual violence targeting Uighur women, as well as political and anti-religious indoctrination, arbitrary detention, separation of children from families, invasive surveillance, destruction of cultural sites, forced labour and organ harvesting.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to take action to formally recognize that Uighurs in China have been and are being subject to ongoing genocide, and to also use the Magnitsky act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, to sanction those who have been responsible for these heinous crimes committed against the Uighur people.

The next petition I am tabling is about a specific Uighur Canadian who has been detained in China approaching two decades. That person is Huseyin Celil.

The petitioners note the efforts that were undertaken to secure the release of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, and certainly support those efforts, and they call on the Government of Canada to take similar efforts to secure the release of Mr. Celil. They note that he was taken from Uzbekistan while travelling there. The Government of China has failed to recognize his Canadian citizenship or provide consular access.

The petitioners have a number of specific suggestions. They want Canada to demand that the Chinese government recognize Mr. Celil's Canadian citizenship and provide him with consular and legal services in accordance with international law, and to formally state that the release of Mr. Celil from Chinese detainment and his return to Canada is a priority of the Canadian government and is of equal concern as the unjust detentions of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. They want the Government of Canada to appoint a special envoy to work on securing Mr. Celil's release, and to seek the assistance of the Biden administration and other allies around the world in obtaining Mr. Celil's release, as done in the case of the two Michaels.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition I am tabling deals with legislation to combat forced organ harvesting and trafficking. Bill S-223 is currently before the foreign affairs committee.

The petitioners want the government to recognize the problem of forced organ harvesting and trafficking and to support the rapid passage of Bill S-223. This bill has been before this Parliament and previous Parliaments for approaching 15 years. The petitioners are hopeful that this Parliament will be the one that finally gets this done.

● (1010)

FALUN GONG

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition I am tabling highlights the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China.

Falun Gong practitioners have been victims of forced organ harvesting and trafficking, as well as various other forms of persecution. The petitioners note the reports done by David Kilgour and David Matas, for example, that reveal this horrific, ongoing campaign whereby people are killed for their organs and those organs are given to others.

The petitioners call on the Canadian Parliament and the government to establish measures to stop the Chinese government's mass murder of innocent people for their organs, including but not limited to introducing legislation to ban organ tourism and criminalize those involved. The petitioners also want to see the government take every opportunity to call for an end to the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners.

• (1015)

#### MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the final petition I am going to table today raises concern about a report from the Minister of National Defence's advisory panel on systemic racism and discrimination, which produced its final report in early 2022.

It is an ironically named panel, because some of its recommendations, in fact, involve discrimination against religious clergy who have views that the government deems politically incorrect. The report called for clergy from religions that have a different view on gender and sexuality in the Department of National Defence to be banned as Canadian Armed Forces chaplains. Petitioners were certainly horrified to see this kind of incitement to religious discrimination from the Minister of National Defence's advisory panel.

Petitioners call on the House of Commons to reject the recommendation on chaplaincy in the Canadian Armed Forces in the final report of the Minister of National Defence's advisory panel on systemic racism and discrimination, and to affirm the right of all Canadians, including Canadian Armed Forces chaplains, to freedom of religion.

I commend these petitions to the consideration of the House.

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#### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary 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.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### POINTS OF ORDER

##### DIVISION OF BILL C-27 FOR THE PURPOSE OF VOTING

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a point of order regarding government Bill C-27, an act to enact the consumer privacy protection act, the personal information and data protection tribunal act and the arti-

cial intelligence and data act and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts.

Standing Order 69.1 states the following:

[English]

(1) In the case where a government bill seeks to repeal, amend or enact more than one act, and where there is not a common element connecting the various provisions or where unrelated matters are linked, the Speaker shall have the power to divide the questions, for the purposes of voting, on the motion for second reading and reference to a committee and the motion for third reading and passage of the bill. The Speaker shall have the power to combine clauses of the bill thematically and to put the aforementioned questions on each of these groups of clauses separately, provided that there will be a single debate at each stage.

[Translation]

You will find that, in the case of Bill C-27, the bill enacts three new laws and amends several other existing laws.

Bill C-27 enacts the consumer privacy protection act and the personal information and data protection tribunal act.

These two acts were at the core of the former Bill C-11 in the 43rd Parliament, a bill that was introduced in November 2020 and died on the Order Paper a year later, without ever having been voted on at second reading.

[English]

Here is the purpose of part 1 of Bill C-27, as described in the text of the bill:

The purpose of this Act is to establish — in an era in which data is constantly flowing across borders and geographical boundaries and significant economic activity relies on the analysis, circulation and exchange of personal information — rules to govern the protection of personal information in a manner that recognizes the right of privacy of individuals with respect to their personal information and the need of organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information for purposes that a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances.

Part 2 of the bill sets up the personal information and data protection tribunal, which would have jurisdiction with respect to appeals made under different sections of the consumer privacy protection act. The link between part 1 and part 2 of Bill C-27 is clear, and I am not putting it into question in this appeal at all.

Where we have an issue, however, is with the third part of the bill.

[Translation]

Bill C-27 also enacts the artificial intelligence and data act, which was not part of Bill C-11, the previous version of this bill.

The purpose of part 3 of Bill C-27, which enacts the artificial intelligence and data act, is as follows:

The purposes of this Act are:

(a) to regulate international and interprovincial trade and commerce in artificial intelligence systems by establishing common requirements, applicable across Canada, for the design, development and use of those systems; and

### *Government Orders*

(b) to prohibit certain conduct in relation to artificial intelligence systems that may result in serious harm to individuals or harm to their interests.

During his second reading speech on Bill C-27, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry said that the new artificial intelligence act would “set a foundation for regulating the design, development, deployment and operations of AI systems”.

[*English*]

The development of artificial intelligence systems in the past decade has led to profound changes in the way we do things. Regulating AI systems is something we believe must be done. However, it seems odd to add these regulations to a bill that has to do with privacy protection and with the analysis, circulation and exchange of personal information. Artificial intelligence is its own beast in a way, and it should be studied and treated separately.

In a ruling by Speaker Regan on March 1, 2018, he said the following.

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

The principle or principles contained in a bill must not be confused with the field it concerns. To frame the concept of principle in that way would prevent the division of most bills, because they each apply to a specific field.

The House leader of the Bloc Québécois and member for La Prairie will remember this, since it is from page 400 of *Parliamentary Procedure in Québec*.

The Speaker continued as follows:

While their procedure for dividing bills is quite different from ours, the idea of distinguishing the principles of a bill from its field has stayed with me. While each bill is different and so too each case, I believe that Standing Order 69.1 can indeed be applied to a bill where all of the initiatives relate to a specific policy area, if those initiatives are sufficiently distinct to warrant a separate decision of the House.

We find ourselves in a similar situation here. While some of the measures in Bill C-27 relate to digital technology, part 1 and part 2 have nothing in common with part 3.

Therefore, it would certainly be appropriate to divide this bill for the vote. The Speaker has that authority, and that would make it possible for members to thoroughly study this legislative measure and better represent their constituents by voting separately on these bills, which are quite different from one another.

**The Speaker:** I would like to thank the hon. member for his intervention.

[*English*]

I assure the member that I will take it under advisement and return to the House should I find it necessary.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

### PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND REVIEW COMMISSION ACT

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-20, An Act establishing the Public Complaints and Review Commission and amending certain Acts and statutory instruments, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there were a few minutes left in my speech on November 3 just before the Deputy Prime Minister took the floor to present her economic update.

Members will remember that, at the time, the House of Commons was all abuzz and everyone was eager to hear the Deputy Prime Minister’s speech, so I have a feeling that not many members heard what I had to say.

I will take this opportunity to review certain points that explain the Bloc Québécois’s position on Bill C-20. I began by announcing that the government had our support for the first reading of the bill. This is a second attempt for me in my speech today, but it is the third attempt for the government in its introduction of the bill.

In fact, the government has been trying to legislate on this issue for several years. Members will remember Bill C-3, introduced in the 43rd legislature, and Bill C-98, introduced in the 42nd legislature. I hope that the third time is the charm, and that Bill C-20 will be able to survive the entire democratic parliamentary process so that we can provide the Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP with a truly independent external review commission.

The community has been asking for this for many years now. More than 18 years ago, in 2004, Justice O’Connor recommended the creation of an independent process to manage public complaints against the CBSA. The CBSA is the only Canadian public safety agency that has no external commission enabling the general public to file a complaint if they suffer any harm.

We know that this has happened in recent years. Many newspaper articles have reported on the fact that Canadian citizens returning home or leaving the country have suffered abuse by border services officers. Obviously, the point of my speech is not to put border services officers on trial. They usually do a very good job but, as in every organization, there are cases of abuse. We therefore need to enable the public to file complaints and allow these complaints to go through the necessary process to see whether anything can be done and whether these complaints should be reviewed.

Of course, there is a complaint process within the CBSA, but we know that self-investigation is never particularly effective. When complaints are dealt with internally, we often need to make access to information requests to find out what was the outcome of these complaints. Moreover, we know what happens with access to information requests these days. As my colleague from Trois-Rivières mentioned, the government “is so transparent that we can see right through the pages”. That is what he said about the 225 blank pages sent by Health Canada in response to an access to information request.

It would be a very good thing to have this process finally in place. As I said earlier, the community has been asking for this for many years. The Customs and Immigration Union gave its opinion on the bill. It asks that the review commission deal with not only misconduct by officers, but also any systemic problem that might come from higher up in the chain of command. That way, the problem could be investigated and complaints could be filed against managers and not just officers. The union really wants the entire chain of command to be looked at and, if there is a problem, officers should not be the only ones who are reprimanded for complaints filed with the commission.

What is also interesting about the bill is that it requires the minister of public safety to present an annual report informing the House and Canadians of what public safety agencies have done to implement the recommendations made by the public complaints and review commission. The commission would be able to issue recommendations to the department, and the minister would be accountable to the public and to complainants.

I mentioned earlier that border services officers have great power. They can detain and search Canadians and even deport people.

● (1025)

The legislative summary of Bill C-20 mentions the case of Maher Arar, a Syrian Canadian citizen who was deported, imprisoned and tortured in Syria. This was the result of a communication problem between Canadian and U.S. border services. Mr. Arar was questioned by the FBI. We realized that there might be a problem and that complaints were not being followed up on. That might have prevented this sort of thing from happening.

The number of investigations rose in 2020 compared to 2019. I do not have the figures for 2021 or 2022. Some 250 investigations of officers were conducted by the Canada Border Services Agency following complaints. For example, it appears that some officers interfered in the immigration process, while others attempted to assist immigration lawyers by illegally removing items that might raise questions from certain files. Still others apparently made disparaging comments about clients or inappropriate comments about colleagues. Some are said to have abused their authority. There were also complaints about harassment and sexual assault. These complaints are serious, and they demonstrate the need to create a thorough, independent complaint process. This will allow people who have been harmed by border services officers to have some recourse and keep informed.

Once again, the government can count on our support to improve this bill and pass it as soon as possible.

### *Government Orders*

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like the hon. member's comment with regard to the importance of legislation of this nature, which puts into place, I believe, a process that assists us in building confidence among the public.

That is a very critical point, when we think of justice and policing in general. The public needs to have confidence in those authorities. With the passage of this legislation, what we would do, at least in part, is ensure that this level of confidence continues to be there for our border control officers and the RCMP. In fact, for border control officers this would be for the first time.

● (1030)

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague.

I think this sends the right message to the public. It is a message that might restore public confidence in the country's institutions. We know that, both for the Canada Border Services Agency and for institutions in general, the public has lost confidence in public safety institutions and agencies in Canada, and even in elected officials.

Bill C-20 will bring in mechanisms that will enable people to follow the complaint process and see the results. It is all well and good to file a complaint, but if it is never mentioned again and nothing comes out of it, then it serves no real purpose, and that does not show that people have been heard. I think this sends a rather positive message.

This could have been introduced sooner, but we are glad it is before us today.

[English]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I enjoy serving with my Bloc colleague on the public safety committee. Our committee produced a very substantial report on systemic racism in policing in Canada.

One of the clear recommendations in that report was that the government appoint indigenous, Black and other racialized people to the commission because, often, they are the ones who have suffered the most at the hands of police interactions. Because of the way that the bill is currently written, it allows for some discretion on the part of the government.

Does she see any room for an amendment to the bill at committee stage, which might codify the inclusion of those specific groups. Does she have any ideas on how this bill could be improved to include meaningful participation from indigenous, Black and other racialized people?

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, with whom it is a pleasure to work on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

What an excellent proposal. I believe it is important that all bodies be representative. We often hear that our parliaments should reflect the people they represent, that there should be as many women as men, that there should be a lot of young people and members of minority groups. It is therefore important that the people representing us reflect the population.

I think that the same principle applies here. If there are certain categories of people more likely to be affected, they should be represented on the commission. As I was saying earlier, when agencies investigate themselves, we rarely get results. If we can appoint anyone we want to the commission, we will end up with a flawed process. It would be interesting to propose an amendment that would allow some of the more affected groups to sit on the commission.

[*English*]

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

To my hon. colleague, as I understand it, this bill was first proposed in the 42nd Parliament and reintroduced in the 43rd Parliament. Here we are about 14 or 15 months after the last election. I wonder if the lag in the amount of time the government has had to put this bill forward, which was previously drafted, speaks to whether it views it as a priority. Could I have her input on that, please?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, who raises a very good point.

As I was saying, this is our third attempt. Let us hope this is the one. In the past, the government tried to legislate on this issue, but the bill always died on the Order Paper because it was never given priority. There were always more important bills to be debated. That is unfortunate.

Let us hope that, this time, it will be given priority. We hope to be able to adopt this bill. Justice O'Connor's decision that proposed the creation of the commission was handed down 18 years ago. The Liberals have been in power for seven years, which was obviously more than enough time to legislate. That being said, if we look at the time frames, the Conservatives were also there for a few years when Justice O'Connor made his ruling.

I think everyone shares the blame. Let us hope that the House will agree to legislate on this issue quickly, which appears to be the case. There appears to be a certain consistency in the parties' positions. However, the government still has to decide to keep the bill on the agenda so that it can be quickly studied in committee.

• (1035)

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

Among other things, Bill C-20 seeks to ensure that all Canadians are treated fairly and equitably. The bill provides for the collection of data to address systemic racism.

I would like to know whether my colleague agrees that these measures will indeed help to combat systemic racism.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, I hope so.

I do not have the figures or the details about the complaints filed in recent years, but I imagine that the degrading comments made about certain people involved gender or nationality. We want to avoid this at all costs.

Once again, I do not want to put border services officers, who do an extraordinary job, on trial. There is a shortage of officers right now, and I think they are doing their best, but that does not give them the right to go places we do not want them to go. That does not give them the right to make degrading comments or abuse their power, which has happened in recent years.

Let us hope that the bill will help resolve these issues. Let us make sure that the commission remains independent, and that the complaint process goes smoothly. If it takes people months or years to get a response after they file a complaint, we may find that the commission is not doing much good after all, so let us ensure that it is truly useful for Canadians.

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. She is always very competent, and the comments and proposals she makes in the House are always very clear.

As my colleague in the Conservative Party said earlier, there have already been two iterations of this bill. There is something that I have noticed since I was elected to the House two or three years ago. On one side, the Liberals spend their time imposing gag orders and, on the other, the Conservatives filibuster to waste our time. All this means that important bills like this one are never adopted. All of the work that we did on the two previous iterations of the bill was for nothing. We keep repeating the same things over and over.

Does my colleague agree that we could work more efficiently for Canadians in the House of Commons?

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his kind words and for his comments.

I am in perfect agreement with him. It is discouraging, and it is difficult not to become cynical when you look at the procedural wrangling in Parliament. Bills that are important to Canadians die on the Order Paper because the government decides not to give them priority or because the opposition decides to filibuster. For a thousand and one reasons, we never get anything done.



I hope that we will be able to adopt this bill. Last week, despite our best efforts, we adopted Government Business No. 22, which extends sitting hours. Let us hope that the government will find another window for this bill on the agenda. Perhaps it will not have to and we already have all the hours we need. What we want is for the bill to be sent back to committee for study and then sent to the Senate for adoption. I think that Justice O'Connor and all Canadians have been waiting a long time.

[English]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is a great honour to stand today to offer my thoughts, as the NDP public safety critic, on Bill C-20.

Before I get into it, I thank the Minister of Public Safety for bringing this bill forward for debate. A number of weeks ago I was having a conversation with him about some of the public safety bills he had on the Order Paper. I identified to him that this bill in particular was of great importance, because we are now in the third Parliament of trying to deal with this legislation. We know there are great problems with Canada's police forces, and many Canadians feel they do not receive equal treatment from them. I am glad to see that we are finally at the point where we are giving this bill serious consideration.

Before I get going on the substance of Bill C-20, it is also important for me to say how much I value and appreciate the members of the RCMP who police my community and work day and night to keep people safe. In the Cowichan Valley, we are going through an opioid crisis right now. We have a very high death toll. I know that when overdoses happen, the RCMP are often the first ones on the scene. They work long hours, and I do not think they get enough recognition for the incredibly important role they play.

For those of us who have never been police officers, or who never will be, we will never know what it is like for the families who, at the start of every shift, wonder if their loved ones are going to return home. In my time as the member of Parliament for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, I have been very privileged to get to know many serving members in the local North Cowichan and West Shore detachments. I formed a good bond with the detachment commander and look forward to strengthening those relationships. I promise that I will, as a legislator, do everything I can to support their role in keeping our communities safe.

The same goes for members of the Canada Border Services Agency. These men and women are our country's first line of defence at our ports of entry. They are diligently on the lookout each and every day for smuggling networks of firearms and drugs. They are carefully reviewing every visitor to our country and are making sure that we are not admitting criminals or those who may have committed war crimes.

That being said, it is impossible for us, as parliamentarians, to ignore the serious calls for reform of the RCMP and the CBSA. Some of those calls are coming from within the force, but a lot of those are from the outside. I will start with the CBSA.

The Canada Border Services Agency is the only major federal law enforcement agency without external oversight. The officers in that agency have a broad range of authority. They can stop trav-

### *Government Orders*

ellers for questioning. They can take breath and blood samples. They have the ability to search, detain and arrest non-citizens without a warrant. They can interrogate Canadians. They also have the authority to issue and carry out deportations on foreign nationals.

These authorities have been carried out in an environment where charter protections are reduced in the name of national security. Despite all of these sweeping powers, this agency has existed until now without any independent or external civilian oversight for any complaints or allegations of misconduct.

I have a lot of respect for the men and women who wear the CBSA uniform. They are doing a very tough job. However, when you look at the force as a whole, the fact that there have been at least 16 deaths in CBSA custody since the year 2000 underlines the importance of having transparency added to how the agency functions, and of having external oversight so that Canadians could continue their trust in how it functions.

With the RCMP, we need to have a little history lesson. It was once known as the North West Mounted Police. It was the agent for enforcing Canada's racist policies against indigenous peoples. These policies called for the assimilation, relocation or elimination of indigenous peoples so that their lands could be made available for settlement and economic development.

● (1040)

There are two federal statutes that were primary tools in the RCMP's tool kit. There was the Indian Act, of course, which was the primary driver of assimilation, but also our Criminal Code was used to penalize indigenous people for their cultural practices. It also sought to eliminate the indigenous identity they expressed.

In modern times we have seen, certainly in my province of British Columbia, troubling interactions between the RCMP and indigenous protesters, most notably in Wet'suwet'en territory in the beginning of 2020. The British Columbia RCMP has a unit called the community-industry response group, and many of its interactions have raised some questions. It has been alleged to have made use of exclusion zones, psychological manipulation, siege tactics and arbitrary detention, theft of property, pain compliance and withholding the necessities of life.

### *Government Orders*

Fairy Creek, in my riding, is one of the last untouched old growth watersheds in southern British Columbia, with some truly magnificent trees. It is on the traditional and unceded territory of the Pacheedaht First Nation. Last year, in the summer of 2021, a rumour that the area was going to be logged sparked massive protests in the region. With some of the tactics the RCMP used, such as exclusion zones to keep the media from interfering with its operation, the B.C. Supreme Court had to step in and rule that the exclusion zones and checkpoints were unlawful. Again, this is an example of the RCMP's not complying with existing law and making it up as it goes.

The complicating factor in Fairy Creek was the fact that the Pacheedaht First Nation was trying its best to cool down the temperature, so to speak. It simply wanted the time and the space to be able to figure out how it was going to manage its own lands. I do not think either side of that protest really fully respected its wishes, and that was the sad legacy of all that.

The other thing is that under the current Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act, we have the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, but it has been plagued by extremely slow timelines. One example I remember reading about in the news is from back in 2014, when the B.C. Civil Liberties Association made a complaint with the CRCC. It alleged that the RCMP had carried out an illegal spying campaign against law-abiding protesters who were opposed to Enbridge's proposed northern gateway pipeline project. The CRCC probed the question and handed the Mounties an interim report in 2017, so it took three years for that interim report. The force still had not responded to that report three and a half years later, preventing the CRCC from releasing its findings publicly.

There are those kinds of timelines and the fact that the civilian agency, the CRCC, has routinely taken the RCMP to task for not properly following through on sexual assault investigations despite the RCMP's promises to do better. In fact, the CRCC has issued 43 adverse findings. These are conclusions that were unfavourable to the RCMP in cases involving sexual assault investigations since 2019, so that is over the last three years. An analysis of these reports has shown that too many RCMP officers fail to take sexual assault allegations seriously and struggle with matters of consent. Again, these problems are well documented, and they exist. We cannot hide from them. It is time for us to confront them openly, honestly and with a great deal of transparency.

I mentioned at the beginning of my speech that many of the criticisms are coming from outside these forces, but there are also major criticisms that need to be addressed from inside the force. Colleagues in this House may recall the name of Janet Merlo. Janet Merlo had worked as an RCMP officer in British Columbia for nearly 20 years when her doctor advised her to go on medical leave back in 2010 because of the constant bullying and harassment she had faced when working as a member of that force.

● (1045)

She and her co-plaintiff, Linda Davidson, took the RCMP to court. They ultimately earned an apology and received a settlement of \$125 million for more than 2,300 women who had faced discrimination. It is not just people on the outside who are facing discrimination in their interactions with the RCMP. These were mem-

bers in good standing, whose biggest goal in life was to be a positive contributor to the image of the RCMP, but who instead had to endure an unimaginable hell during their time within the force.

I will read from Human Rights Watch, which stated:

When they experience abuse at the hands of the police or when the police fail to provide adequate protection, women and girls have limited recourse. They can lodge a complaint with the Commission for Public Complaints against the RCMP, but the process is time consuming and the investigation of the complaint will likely fall to the RCMP itself or an external police force. Fear of retaliation from police runs high in the north, and the apparent lack of genuine accountability for police abuse adds to long-standing tensions between the police and indigenous communities.

That in itself underlines the seriousness of the issue and why it is so very important that this time, with Bill C-20, we make a determined effort to push it over the finish line so it becomes part of the statutes of Canada.

I do not think that today's discussion on Bill C-20 can happen unless we make an important reference to the report entitled "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada", which was tabled earlier this year by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. This was a report that was done in the last Parliament, but we ran out of runway in order to get a government response. I got unanimous consent from the committee in this Parliament to retable the report so we could get a government response.

I will read from the beginning of the report, which states:

Given the pervasive nature of systemic racism in policing in Canada, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security...has concluded that a transformative national effort is required to ensure that all Indigenous, Black and other racialized people in Canada are not subject to the discrimination and injustice that is inherent in the system as it exists today.

It goes on to say:

The Committee was told that accountability, oversight and transparency are critical to restore trust with Indigenous and racialized communities subject to systemic racism. Witnesses also emphasized the need for the collection of disaggregated race-based data to provide Canadians with an accurate picture of the impact of police practices and policies on Indigenous and racialized people.

From that report there were some amazing recommendations, but I will focus on the first four or five, because I think they are most pertinent to the bill before us today.

*Government Orders*

The first recommendation that came out of that report was that it called upon the Government of Canada to clarify and strengthen the mandate, independence and efficacy of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission through a number of ways. The report recommended that there be a substantial increase in its annual funding to ensure it had adequate resources; that we create statutory timelines for responses by the RCMP commissioner to the reports; that there be a requirement that the commissioner of the RCMP report annually to the Minister of Public Safety to describe the steps taken to implement CRCC recommendations and that the report be tabled in Parliament; and that the CRCC be required to publish its findings and recommendations in respect of all the complaints it receives in a manner that protects the identities of the complainants.

The second recommendation called on the government to increase the accessibility and transparency of that same CRCC, so that the process for initiating a complaint is easier to navigate; ensure that the independent review process is explained in a detailed and accessible format, again making sure the people who are most impacted by this have as easy a time as possible in making their complaint; and make sure that the progression of a review and the reports involved in it are transparent and publicly available.

• (1050)

The third recommendation is particularly important, because it is calling for “meaningful and engaged Indigenous participation and holds the RCMP accountable for wrongful, negligent, reckless, or discriminatory behaviour”. This would require the government to “consult with local Indigenous groups where complaints or systemic reviews involve Indigenous complainants; include Indigenous investigators and decision makers [within the commission]; and ensure Indigenous investigators are involved where the complaint involves Indigenous people.”

I had a chance, when the minister gave his opening speech on the bill, to ask him about that, because currently the bill would allow for the government to have some discretion on who is appointed to the body. I asked the minister if he would be open to codifying the fact that we need to have indigenous participation. The media got a hold of my interactions with the minister, and the CBC took the time to reach out to Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, who is president of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs.

I will read a quote from him. He said, “All legislation must engage Indigenous input not after the fact but during the drafting of the legislation itself, and it's absolutely essential that any oversight bodies of policing agencies include an Indigenous presence.” That is from Grand Chief Stewart Phillip. I have to say that I think that kind of quote is very helpful, and I hope he will be of service when the bill comes before the committee.

The report flows on to recommendation 4, about making sure the appointment of Indigenous, Black and other racialized people is a part of that commission and that they also take leadership positions within the organization.

I have also borrowed heavily from Professor Kent Roach. He is a professor of law at the University of Toronto. He has often written about problems with the RCMP and the way we need to reform it. He too has publicly called for a reform of the existing CRCC to make sure it can investigate complaints and conduct systemic re-

views, but also to create more indigenous police services. That is something we are looking forward to seeing, a legislative framework for indigenous policing in Canada.

There have been a lot of attempts at addressing this issue, and in fact my colleague, the member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, raised this issue all the way back in 2014, in the 41st Parliament. Several standing committees in both the Senate and the House have addressed this issue over a number of years, and as has been mentioned by previous speakers, we have seen the bill before us in other forms, in Bill C-98 in the 42nd Parliament, Bill C-3 in the last Parliament, and now Bill C-20 in this one. In each of those earlier cases we simply ran out of runway. One of the bills was introduced at the very end of a session, and the other bill, of course, fell victim to an unnecessary election call during the summer of last year.

Very quickly, because I know my time is winding down, when we look at the substance of Bill C-20, what it would essentially do, and this is a fairly radical departure from the previous versions, is create a brand new public complaints and review commission that would be a stand-alone piece of legislation, so it would be completely separate from the RCMP Act. That would give it a measure of independence that is sorely needed.

I know, from reading government backgrounders on this, that the Government of Canada has committed to funding \$112.3 million over six years to this agency, with \$19.4 million ongoing, and that is going to be incredibly important in ensuring it has the resources to do the job and Canadians can maintain trust.

In my final minute, I will conclude by saying that Bill C-20 is a good and important step, and I think ultimately it would help ensure transparency and public confidence in our institutions, both with the CBSA and the RCMP. Extremely vulnerable people in Canada, including refugee claimants, have long advocated for this body to ensure accountability and transparency. It is clear that we, as a Parliament, have waited a long time to codify these reforms, and I hope members from all parties will agree and come to a point where we can get this bill to a vote soon and send it to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security so that we can look for ways to improve it.

I will conclude there. I appreciate this opportunity to have made a few remarks.

• (1055)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to pick up on the fact that the report was done back in the mid 2000s, maybe 2005 or 2006, and it has been a while to take the action necessary. The member might know it for a fact, but I do not believe that the Canada Border Services Agency was incorporated in the original recommendations by Justice O'Connor.

*Government Orders*

I am wondering if the member could give his thoughts on how, yes, a considerable amount of time has lapsed, but some substantive changes have been proposed, and those substantive changes would complement the overall public confidence in two agencies that are so critically important to all Canadians.

• (1100)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, yes, that is including some of the important parts of this bill. In the section of the bill that details the content and form of the annual report that must be submitted, we now have a reference to disaggregated race-based data. This has long been a call from many people across Canadian society for how both the RCMP and the CBSA interact with people.

Also, one of the things that I took note of is that either the federal Minister of Public Safety or his provincial counterparts would be able to request a review of specified activities of either agency, and that is a good thing. Perhaps at committee, I might look for an opportunity where Parliament would also have such a role because, as parliamentarians and as committee members, sometimes these kinds of systemic problems come to our awareness, and parliamentarians should have that same ability to request a review.

Therefore, I would agree with the member that there have been some significant improvements since the first report he referenced. I hope we can come to a place where the debate collapses on this bill because we committee members are eager to get to work on it.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. One of the things my hon. colleague laid out quite well is the difficulty peace officers go through and the current climate that RCMP, CBSA and all peace officers are operating within.

This is a time when there have likely never been as many illegal guns on the streets of Canada as there are today, yet his party has supported the Liberal government's essentially lessening gun offences when it comes to sentencing. How does he reconcile that with the fact that he is speaking about the difficult circumstance peace officers find themselves within, yet he is not doing the things that need to be done to protect them?

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, I will parse it into two separate parts.

First, I do not think the member will find any argument from any member of the House that our frontline police officers and CBSA officers do need more support, and they do need to have the technology to make sure they are intercepting that.

Second, where I differ from my hon. colleague is on the Criminal Code reforms. I do not believe that we need to have a simple, stand-alone mandatory minimum apply equally to every single case. How did I know that? It is because every case that comes before a court of law is different. Unlike my Conservative colleague, I have faith that the judge who is presiding over the case will look at the facts of the case, the crime that was committed, the circumstances of the accused and then make the appropriate sentence for the case that is before them.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very informative speech. He clearly knows a lot about this issue.

I would like to take him in another direction and ask him a question about the importance of having an independent complaints management committee in various areas. I think that is really important.

Here in the House, we worked on setting up a similar committee to deal with sexual harassment complaints in the army, but it never went anywhere. Even though Justice Deschamps issued a report in 2015, such a committee has not been set up while the Liberals have been in office.

However, the government took action right away on the complaints by female Swimming Canada team members. An independent committee to handle complaints was set up. That is really important, and we see that in this bill.

I would like my colleague to talk a bit more about the importance of having an independent committee, outside the community in question, to handle complaints in certain cases.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, independence is critical in this. This bill diverges from its previous versions in that we would now be creating a stand-alone agency that would be completely removed from the RCMP Act. What we do not want is for this commission to have in any way undue influence over the agency or force it is supposed to investigate. That transparency, that accountability and that independence is critical, not only so it can do its job properly, but also so Canadians have trust it will actually be doing that job.

• (1105)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague and neighbour from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for sketching out, as I would have as well, that the RCMP has had instances, which are in the minority of RCMP behaviour, that were alarming. I note that, in the Fairy Creek example my hon. colleague raised, even after the Supreme Court informed the RCMP that the way it was interpreting the injunction to create setbacks to prohibit the media from being near the deliberate abuse by and brutality of the RCMP officers in the way they were arresting people, particularly indigenous people, was illegal, it continued to do so.

I want to raise the example of the CBSA. We are long overdue for this oversight agency. The CBSA has a very high degree of reported instances of racism, homophobia and abuse towards people. Border agents have immense power. Each individual agent has the power to say someone is not coming into our country, and there is no appeal. We really need to look at how fair and democratic these institutions are.

Is my hon. colleague not disturbed by the extent to which individual powers are granted to CBSA officers, and for which no one can complain?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, my neighbour from Saanich—Gulf Islands raises some excellent points. I do not think I have much to add, other than to say that I agree with her. That is why we need to get this bill to committee, so we can hear that important feedback. I think there might be some improvements we can make.

I will close by also commenting on Fairy Creek. Absolutely, there were some very troubling reports that came out of there. It was a very complex situation, especially when we had the elected and hereditary leadership of the Huu-ay-aht, Ditidaht and Pacheedaht first nations simply wanting the time and space to figure out how they were going to manage their own lands. That is a clear example of how we saw police interactions there and why this bill is an important step in addressing many of those concerns.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always interesting to engage in debate about the criminal justice situation. I know the member serves on the public safety committee, as he spoke about it.

It seems to me that, with the government, failure never leads to course correction. Rather, it always leads to a doubling down. What we see with criminal justice is a clear failure. Crime rates are up. Violent crime rates are up, and hate crime is up. The government talks about combatting hate, yet hate crime is up, which means it is not effectively combatting it. I wonder if the member thinks that now is the time for the government to take note of its failures and look for ways to course correct rather than doubling down on the same approach it has taken in the past.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Madam Speaker, a problem as complex as what the member identified is not going to be solved by legislation alone. It is incredibly complex. We know there is a myriad of causes of crime, and they are very diverse. I think it is going to require a very firm partnership between the federal government and individual provinces because, while we are responsible in this legislature for the criminal law, the administration of justice falls on provincial governments.

In my home province of British Columbia our new premier, David Eby, who I would like to congratulate on assuming that role, has already made a substantive announcement with respect to some of the reforms he sees for the administration of justice side. I would agree with the member that it is sometimes good to change course if things are not working, and I am glad to see that, at least in my home province of B.C., the B.C. NDP government is starting to engage down that path.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak to an important piece of legislation, legislation that I would have liked, ideally, to see pass earlier. I would like to break down my comments into a couple of different sections. First, I want to talk about something that has already been raised by two previous speakers and that is the issue of timing.

It is important that we recognize that a substantive report was provided many years ago, when Stephen Harper was prime minister of Canada, that took a look at the ways we could reinforce public confidence in Canada's Royal Canadian Mounted Police, given

some circumstances that were taking place at the time. That report came out with a number of recommendations.

One of those recommendations was the idea of having some form of an independent commission that would be able to address complaints, with respect to the RCMP, and to be able to investigate. I looked up that report, and I thought that it had been from around 2005 or 2006. I understand that it was actually brought to the House in 2006.

Mr. Harper was the prime minister at the time, and he chose not to take any sort of action on it. When the government changed in 2015, we did a considerable amount of work and effort on doing an overall review.

The Department of Justice had a number of pieces of legislation that would have been before them. We have been debating several pieces of legislation, virtually from 2015, on a wide spectrum of that department's responsibilities. This is our third attempt to get the legislation through, dealing with the commission.

I believe that our very first piece of legislation was Bill C-2, which was tax relief for Canada's middle class. Members will recall that this was when we reduced the taxes of Canadians, for the most part. We had the 1% wealthiest get the extra tax, but that was our first major piece of legislation.

From then to today, there has been an extensive legislative agenda. We have had to go through some fairly difficult times. For example, the worldwide pandemic required numerous pieces of legislation.

I do not know how many times I have stood up inside the chamber to talk about Conservative filibustering on government legislation. We have seen that consistently for years now. We take a look at it and we say, well, today, we are talking about Bill C-20, legislation that is significant. Not only does it reflect on a report that was provided back in 2006, but it is also a reflection on several years of consultations with Canada's border control agency. Not only are we talking about the RCMP today but we are also talking about the Canada Border Services Agency.

The CBSA plays a critical role, as does the RCMP, every day, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. That whole agency is now being provided the same opportunity that the RCMP with the public and the issues that have been raised with regard to both agencies. I see that as a very strong, powerful piece of legislation that will make a difference.

• (1110)

Earlier I asked about the Bloc's support for this. Its members were fairly clear that they would vote in favour of it. They saw the legislation as a positive and were anxious to see it pass through the House. Then we asked the New Democratic Party about the issue of getting the legislation through the House and the NDP seemed to be just as supportive, recognizing the value of the legislation and the desire to see it pass through the House. Both parties were somewhat critical of the government for not passing it earlier. That is why I highlighted the fact that there was substantial legislation.

*Government Orders*

If time permitted, I would go into the different types of legislation that the government has had to introduce. There is a finite amount of time that the House actually sits. That is one reason why, with the support of the New Democratic Party, we were successful in being able to extend hours so we could sit beyond six o'clock. If we need to sit until midnight for more debate, we are in that position, thanks to the support from the New Democratic Party. Both political entities have acknowledged that substantive legislation needs to be passed. One way we can ensure there is time for debate is to provide those additional hours, if more hours of debate are required, particularly by the official opposition, prior to passing the legislation.

From questions posed by the Conservatives, I am of the opinion that they also support this legislation.

Once again, we might actually find ourselves in a position where political parties support the legislation. I suspect the Green Party will take a position on it, likely in support. I must congratulate the leader of the Green Party, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, for taking on that role again.

I suspect we have legislation before the chamber that will receive unanimous support of getting it to committee. It would be wonderful to get a sense from the official opposition as to when it would like to see this legislation go to committee. In other words, how many speakers will the Conservatives be putting up? For example, if they are going to put up more than three or four speakers, maybe they should look to the government and suggest we sit additional hours in an evening, so we can get the legislation passed and get it to committee.

It seems to me that the desire is there to see the legislation pass to the committee. There are more government bills on the horizon on which we would like to have debate. When I hear that all members are supporting the legislation, my concern is that the Conservatives might double down, insisting they put up speakers until the government brings in time allocation. The leader of the Green Party will be in opposition to that time allocation and we will have to bring in other parties to support it in order to get the Conservatives to pass the legislation and allow the bill to ultimately go to committee.

• (1115)

We should try to avoid all that. If it is not resolved today, I would encourage the opposition House leader, in particular, to let the government House leader know how many actual speakers the Conservatives anticipate, so we can get it into committee. Literally thousands of people are being directly or indirectly impacted. I would argue that all Canadians are, in one way or another, affected by it.

With respect to the cost expenditure, we are talking about well over \$100 million over five years, but the trade-off with the cost factor is building what is absolutely essential when it comes to law enforcement, whether it for our borders or anywhere in between. Public confidence in our border agency and RCMP is absolutely critical. This is one way we can reinforce the many things that need to be done related to the fine work that both CBSA and RCMP agents do for us seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

In listening to the comments from members, I want to provide a general thought with respect to bad apples versus the vast majority. For the vast majority in both agencies, we continue to receive the best service that is humanly possible.

I do not have a problem in comparing our national institutions, in particular, the RCMP, to any other law enforcement agency anywhere in the world. Its members are constantly called upon from other countries and from within Canada to perform in many ways, whether it is training and assistance in countries like Ukraine and many others throughout the world to the absolutely fantastic work they do in Canada.

The same principle applies to the majority of those who work at the Canada Border Services Agency, and I recognize their phenomenal effort. It is very delicate work, as some members have implied. It is almost like a border agent is a semi-god of sorts when someone comes into Canada. That individual is completely dependent on that border agent to make a decision that is favourable to the nation and that decision could ultimately prevent the person from coming into Canada.

The bad apples cause a great deal of issues for both agencies, and we often will see that take place. After all, it is the incident that the public will react to through media reporting which reflects negatively on the institution. For example, when an RCMP officer takes an action that reflects negatively on the entire force, that gets amplified, whether through social media or mainstream media. That is when the seeds of doubt or questionable behaviour are planted in the minds of many, and justifiably so. However, it is because of those bad apples in particular that we need this legislation.

• (1120)

This is why it is so important to recognize the finances to support the public complaints and review commission. That is money well spent.

The public complaints and review commission will have the ability to review and investigate the conduct and level of service of an RCMP officer or a border control agent when an issue has been raised. That is the essence of the legislation. It will allow the chair of the commission to initiate some form of a disciplinary action where it is deemed warranted. Again, that type of action is necessary. At the beginning, when I talked about the time frame, I put it in the form of a question. There has been a lot of time since the report, but the essence of the legislation is far beyond what was recommended back when Stephen Harper was the prime minister.

The vote of confidence that is established when the commissioner provides a recommendation on a behaviour that has taken place is what provides that confidence. Through that recommendation, we will receive an annual report. That annual report will highlight the many different things with which the commission has had the opportunity to deal.

*Government Orders*

I recognize the importance of the makeup of the commission. I suspect, given some of the suggestions or ideas from the opposition party, we will likely see some healthy debate on this at the standing committee. Given the department's interest and level of time commitment to the legislation, I believe the government is open to suggestions, and I would encourage members to bring those ideas to committee.

I understand there are concerns, particularly related to a number of issues of the day. The Conservatives have raised issues like illegal guns crossing the borders. When we think of the Canada Border Services Agency, it is important to note that it deals with issues such as arrests, detentions, removals, human trafficking, customs, trade, immigration and illegal firearms. The Conservatives are quick to criticize the government on that issue.

I suggest that the Conservatives might not want to bring that issue up during questions and answers. If they do, I will talk about the tens of millions of dollars in cuts to the Canada Border Services Agency that the Conservatives put in place, which reduced the number of border services officers and that enhanced the opportunities for illegal trafficking of guns and weapons coming into the country. I will remind them of their responsibilities to the issue and their lack of commitment and support of Canada Border Services Agency before. Maybe they could come up with a different question, but I will not tell them what they have to ask.

I hope, as I explained in depth why it is important, that the legislation passes.

• (1125)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will take up my colleague's offer to discuss the CBSA.

I have the public accounts here from a previous year detailing cuts from the time the government took over. Funding was higher in the final year of the Harper era and was cut in the Liberal era. This is from the public accounts.

Who is lying, the public accounts or perhaps someone else?

• (1130)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would remind the hon. member that "lying" is not a word we like to use here in the House. The hon. member also cannot use props, so I would remind him of that too.

The hon. member for Edmonton West.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Madam Speaker, I will address that. I did not accuse the member of lying. I asked a simple question: Who is lying, the public accounts or someone else?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would remind the member that he cannot say indirectly what he cannot say directly.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the Conservatives have a way of trying to make numbers tell different stories.

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There will be time for other questions. I would ask members to please hold onto their thoughts.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the Conservatives have a magical way of manipulating the numbers. I know there are more border control officers today than there were when Stephen Harper made his notable and well-known cuts to Canada's border control. That I am fairly confident of.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is always fascinating to hear my colleague boast about the government's actions.

He said earlier that they gave time to the House, that they voted to extend sitting hours until midnight with the NDP's agreement, that they are so democratic, and that they have so much to say. I forget how many gag orders they have forced on the House since I have been here. In fact, we spend half our time in the House debating adjournment motions in order not to debate. It is outrageous. Two weeks ago, they cut off debate on Bill C-31, a very important bill for housing. In committee, they cut off debate on Bill C-13 on reforming the Official Languages Act and they no longer want witnesses to be heard. The act has not been reformed in 50 years. There is a major language crisis in Canada and the Liberals do not want to debate it.

I cannot believe that they think this is a great democracy that spends its time debating the big issues.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, it seems that every day the Conservatives and the Bloc get closer and closer on certain themes.

At the end of the day, there is a government legislative agenda. As I detailed earlier in addressing the legislation, there is a substantial amount of legislation to support Canadians, whether it was through the pandemic or now to deal with inflation, not to mention other legislative initiatives that are historic. They are for issues dealing with a national dental plan, which will be there for children under the age 12, and for issues dealing with a wide variety of things that are affecting everyday Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

There is a sense of eagerness to get the legislation and the budgetary measures through. Much like when there are opposition days, there is a process that allows for votes to occur. That same principle does not apply to government legislation and, as a result, if an opposition party wants to prevent something from passing, all it needs to do is continue talking, which then dictates that the government needs to take some sort of action in order to get it passed.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member completely neglects the fact that it was the Liberals who failed to deliver on this bill in the last two elections. Both times, the bill died on the Order Paper and did not get through, and that is on the government. Notwithstanding that, I have a substantial question for the member.

*Government Orders*

Systemic racism is acknowledged to exist in the government, and despite reports and recommendations to ensure indigenous oversight is provided, no such provision is proposed in this bill. Does the government not agree that, given its commitment to reconciliation, this is a major oversight by the Liberals and they must include amendments to ensure indigenous oversight in this bill?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I know the Prime Minister takes all issues related to indigenous matters very seriously. We also recognize systemic racism is there; it is real and tangible. We have a caucus that understands the issue, and we look forward to this bill going to committee, where no doubt there will be a healthy discussion on that point. If there are ways we can enhance the legislation and make it stronger, I am sure the department, and in particular the minister, would be open to them.

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we in Châteauguay—Lacolle have a major border crossing at Lacolle. Admittedly, we do receive complaints, from time to time, about problems people have experienced at the border, but I also get calls from officers who work at the border. As we know, they have to deal with a whole range of legislation and regulation; however, cutbacks in recent years have limited training in particular.

I would like to hear from my colleague about the importance of this legislation and how it will help border services to better serve the community and Canada.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, to address many of the phone calls the member receives, what the legislation would do is build upon public confidence in Canada border control agents. If, for example, someone is going across the border and is deeply offended because of an incident that occurred, they would have, for the first time, an independent commission where the issue could be raised so there would be a feeling that justice is served.

We know there are bad apples in every profession, including among border agents. Unfortunately, a bad apple is a reflection on all, which is one of the reasons it is important to recognize that legislation of this nature benefits everyone, including border control agents and RCMP officers.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, first, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his kind words of congratulations. Second, I support this. I have been waiting and waiting to see action taken, as it has been promised for many years. I remember that the initial questions I raised about the Canada Border Services Agency were directed to the minister at the time, Ralph Goodale, who is now our high commissioner to the Commonwealth. Some time has passed and this is urgent.

There are areas I am concerned about. There will be hearings before this commission. It is possible that things could progress to a hearing on the conduct of an RCMP officer or officers, or a CBSA officer or officers.

I would like the parliamentary secretary to give me his opinion, and I do not think he can be conclusive. I am disturbed by the in-

vestigation into the Portapique massacres. I am disturbed that something called “trauma-informed inquiry” was used, which meant the people who actually made the decisions and failed to protect the public in Nova Scotia did not need to take the stand. Is there a way to protect against that in this bill?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I think the chair of the commission is obligated to provide an annual report. It is important that we recognize how critically important this is for its independence. Through the report provided, I would like to think a number of potential outcomes could come about, including how one might want to further a particular investigation that was conducted by the commission or potential substantial policy changes at the government level, whether it is regulations or even future laws.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, and I will take the member up on this opportunity.

The reality is that I would not want to be a police officer today given the proliferation of illegal firearms on the streets. I would be worried about that, yet the government has done nothing to protect peace officers in that situation. Can he comment on that, please?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, one of my colleagues asked what the Conservatives did when they were in government. At the end of the day, our law enforcement agencies from coast to coast have the confidence of the government of the day. When I say confidence, that means additional supports and resources that I would argue are probably more plentiful than what the Harper regime provided. What we are talking about today is how we ensure we can weed out or recognize more accountability, because there are bad apples that exist in both agencies.

• (1140)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have many things to say about Bill C-20, but I cannot follow the member for Winnipeg North without offering some response to the absurdities contained within his remarks, something we have come to expect from my friend from Winnipeg North. In particular, the member spoke for about 20 minutes about how people should not be speaking to the legislation, and about how instead we should rapidly pass all of the government's bills. I would submit that, if every member of the House spoke half as much as the member for Winnipeg North, we would be taking much longer, in fact, than we currently do with respect to legislation. I do not claim to be lily-white on that score either, but at least I do not lecture other members about speaking too much.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** You just did.



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, if I could respond here, there is nothing wrong with speaking in the House, but—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. I understand this is a very lively debate, but it is not time for questions and comments, so I would ask the government side to please hold onto its thoughts, questions and comments until it is time for them.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, it seems the members across the way misunderstood my meaning, whether intentionally or not. I think it is wonderful when members stand up in the House and speak on behalf of their constituents. The member for Winnipeg North speaks quite often on behalf of the government, maybe occasionally on behalf of his constituents, but the point is that he spent 20 minutes telling us there have been too many people speaking to this bill. He gave a 20-minute speech about how we should just stop debating this bill and, in fact, let it pass.

I would put it to the member that if he wants more legislation to pass, he could speak less himself, if that was his goal. I am not suggesting that he speak less. He is welcome to speak as much as he wishes. However, it is a bit rich for him to tell other people to speak less when he is giving a 20-minute speech on this legislation. I am sure there are other members of the government caucus who have a particular interest in these subjects or particular expertise and who might have wanted to speak as well.

The other point to make about legislation is that the member is right to say that we had bills in the last Parliament that were put forward and then did not become law. I was trying to remember what happened in the last Parliament that might have prevented government legislation from becoming law.

One thing was that the government suspended Parliament completely, with the acquiescence of the NDP. For a substantial portion of 2020, when Conservatives were saying it was time to bring Parliament back in some form and that we were ready to work in a modified form, the Liberals, in fact, wanted to shut down Parliament because they did not want to have to deal with question period. Part of that was that their legislation did not move forward, and then they prorogued Parliament. We came back after prorogation, and then they called an election.

The Liberals now come back to us and say that they have these bills they have been working on for multiple Parliaments. They ask what happened, when they are the ones who made the decisions around suspending Parliament, prorogation and calling an early election. I think the member for Winnipeg North and the government have to face up to the fact that, if there are bills before us today that have been considered and were widely supported in previous Parliaments, they certainly bear some of the responsibility for decisions that they made.

I will make a final point in response to what the member for Winnipeg North said about how the government really wants to pass the bill. We have the same situation when Private Members' Business has been substantially delayed by the government's call-

ing of an early election and by the government's unwillingness to be collaborative.

I will give one example. My private member's bill on organ harvesting and trafficking has been before the foreign affairs committee, approaching the full 60 sitting days, at which time it will be automatically reported back to the House. We actually also have another private member's bill, by a government member, which is before the foreign affairs committee, that has been subject to the same kinds of delays. We have private members' bills, as well, that have been back, Parliament after Parliament. Rather than the government being willing to have those studied at committee, we have seen significant delays.

Hopefully if the government wants assistance in passing legislation, it will take seriously the fact that there are good ideas that come from all corners of the House and take a little bit more of a collaborative approach around moving forward with Private Members' Business as well.

Bill C-20 deals with oversight for law enforcement, as well as for CBSA. It is a bill that underlines, I think, the profound failures of the government when it comes to criminal justice and policing in the country.

I want to share some statistics that underline the fact that whatever the government is doing is clearly not working. We are not seeing the kinds of outcomes we would want to see.

There has been a 32% increase in serious violent crime since 2015. There were 124,000 more violent crimes committed last year than in 2015. There were 788 homicides in Canada last year. There were 611 in 2015. That is a 29% increase in homicides, a 92% increase in gang-related homicides since 2015 and a 61% increase in reported sexual assaults since 2015. Police have reported that hate crimes have increased 72% over the last two years.

• (1145)

The point I made in a question earlier in debate and that I will underscore again is that when we look at these statistics we have to at some point face up to the fact that the government is failing if its objective is to reduce crime. We hear a lot of talk from the government about the problem of violent crime and how we need to work to reduce it. At the same time, the government is presiding over a significant escalation in violent crime, which means that either its strategy is making the problem worse or at least not solving it, or there is such a preponderance of exogenous factors that are shifting the landscape that those factors are driving this increase in crime despite the government's best efforts.

### *Government Orders*

What we heard from an NDP member earlier, as we might expect offering defence of the government's approach, was that we should acknowledge that the causes of crime are complex, that there are many different issues that may be contributing to the rise in violent crime we are seeing in Canada and that we should acknowledge it may not all come down to what the federal government is doing. That is plausible. It is true that the causes of crime are diverse and complex. It is true that there are always lots of different things going on that may contribute to crime.

However, the government has pursued a particular strategy around criminal justice that is different from what we had seen previously, including the legalization and decriminalization of things. In the case of B.C., we have the government decriminalizing the use of extreme and very dangerous drugs like fentanyl. We see a particular approach to criminal justice being taken by the government with no acknowledgement that, in light of the increase in violent crime, there may be some relationship between the fact that the government changed the strategy on criminal justice and at the same time there was a significant increase in crime.

It is also particularly telling that this deflecting of responsibility to exogenous factors is what the government always does on every policy issue. The Liberals talk about how they are trying to achieve certain things and about how they are fighting for certain things, yet when the outcomes they promised are not realized, it is always somebody else's fault.

It is the current government that came in saying it was going to help the middle class and those working hard to join it. How is that going? We have an affordability crisis in this country seven years after the government took power. The Liberals said that they were going to work to bring about change for the middle class, to make life more affordable and to promote economic growth and so forth, yet we are seeing significant negative outcomes in terms of the middle class and those working hard to join it.

However, the government is here to assure us it is not the government's fault and that all of the measures it put in place were apparently positive. It says that the fact we have an affordability crisis has nothing to do with actions government members have taken, even though experts, including Mark Carney, the former governor of the Bank of Canada and prospective future leader of the Liberal Party, has said that inflation is a homegrown problem. We have these instances when, on the economy, the members of the government say things are going wrong but it is not their fault because they are there for the middle class, even though things have gotten significantly worse for the middle class.

On drug policy, the government says it is going to take a different approach and it has solutions to offer, which include decriminalization and safe supply, in which the government subsidizes drugs. Again, how is that going? The government has pursued a policy approach that is not working and is not achieving the results it promised. Then the Liberals are here to say again, on drug policy, that it is not them, that it is other factors driving this.

We see this in violent crime. It is worth mentioning the hate crime statistics again. There has been an increase of 72% over the last two years in hate crime. There are many factors, absolutely, that may be impacting levels of hate crime, but if the government

says that its goal is to combat hate, and then we see a significant increase, it might be worth coming back to the government and asking why its policy approach has not achieved the results that clearly we all consider desirable.

● (1150)

Maybe doubling down on the same failed approach is not the right way to go. We see this across a broad range of policy areas. There are exogenous factors, of course, but if the government constantly says that when things go well it is because of them, and when things go poorly, it is not the government causing it, that is liable to generate some suspicion. We see how the failures of the government on a broad range of policy issues in criminal justice, drug policy, the economy and other areas, are contributing to a declining faith in government, a declining trust in institutions.

The good news, of course, is that we can try to rebuild that trust by having a new government that would chart a new course. What we see now increasingly is a declining trust in institutions, with people having a sense that the current government is not on their side and looking for change.

This bill, in creating a mechanism of oversight for the RCMP, seeks to engage in that dynamic of declining trust in institutions. There is a question of the level of public trust in certain communities in particular, of our RCMP, our CBSA, etc., and what can be done to strengthen that trust and to respond to the discourse around declining trust in government and other institutions.

I would say this about the broader question of trust in institutions. There are a couple of different factors that can cause declining trust in institutions. One is those institutions failing to earn that trust, but another is those institutions being maliciously run down by those who have an agenda to run them down. What we see in this case is the government failing to earn the trust of Canadians, thus losing their trust. Sometimes when the government shows itself to be unworthy of trust, it tries to invoke a "trust in institutions" discourse to suggest that people should not be criticizing the government because that leads to declining trust in institutions.

In those cases it is important we hold the government accountable, that we push the government to, in fact, earn that trust of Canadians, to act with integrity and to address the repeated problems of corruption we see within the government. I know the Conservative Party is prepared to do that as we offer Canadians an alternative.

In the case of law enforcement, mistakes have been made at various times by various enforcement agencies, but I think we also have a dynamic in which trust is challenged because trust in our law enforcement is repeatedly undermined by those who offer extreme criticisms of those agencies. It is very important that we work to build up and support those who serve in our various security agencies, who have a challenging job, who do their best and are worthy of our support.

There are some quarters in the House where we hear, for instance, people talking about defunding the police. I will say very clearly that I am against these proposals for defunding the police. I think clarity from other quarters would be appreciated on that topic. We recognize the allied service provision has a role to play alongside law enforcement, absolutely, but we also recognize the critical role played by law enforcement. It is not realistic, in many cases it is counterproductive for those most vulnerable, to say we should be pulling resources from law enforcement.

Law enforcement should earn the public's trust, and we should also be critical of a discourse that seeks to run down that trust or undermine that trust. We need to recognize, appreciate and affirm the positive role in our society played by law enforcement. To understand the reality of proposals to defund the police, one only needs to look at places in the world where law enforcement is not available, where the institutions of justice, police, courts, etc., do not function properly or are not available to protect the vast majority of society.

• (1155)

In all of those cases, inevitably, when people do not have access to protection and justice, there is more crime, more violence and more harm done. From our perspective on this side of the House, we need to reject those efforts to undermine our law enforcement. At the same time, we need to build up those institutions, such as this civilian complaints mechanism, that support the building of trust.

With that in mind, the legislation before us should proceed to committee and be studied. We look forward to the further review on how to make this legislation work as effectively as possible.

I think there is work required, but we need to also understand the context in which this work is happening. It is a context in which we have increasing crime and increasing concern about public safety. The government's response to that concern is to double down on a failed approach of reducing sentences. Lowering sentences does not help people give up a life of crime.

There are various critical steps that we could take to support rehabilitation, and I am a big believer in rehabilitation. This is work that the justice system and all of us need to do to help people make a transition from a life of crime to a healthy, safe and productive life. However, reducing serious consequences for serious criminality is not a way to achieve that.

In terms of oversight of law enforcement and this government's failed approach, I will say a few words about the horrific mass shooting in Nova Scotia. This was an example of perhaps not only gaps in enforcement but also significant failures of policy.

### *Government Orders*

We had an individual who was never a licensed firearms owner in Canada, but who had a NEXUS card. By all indications, he repeatedly brought guns across the border from the United States, using the ease facilitated by his NEXUS card. He was known by others in his community to have firearms, even though he was not licensed to be a firearms owner in Canada, and he carried out this horrific act of violence.

The immediate response of the government was to try to seize this moment to say that it needed to change and tighten its policy around firearms. However, the lesson it should have learned from that situation, and probably a variety of lessons around enforcement, was that the policy solution clearly was not to make more guns illegal. This was a person who smuggled guns from the United States. He used illegal guns, and he was never licensed to own firearms in Canada.

How do we have a situation where someone who had guns, but was not a licensed firearms owner, was not apprehended for his possession of illegal guns in a way that would have prevented this violence? These are questions that we need to hear answered. The fact of the matter is that the government was missing the point, and it was missing the response that was required. It was not about which guns were legal. It was about the fact that illegal guns were still being brought into this country and used.

I call on the government to recognize its failures in policy, to stop doubling down on those failures, to correct policies that clearly are not working and to take a new approach when it comes to criminal justice.

• (1200)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member took the liberty to talk about our budget. He made reference to the middle class, so I want to ask him a question about the middle class.

Given the Conservative policy of tax cuts, which is all they are advocating for nowadays, does the member feel any remorse or regret in regard to voting against Bill C-2, which provided Canada's middle class a tax cut?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, I will never feel remorse about voting against measures put forward by the government.

Canadians, looking back over the last seven years, are asking themselves if things are more affordable than they were seven years ago, or if they are better off financially than they were seven years ago. I think virtually all Canadians are saying no. There may be a few exceptions. There may be individuals who have benefited from various government contracts, but the vast majority of everyday Canadians, who do not have access to government largesse, will clearly realize that the government's policies, when it comes to allegedly creating affordability, have failed.

*Government Orders*

The government also has a regular habit of giving with one hand while taking away with the other. People are paying substantially more. Unless the government changes course, we are going to see increases to the carbon tax and payroll taxes next year. When the government was first starting out, it reduced the amount people could save through the tax-free savings account.

We have seen multiple instances where the government said it was giving people money over here, but taking that away and more. In particular, we are seeing that now with inflation. The escalation of inflation under the government is gobbling up any of the other so-called gains that it says it is giving to people.

If members ask people in Winnipeg North or anywhere, I think they will find that the middle class is not better off as a result of measures taken over the last seven years. In fact, they are much worse off.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, does the member feel that RCMP actions, such as invading an unarmed woman's house with a chainsaw, an axe and a guard dog on unceded Wet'suwet'en territory, should be punishable? Extreme RCMP violence was noted by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Does he think that should be punishable? We know that what happened was on unceded, unsundered Wet'suwet'en territory.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, I am not going to say, in the House of Commons, whether someone should be charged in a particular case. There may be other facts of that case that the member did not mention in her question. Therefore, I will leave considerations around that to the appropriate authorities.

I will say that I am supportive of the framework of this legislation, in terms of facilitating civilian oversight. That civilian oversight is not me saying, based on a few select facts given by the member, what should or should not happen. However, I am supportive of a process that would look into cases like the member referred to and that would hold people accountable, if appropriate.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have noted my colleague's comments. Earlier in his speech, he mentioned how it seemed that, on that side of the House, it is often the same few members who rise to speak. There seems to be a very limited circle of people on the other side of the House who take the floor. I found that interesting.

I was wondering whether my colleague could tell us more about his thoughts on that. I wonder about the government's respect for democracy when there are only one or two members of the governing party who speak in the House. Does he not think that other parliamentarians have things to say?

• (1205)

[*English*]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, it is often said that the Liberal backbench is revolting. That may be a reason there is unrest in the Liberal caucus over the fact that only a small number of members are given an opportunity to speak. It is hard to speculate on

what does and does not happen in the Liberal caucus room, but I agree with the member that it is a bit odd.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in my past life in a financial institution, I experienced many robberies and was also involved in a shooting. When speaking to police officers, a lot of times the problem was that the guns used were illegal and the crimes by these robbers do not match their sentencing, because we are too soft on crime.

How can we change that so we can encourage police officers to do their jobs to the best of their abilities and not continue to rearrest the same offenders?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question from my colleague, who always adds a great deal to the debate.

I know there is a great deal of concern, in the greater Toronto area specifically, around increasing crime of various kinds, including property crime and violent crime. The government's approach of saying it is going to reduce sentences overall, and trying to use the rhetorical shield of racial justice as an excuse to reduce sentences for everyone, does not make sense. It is not helping anybody, including those in minority communities. In fact, it is leading to the significant increase in crime that we are seeing.

I very much agree with the fact, as our leader has said, that when a young person makes a mistake, we should seek rehabilitation. People should have a second chance. However, there are instances of the same people, and in some cases a very small number of people, committing crimes over and over. When it is a relatively small number of people who account for a very large number of interactions with law enforcement, that suggests there is a particular problem of repeat offenders, repeat violent offenders, as well as repeat offenders against property. It simply requires a different approach. The only way to really incentivize rehabilitation is to have serious consequences for serious crimes.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I fundamentally disagree with some of the member's positions, in particular on safe supply. Health experts and addiction specialists have been calling on the government to decriminalize and create a safe supply because it would save lives. However, I think the member has a point about the government making statements about ideals and principles, but then failing when it comes to delivering the policies that would actually make a difference.

I am thinking right now of indigenous justice. Chantel Moore was an indigenous woman who was killed by police. Her family has not only drawn attention to the fact that too many indigenous and Black lives have been lost at the hands of police, but also they are calling for indigenous oversight.

Would the member support amendments to strengthen this bill to ensure there is indigenous oversight?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, it would be very important, in the development of these mechanisms, for the government to consult with indigenous peoples. I hope that the committee will hear from indigenous leaders about the most effective way to do that. I know that the members on the committee reviewing this bill will be seized with ensuring that indigenous voices are heard and engaged as part of this process.

I want to comment on the member's statement on so-called safe supply. My point, very clearly, was that we need to look at the results of policy. We see how, in Alberta, an emphasis on treatment and recovery has led to a significant drop in overdose deaths. We see in B.C. that there continues to be an escalation in overdose deaths, and a different policy is being pursued there. It is one that emphasizes so-called safe supply and giving dangerous drugs to those who are struggling with addiction.

There are medical alternatives to dangerous drugs, which I support. It makes no sense to supply the most dangerous drugs to people when medical alternatives could be supplied that actually reduce the harm. I have a hard time making sense of the policy proposed by the NDP. In any event, if we look at the facts on the ground, it is not working.

• (1210)

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Vancouver East.

I am really pleased today to rise to speak in favour of Bill C-20, an act establishing the public complaints and review commission for the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency. The creation of this commission would replace the RCMP's flawed Civil Review and Complaints Commission and finally establish a much-needed oversight body for the CBSA.

This, as most of us in this House agree, is long overdue, because we know that there have been several issues related to the RCMP, including its participation in infringing upon the human rights of people including indigenous people; indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+; and its deplorable record related to the detention of individuals with precarious immigration status. Systemic racism is, in fact, rooted within the foundations of the RCMP, and it is an issue that is much bigger than a few bad apples. We need to begin moving away from that myth of a bad apple, when it is clearly deeply rooted in the systemic racism within the RCMP.

In fact, in an article in *Policy Options*, written by Eberts, Stanton and Yeo in July 2020, they affirmed that the idea of the bad apple is "largely a figment of the imagination of those who want to argue that there is no such thing as 'systemic' racism."

They go on to state:

The bad apple is a scapegoat, a way for our public institutions to engage in denial about the abiding racism which exists in the very fabric of their structures. The bad apple allows leaders to say the problem is limited and can be solved by blaming an individual, or a handful of individuals. That way, they can avoid engaging in the hard work of acknowledgement and system-wide reform to address the ongoing harms of systemic racism.

Harms are ongoing and have occurred without proper oversight, and I have a few examples I would like to share today. In 2015, in an article written by Holly Moore for the CBC, she states that:

### *Government Orders*

RCMP Const. Kevin Theriault took an intoxicated [indigenous] woman he had arrested out of a cell and drove her to his northern Manitoba home to "pursue a personal relationship," according to RCMP adjudication documents obtained by CBC News.

Fellow officers teased and goaded him by text message to see "how far he would go," and another constable observed flirting between Theriault and the woman, saying he "jokingly made a comment about having a threesome" with her.

The senior officer in the detachment first said "it wasn't right" for Theriault to take the woman out of custody but finally said: "You arrested her, you can do whatever the f—k you want to do."

We know this violence has occurred, particularly against indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people, at the hands of police, as noted in the national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, which has specific calls for justice related to the RCMP and its participation in violence against indigenous women and girls.

The very systems that are supposed to be there to protect us and the very people who are put in positions of power and who are supposed to protect us are the same systems and people who abuse us and violate us in all sorts of ways, including with a record of sexual violation against indigenous women. It is shameful.

There is also the RCMP's police brutality, which we have witnessed and continue to witness against indigenous land defenders. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has called for an investigation of the RCMP on Wet'suwet'en territory.

• (1215)

Let us recall, and I have mentioned this example in the House many times, the two unarmed indigenous women on their unceded Wet'suwet'en territory, having their door taken down by an axe, a chainsaw and an attack dog, which was excessive force. Let us look at some of the RCMP violence that was been perpetrated against the land defenders at Fairy Creek. This is abhorrent and needs to be dealt with.

This display of human rights violations, which continues to be noted, in fact, by the United Nations, needs oversight. It requires real accountability and statutory timelines so that complainants do not have to wait years for justice. Individuals and communities impacted by this sort of systemic racism deserve justice, including the many individuals whose human rights, including the right to live, have been violated in immigration detention centres in Canada Border Services Agency custody.

I ask members why we find it acceptable in Canada to detain immigrants in jail cells to begin with. Why do we find it acceptable to incarcerate children based on their immigration status? It is time for status for all. No one within Canada should be treated as illegal. No person is illegal.

*Government Orders*

In fact, Canada has been accused of breaking international law by keeping hundreds of children in immigration detention centres. This is deplorable. It is inhumane. It is vile to keep hundreds of children in detention centres. It is especially deplorable in Canada, which espouses to be a place that respects human rights but then disregards the rights of little children, breaking international law. Detention centres in Toronto, Ontario, and Laval, Quebec have been criticized for not being equipped to hold children. People have died in these detention centres, including this year at a detention centre in Laval, where a person died after being found in medical distress.

We need to address ongoing and grotesque human rights violations. This requires reforming oversight, which was affirmed in an article written by Human Rights Watch in February 2022, which states:

CBSA has a history of cloaking fatalities of immigration detainees in secrecy and refusing to release basis information about those who die in custody and the cause of death, often citing privacy concerns. CBSA's extensive powers remain largely unchecked; it is the only major Canadian law enforcement agency without independent civilian oversight.

Therefore, I rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-20, an act establishing the public complaints and review commission for the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency. The creation of this commission is long overdue. It must have representation by indigenous women, members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, members of the newcomer community, women and other communities that have experienced the wrath of systemic racism by the RCMP and CBSA.

• (1220)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre, who knows of what she speaks when talking about the abuse of indigenous women and indigenous people in a disproportionate fashion.

I will briefly say this. My own experience with the RCMP officers, when they led me away while arresting me for violating the injunction to protect the Texas pipeline company Kinder Morgan, was that they were kind. They asked if I would take their arm, as they did not want me to slip in the mud. When I saw the arrest of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs, who were thrown to the ground with a knee in the back, I realized that not only were their actions different, but these were different police people, different RCMP officers. Sure enough, it turns out there is a branch of the RCMP that is typically using more brutal force against indigenous protesters than it would use with a settler culture MP standing on indigenous lands. When the hereditary chiefs were on their own land, UNDRIP was being violated by the way they were treated. I would ask for the hon. member's comments on that.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to congratulate my colleague on her re-election as the leader of the Green Party.

This is certainly not my personal opinion, but in terms of systemic racism that is perpetrated by police forces, particularly against BIPOC, Black, indigenous and people of colour, has been noted not just nationally but also by the international community at the level of the United Nations, including the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for her powerful speech.

I also wanted to bring up our colleague, the member for Nunavut, who made me aware that there are children being bused back and forth, waiting 40 minutes to go through customs every day, just in order to attend school.

I wonder if the member can speak to the need for the creation of an external oversight body for the Canadian Border Services Agency, to ensure that travellers are protected and that indigenous rights to mobility are better protected, so children do not have to spend too much time going through Canadian border services.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, that is another example of how indigenous people's rights in this country are consistently trampled on daily, including their mobility rights. Absolutely, we need to have independent oversight. That is certainly something we have called for.

It also speaks to the need to have indigenous representation and indigenous oversight to look at matters of human rights, which the government agreed to uphold with the adoption of Bill C-15 in the last Parliament, to see the full adoption and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would just like to ask my colleague about a comment last week from Grand Chief Stewart Phillip in British Columbia on the importance of appointing an indigenous representative to this commission. Can she offer some thoughts on how important it is that indigenous people in Canada become a part of these power structures, so that the general population can see themselves reflected and know their lived experience is going to be acted on in a meaningful way?

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, I absolutely agree that there needs to be indigenous representation on the oversight. It is no secret, when we look at the history of systemic racism in this country, that indigenous and Black people and people of colour have been disproportionately represented at the hands of police.

This requires representation. This requires that our voices be at the table, the voices of groups of people who are experiencing the most grotesque levels of systemic racism by the CBSA and the RCMP.

• (1225)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to rise once again to enter this debate about bringing in independent oversight for the CBSA and more enhanced oversight for the RCMP. This is the third time I have risen in the House to speak to this bill. In fact, back in 2019, when the government tabled it, I and behold it was tabled literally on the eve of an election. Without any doubt, the bill died on the Order Paper because the election was called a couple of days after that.

Despite the Liberals promising that they would bring this in, once again, just before the 2021 election, the government tabled the same bill under a different number: Bill C-3. Then the Prime Minister saw fit to call an election that nobody wanted and the bill died yet again. Now here we are and it is the third time around. Maybe the third time is lucky and Bill C-20 will get through the system, and we will finally see independent oversight for the CBSA and enhanced measures for the RCMP. This is so important and so significant. Why? People's lives hinge upon it.

We have just heard from my colleague, who spoke about the importance of this for indigenous people. The member for Winnipeg Centre highlighted the systemic racism that exists within the RCMP, the unbelievable measures and the extent to which they brought a heavy hand to addressing indigenous protests. It was shocking to see the images in British Columbia of what was being done at that time and how indigenous people were dealt with, all because they wanted to exercise their right to protect their land.

In “Behind the Thin Blue Line”, an APTN investigation, APTN provided this:

“You do one more thing and I’ll dose you, bitch,” a Mountie allegedly told independent media producer Kristy Grear, according to court files. “There was no name tag or badge number displayed on the officer’s uniform,” the documents claim. “However I did observe a so-called ‘thin-blue line’ patch on the officer’s uniform.”

This is how the Mounties of the Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG), a secretive industry defence arm of the B.C. RCMP arrive to dismantle blockades: armed with guns and mace, name tags ripped off, faces hidden, thin blue line patches emblazoned on their chests.

Police arrive with howling dogs, helicopters, drones, chainsaws, axes, an excavator, jackhammers, angle grinders and fancier gadgets like thermal imaging cameras.

This is what is happening and it is shocking. It should be shocking to every single member of the House and to Canadians. How could it be that such measures are taken unchecked? However, that is the reality and that is why we need this bill.

More to the point, we need amendments to this bill to ensure there is indigenous representation. I do not know how that is possible, since the government had two bills before this one and had so much time to get it right. Despite the government's claim and the Prime Minister's claim that they are committed to reconciliation, it is the third time around with the bill, and the government still did not have the wherewithal to get it right to ensure that indigenous people have representation on this critical question of oversight. Why is that? Is it just incompetence, or is it willful blindness to the systemic racism that exists in the system?

I want to take a moment to turn to the CBSA, as I am the NDP critic for immigration, refugees and citizenship. The CBSA has unchecked powers to deport people, detain people and arrest people. Refugees and people without status have zero power whatsoever.

• (1230)

When refugees are subjected to abuse, what can they do? Can they file a complaint? I doubt they could file a complaint against the very people who are going after them. Even if they did, the process takes so long that they would be deported. They would be out of the country before they could even see the result of their com-

### *Government Orders*

plaint. It is a joke to say to the people, “Here is the process you could follow.” In reality, it does not materialize.

To boot, successive Canadian governments have allowed this practice to continue, that is, putting refugees in detention and in jails. The government is actively engaging with the provincial government on contracts so they can throw refugees in detention and put them in jail. This is happening in Canada, and it is a gross violation of people's human rights.

The report from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch has exposed Canada's inhumane practice of jailing thousands of people fleeing persecution, and often in maximum security provincial jails. Let me be very clear: Refugees and migrants are not criminals. Canada is one of the few countries in the global north without a legal limit on detention. In other words, people could be put in there indefinitely. We know there are devastating long-term impacts on those who are incarcerated in immigration detention. Such gross violations of human rights must end now.

The NDP fully supports this bill. We have wanted to see it since the Harper administration. It is the third time the bill has been introduced in the House, and maybe we will finally have independent oversight. Maybe we will finally see the federal government take action and, equally importantly, end the practice of detaining and jailing refugees and migrants. The government has promised this.

It is enough talk. Let us see the action. The government has a responsibility to undertake this work because people's lives hinge on it. CBSA is so aggressive right now in trying to go after people that it even goes to people's schools to arrest them, or tries to get private information from the school system to make arrests. That is what is happening right now, and it has to be stopped. There has to be accountability. We have to address systemic racism. Enough is enough.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the bill, there is a section that allows for the minister or provincial counterparts to do a review of specified activities to ensure that the RCMP is acting in accordance with its act and that the CBSA is doing the same.

I am of the opinion that parliamentarians should be granted this power as well. Sometimes our committees are made aware of information, and I am just wondering what thoughts she has on that. Rather than confining this power just to the executive branch, should there also be more of a role for the legislative branch, which is meant as an important check and balance on executive power?

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his excellent work with respect to this. He is absolutely correct to say that this measure should be extended to parliamentarians so that there is accountability. We often come across situations or instances that we learn of, and there should be a pathway for parliamentarians to raise these concerns, file a complaint and have the matter investigated. There has to be open, transparent accountability in this process.

• (1235)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. She cited many examples of past complaints to the Canada Border Services Agency. I know that there have been complaints about sexual harassment and even about sexual assault. These are serious complaints.

As my colleague said, when an agency investigates itself, there is little chance of a result or a reply to the complainants.

I wonder whether she believes that the creation of this independent commission will ensure that this does not happen again, as we hope, but also that people who file complaints for important reasons, such as sexual assault, will get to see the process lead to corrective action.

[*English*]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, horrific situations have occurred where people have been subjected to violence and abuse. In fact, at least 16 deaths have occurred in CBSA custody since 2000. These are serious situations that have taken place.

With the bill before us, at the very minimum at least there is independent oversight. With independent oversight, the organization is not investigating itself. We need to ensure transparency and accountability.

To this point, we need to ensure that systemic racism is addressed. We also need to ensure that there is representation for the indigenous people, racialized people and Black people involved in this process as well.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, for a long time it has been manifestly obvious that there is systemic racism in our police forces: the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency. We know that up until now, there has been no oversight body to deal with Canadian border services. I think that with the debate so far, in the very little amount of time we have had Bill C-20 before us, it is also manifestly clear that this act should be amended to ensure an indigenous role in the oversight process. The commission will deal with both agencies.

I would like my hon. colleague's comments on this. What are the best ways, in her opinion, to engage indigenous participation in the commission when investigating complaints?

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Mr. Speaker, of course, indigenous oversight, which includes indigenous investigators and decision-makers, and the appointment of Black and racialized Canadians should be in this process. The bill, if passed through the House, will be referred to committee, where I think it will be very important to hear from witnesses with respect to that to see how that process should unfold.

The government should have done this work, by the way, before now. It is so disappointing to me that once again it did not do its job and it neglected to ensure that this was properly addressed.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. Today, we are here debating Bill C-20, an act that would establish the public complaints and review commission and amend certain acts and statutory instruments.

First, I want to recognize a first-year law student at Thompson Rivers University where I used to teach. I want to thank Najib Rahall, who is about to start contracts class, which I appreciate. He is now in Hansard. I thank him for turning in my wallet this weekend. He is taught by my friends Professor Craig Jones, K.C. and Professor Dr. Ryan Gauthier. I am sure he is also getting a first-class education.

I also want to recognize somebody else who is a constituent. He was also a colleague at the bar and at my work, maybe even taking my position as a Crown prosecutor. I want to recognize my friend, Anthony Varesi, on his new book on Bob Dylan. It is his second book. He wrote the first one in law school. I am not sure how he did that.

On the matter at hand, it seems the Liberals have been discussing this issue well before I arrived at Parliament. From what I can see, this matter has been discussed for about seven years. The bill was first tabled in the 42nd Parliament and died in the Senate. It was then tabled again during the 43rd Parliament. We all know what happened at that point. Despite Canadians clearly signalling they did not want to go to the polls and despite the fact there was a lot of work to be done, the Prime Minister coveted majority government and, with all candour, let that get in the way of the work of the House.

Having been here for a year, I am still learning, but what I can see is that there is a lot of work to be done. The work on this bill in the 43rd Parliament was interrupted by what amounted to a small seat change in hopes that the Prime Minister would get what he wanted. He was ultimately denied that, but there was a seat shuffle, and I am proud to stand here on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo as part of that seat shuffle.



*Government Orders*

Now we have this bill tabled a year into the government's mandate. As I was preparing for this speech, I reflected on why it took the government a year to do this. The election was about 14 months ago. I am wondering whether this was a priority. In fact, I asked my Bloc colleague a question about this. This is an important matter to discuss.

Canada has what amounts to the longest undefended border in the world. I have had countless interactions with the RCMP and with CBSA officials, some of them in my personal capacity and others in my professional capacity. These interactions likely number into the hundreds, and all but one have generally been cordial or favourable professional interactions. That is why we are here, because not all interactions and not all things go as they should both personally and professionally.

I will take a moment to recognize the work of peace officers, civilian members and staff with the CBSA and with the RCMP. In my riding, there are detachments with the RCMP, like Clinton, 100 Mile House, Clearwater and Barriere. There are three detachments also in Kamloops, being Kamloops City, Tk'emlups rural, which is situated on the traditional land of the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc, and Kamloops traffic. All of these detachments cover 38,000 square kilometres of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. I am grateful for the sacrifices of those who put on the uniform to keep us safe, with their backup officers often being an hour away through staffing or resource difficulties. They are there to keep people safe whenever they are in that area. These members see terrible things.

● (1240)

I was speaking to a bill I authored, Bill C-291, last week. I authored the bill and it was sponsored by the member for North Okanagan—Shuswap, and I thank him again for doing so. The bill proposes to change the definition of “child pornography” to “child sexual abuse material”, because what is occurring is not pornography, it is sexual abuse, and we should be calling it what it is.

One of the things I pointed out was that police doing this job were often at a constable level and they were reviewing horrendous images, images of unspeakable horrors. Usually, in my prior work, I did not have to view this sort of evidence, but police officers did, and they are not paid enough to do so, frankly, given the work they do. I thank them for that.

Let us face it, most peace officers, people and frontline workers doing the job just want to make it home. They do not want to hurt anybody. A lot of police officers I know would love to go through a shift without having to arrest anybody. That is often not something most police officers do. At the end of the day, people in the RCMP and CBSA have a mandate to keep us safe. They are expected to do more with less resources. While this is not always fair, it is the reality of our situation.

When it comes to our frontline officers and workers, we expect leadership. We expect them to engage professionally, to do their jobs, to be equipped and to be professional in all that they do. I wish I could see the same from the RCMP commissioner at this time. It seems to me that the commissioner is not always modelling that professionalism, being vulnerable to inappropriate influence from the former Minister of Public Safety. It is ironic that Bill C-20 talks about the overseeing of frontline officers, mainly constables,

but I question whether senior Mounties or, in this case, the senior Mountie is herself immune from the oversight that is required.

I point to what the member for Kildonan—St. Paul said in committee in questioning the minister. I will do my best to paraphrase her, because I cannot be nearly as eloquent as the member. She noted that the commissioner was either influenced by the government or completely bungled the investigation into the mass shootings in Nova Scotia, a terrible incident. She asked why she had not been fired. This is the professionalism, oversight and leadership that Canadians want.

At the end of the day, we are here to talk about who oversees the overseers. This came up when we were debating Bill C-9 at committee in the past week or two. That bill proposes changes to the Judges Act that are long overdue.

Before I came to Parliament, I was unaware that there was no independent oversight for CBSA. Let us not forget that these are frontline peace officers. Oftentimes and typically, they will be people's first human point of contact once they get off the plane or at a land or sea border crossing. The provisions would require the RCMP commissioner and the CBSA president to respond to interim reports, reviews and recommendations within legislative timelines. This is quite important because we require, in my view, a consideration of some measure of independent oversight.

● (1245)

Most people here know that I come from a legal background. In my world view, the rule of law is obviously sacrosanct. Sometimes, we can have heated debates in this place, as we should, about how that should manifest itself. We may agree to disagree, but at the end of the day I think we can all agree that the rule of law is important. In fact, it is written into the preamble of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In the courts, the rule of law is maintained in two ways, typically through an appellate function but also through ethical guidelines, for instance, the ethical guidelines that are being revised in Bill C-9. The overseers are overseen on legal matters by these two mechanisms.

### *Government Orders*

The one question I do have when it comes to Bill C-20, and this came up in Bill C-9, is the question of consultations. I believe my colleague for the NDP raised this. I am not sure what, if any, consultations were done, but this obviously needs be explored at committee, if the legislation successfully passes on second reading. Let us face it that governments of all stripes often fail on these issues. We have seen it on the extreme intoxication bill. I call on the government to make this a priority.

CBSA has extraordinary powers, detention, arrest and search. These are sweeping powers where charter rights are often diminished. This bill would replace the existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP with the complaints and review commission.

Let us examine the backdrop in which peace officers within the RCMP and CBSA are expected to do their job. It is important to evaluate that backdrop as we consider the independent oversight for peace officers doing their job.

My constituents frequently complain to me about what they have termed, and others have termed, catch and release. I hear about this from police officers from across the country. This is why I put forward Bill C-274, because our bail system must be reformed.

I have compassion for police officers doing their job and arresting the same person again and again, only to know that this person will be released shortly.

The government, though it is dealing with the oversight issue in Bill C-20, has not addressed key bail decisions in the last few years, which has led to a catch-and-release system. It is in the interest of all Canadians that the government do so.

There has been a 32% increase in violent crime since 2015. This is not lost on this side of the House. We have Bill C-5 and Bill C-21. The word “victim” is not in either piece of legislation.

It saddens me to say, and I am surprised to be saying this, that drive-by shootings can now result in a community-based sentence. That does not feel right in my heart, but, more important, from a legal perspective, it is not logical.

The *Regina v. Nur* decision struck down mandatory minimums for section 95 of the Criminal Code, possessing a restricted firearm with readily available ammunition, in this case a handgun. In that instance, the Supreme Court of Canada said that the appropriate sentence, as I recall, would be 40 months in jail.

That is what it said the appropriate sentence would be for a relatively young man. I believe the accused in that case was 19 or 20 years old. We are here debating, not long after *Nur* was struck down, whether that should actually result in a jail sentence when our highest court, which has frequently struck down these cases, said that this should have been 40 months in jail.

On the one hand, we have Conservatives who have often advocated for mandatory minimums. It was the Harper government that passed many of the mandatory minimums. On the other hand, we have, across the aisle, people who say that there should be no mandatory minimums.

I would advocate for a middle-ground approach, one that has mandatory minimums that operate in a constitutionally compliant manner. I have stated this to the Minister of Justice, that this is the appropriate middle ground. Unfortunately, he did not heed my exhortation to do so.

● (1250)

Police and CBSA officials are operating within an environment that has 124,000 more violent crimes than last year. This would make up almost my whole riding. Canadians are tired of this. Also, there were 789 homicides in Canada last year and 611 in 2015, which is a 29% increase.

Police and CBSA are in situations in which gun crime is a concern. I recall reading in the news a couple of years ago about a shooting of a teenager who was innocently driving with his parents. There was a person in my riding, a case of mistaken identity, who was shot down at a hotel. This is the situation our police are operating within. These were sons, brothers and friends.

There has been a 92% increase in gang-related homicides since 2015, yet when we come to the House to debate legislation on public safety, the debate is whether or not to relax these types of penalties rather than make them more stringent so that gang-related homicides would ultimately go down rather than up.

If members ask anyone in the system, I anticipate they will tell them that organized crime is so difficult to investigate. That is why they call it “organized”. There is intimidation, often a layer of distancing, money and organization.

If I were a police officer or a CBSA officer, I would be concerned with the proliferation of firearms. I remember one of the first cases I dealt with which involved now staff sergeant Kelly Butler, one of the best police officers I have encountered. She pulled a vehicle over and what was revealed inside the driver's jacket was a loaded sawed-off shotgun. I remember holding that firearm when it was in evidence. The firearm was illegal. The stock and the barrel had been cut off, so it was probably about 10 to 12 inches long. That is the environment our peace officers and CBSA officers are operating within.

Our border is porous, and there is a concern of what to do about it. The public safety minister has earmarked, as I recall, \$5 billion to target law-abiding gun owners who are not accounting for crimes. Bill C-5 and Bill C-21 will be targeting that. Where could \$5 billion be spent when it comes to our border and enforcement of illegal guns? I ask that question rhetorically because I have some pretty good ideas.

There has been a 61% increase in reporting sexual assaults since 2015. I have two bills on sexual offences. We obviously had the #MeToo movement in that time, which is always important. My wife was telling me that she saw a sign recently that said, “No means no”, but we have to go one step further and say, “Only yes means yes”. Only consent itself is consent.

To conclude, this proposed act would create an obligation for the RCMP commissioner and CBSA president to submit an annual report to the Minister of Public Safety. The report would inform the minister of actions that the RCMP and CBSA have taken within the year to respond to recommendations from the chairperson.

This is great, but one thing I learned in my first year in Parliament, while sitting on the veterans affairs committee is that, just because a recommendation is made, does not mean it will be acted upon. My hope is that, when these recommendations are made, they will actually be acted upon, otherwise they are worth nothing more than the piece of paper they are written upon. It is easy to use words, and we have frequently said that, but I call on the government to act.

• (1255)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I really appreciated my colleague's nuanced and moderate speech. In particular, he cited facts related to his personal experience. It is good to hear speeches that leave hyperpartisanship behind. I really want to congratulate my colleague for his speech and the position he has taken.

This brings me to a subject that he only touched on, but that seemed important to him. I am referring to the role and work of both border and police officers. We can see that these people are under a lot of pressure and work under a lot of scrutiny. We wonder if they are doing their job correctly or whether they are abusing their power.

Abuses of power and unpleasant situations do happen. However, I have also heard from people who work in this field. They say that they go to work in the morning with a weight on their shoulders. They do not like feeling as though they are constantly being criticized and monitored at work. They no longer know when or how they should intervene, and that is making their job difficult.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about passing Bill C-20. The Bloc Québécois believes that this bill must be passed. What message should Bill C-20 send?

I think my colleague might have something to say about that.

• (1300)

[*English*]

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, that was a very thoughtful question. When I was a very young man with a beautiful full head of hair, and it is true that it was there, I was actually a peace officer myself. I remember the pressure as a frontline peace officer at that time.

My hon. colleague's question was about the message we are sending. I certainly cannot speak to what message will be received.

### *Government Orders*

I can only speak to what message I hope will be sent. The message I hope will be sent is that we expect our frontline officers, right up to the highest members of management, whether it be the RCMP commissioner or the president of CBSA, to operate with integrity, to operate in a neutral manner and to recognize the difficult landscapes within which they operate. We have talked a lot today about racism and over-representation in the justice system. Those are all issues that concern me and that I want addressed.

The message I hope to send is that peace officers are here to do a job. They are employed by the people of Canada and they have a very tall order to keep us safe, but concurrent with that is an obligation to do so with the highest level of integrity.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate my colleague's last statement. I think the balance of accountability and the expectation that we have on the front line is really important. In my region, where we are dealing with the opioid crisis, there is a great deal of frustration because we have seen the rise in crime. We have seen the rise in deaths in communities we never thought we would see before, and there is an expectation that the police will just handle this.

I remember the Timmins chief of police speaking at a community meeting saying they cannot police our way out of this situation. It is a bigger situation. We have also seen the willingness of police to work with frontline mental health workers. This represents major changes in how policing is done.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague about the role of police, who have to take on many aspects now in a very complex society, yet at the same time, we do need to make sure that there is accountability so they respect that trust. Given my hon. colleague's past, what are his thoughts on these issues?

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of something we have in my riding. It is called Car 40. I am not sure if it is unique to the Kamloops RCMP or not. Car 40 pairs a police officer with a mental health nurse, and they respond to mental health-related calls.

I said earlier that police are expected to do more with fewer resources. I do not think I am speaking out of turn here by saying that we have seen a proliferation of mental health issues. Perhaps it is actually just coming to the forefront. I am not an expert on this. I am not sure which, but I did have a section on opioids in my speech that I did not get to. It is often a case where frontline responders are dealing with the same person, sometimes twice in a shift, with multiple overdoses.

*Government Orders*

I was very proud that our last platform addressed substance abuse and spoke about health issues. I also echo the leader of His Majesty's official opposition when he says that we want to get to the bottom of this, and we want to deal with treatment. A Conservative government would put treatment to the forefront to ideally ease the burden that is on frontline workers, and let us not overlook the trauma that they themselves go through in dealing with people dying before their very eyes.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to raise something that is a bit tangential. The member mentioned the head of the RCMP, Brenda Lucki. It is very much on my mind that the Parliamentary Protective Service officers here had to work three years to get a decent contract. They do not get back pay. They have to report through the RCMP now. That is a change that I opposed.

I want to ask all hon. members in this place to do whatever we can. Winter is coming. The people who risk their lives to protect us do not even have a piece of plywood over their heads before the storms come. They are vulnerable to extreme weather events and have to stand outside this place. Unlike Centre Block, this building is not adequate to provide any shelter from winter storms. Does my hon. colleague have any comment?

• (1305)

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my hon. colleague on her new role within her party.

I am indebted to all forms of law enforcement. Some are obviously closer to us physically than others. The Parliamentary Protective Service officers are close to us. We walk by them literally every day, sometimes without giving a second thought to the protection, security and oversight they provide us not only so we can walk in here unencumbered to do our jobs at the centre of democracy, but also so family and Canadians can be here. I appreciate each and every single thing they do.

I am not familiar with all of the nuances the member spoke of, but my hope is that we can address that and do so in a way that is fair and safe for all.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is obviously in favour of Bill C-20, which will introduce mechanisms, that is, an independent organization, to handle complaints.

Several years ago, in 2004, there was the Arar case that made it clear we needed an independent organization. In 2022, there are still complaint management mechanisms and organizations that are not independent. There is some independent oversight at the RCMP, but not at the Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA.

I would like to ask my colleague why the government, after a number of years, has still not taken action to ensure that complaints are handled fairly and independently and that there are no abuses, particularly with regard to the CBSA.

[*English*]

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, obviously I cannot get into the heads of the government members. If I could, this place would maybe run a bit more efficiently, from our perspective.

The reality is that I am not sure why the government took as long as it did. To me, when we are looking at legislation and how much time it takes, and also when it is tabled, it speaks to governmental priorities. In this case, with this legislation, we waited two months before we even got to work, which is ironic given that now we are talking about sitting later to get more work done. However, various other pieces of legislation were put forward, so I can only surmise that the government did not view this as being as serious an issue or as problematic a situation as others that it has put forward.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, off the top I would like to note that I will be happy to share my time with the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

I am in my place today, aware that we are standing on traditional Algonquin territory. I am also aware that much has been said on Bill C-20 so far, so what I will have to say will kind of act as a recap of where we are. We are debating this legislation that would enact a new stand-alone statute, the public complaints and review commission act, to provide an external review regime for both the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency.

To uphold trust and confidence in our law enforcement and border protection services, Canadians should count on a robust system of accountability. Canadians expect consistent, fair and equal treatment when receiving services from the RCMP and the CBSA. Civilian review is essential for the transparency of that system.

Currently, the RCMP is reviewed by the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, the CRCC. The House has now heard that the new public complaints and review commission would replace the CRCC, provide enhanced reporting requirements for the RCMP, and establish an independent review mechanism for the CBSA.

I would like to note in particular the impact this bill would have on the Canada Border Services Agency. With some 14,000 dedicated and professional employees, the CBSA is one of the largest organizations within the public safety portfolio. It has a long and rich history of providing border services in an exemplary manner, but inevitably, where there is interaction between the public and border service agencies, disputes will sometimes arise. A transparent means of dealing with such disputes supports respect for the rule of law, but unlike the RCMP, the CBSA does not currently have an ongoing structure for independent review of such situations.

*Government Orders*

The agency is indeed reviewed by various independent boards, tribunals and courts, but it does not have a review mechanism for specific complaints, including officer conduct and the agency's level of service. I would remind the House that the CBSA is one of the public safety bodies that many Canadians encounter regularly. I know personally that when I come to the border I always look guilty, no matter what, but I have always been treated with fairness and respect.

Border services officers control the movement of people and goods through Canadian borders. They detain and remove potential threats. They collect duties and taxes. Canadians rely on the border security measures enforced by the CBSA, and at the same time the CBSA is a Canadian public safety institution that non-Canadians encounter, including, for example, the refugees currently seeking asylum in our country. For this reason, a review mechanism must be accessible to all people who deal with CBSA employees. It is key to building public trust in the institution designed to protect our borders.

Under Bill C-20, the public complaints and review commission would have authority to review both the CBSA and the RCMP. Some components of the bill would apply to both institutions. Each year, both would be required to report to the Minister of Public Safety on how they have responded to PCRC recommendations. Both would have codified timelines dictating how soon they would need to respond to those recommendations. The PCRC will disaggregate the data of complaints related to both agencies and report on what it reveals about race-based issues. This will help us, for example, to better understand and address any systemic racism in law enforcement in Canada, at least in this law enforcement system.

Apart from national security issues, which are reviewed through the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency, the PCRC would be responsible for conducting specified reviews of any activities of the RCMP and the CBSA. These reviews could be conducted at the request of the minister or on the PCRC's own initiative. The PCRC will have the responsibility for receiving complaints concerning CBSA conduct or levels of service, and the authority to launch investigations.

Indeed, under the bill, individuals who are detained by the CBSA would be informed that they have an avenue to make a complaint. If somebody has filed a complaint with the CBSA and is not satisfied with the manner in which the complaint was handled, the complainant may forward the matter to the PCRC for review. The PCRC would also have authority to initiate its own investigation into CBSA conduct when it is in the public interest to do so. The PCRC would report its findings and recommendations to the CBSA and to the minister.

● (1310)

I have been speaking about the authority to review complaints, but there is another level of authority required to govern serious incidents involving the CBSA and its personnel. These would include matters that, for example, may have resulted in serious injury or death, or constituted federal or provincial offences. The CBSA is responsible for conducting its own internal reviews of such matters, but there is currently no statutory obligation for the CBSA to conduct such a review.

Under the bill before us, the CBSA would be obliged to conduct internal investigations into alleged serious incidents. The CBSA would be required to notify the police of the jurisdiction in which the alleged serious incident took place and to notify the PCRC.

Furthermore, the CBSA would be required to provide the PCRC with reports and other information on serious incidents. The PCRC, for its part, would have the authority to send an observer to verify the impartiality of the CBSA's internal investigation, and it would be required to report on the number, types and outcomes of serious incidents as part of its annual reporting. I am sure hon. members would agree that this would provide a much-needed degree of transparency to the handling of serious incidents.

Finally, I would remind the House of the special nature of CBSA review, in that it would seek to provide the consistent, fair and equal treatment that Canadians expect in a manner that would also include people who do not reside in Canada. The Canadian Human Rights Commission, for example, can receive complaints only from individuals lawfully in Canada. The PCRC, on the other hand, would be in a position to accept complaints from foreign nationals that involve allegations of discrimination by the CBSA.

These are important matters in creating the kind of robust accountability mechanisms that are essential for public trust in our border services and law enforcement institutions. The time is well overdue for the CBSA to join its partner organizations in having such a mechanism. Indeed, this is the third time in recent years that the government has endeavoured to reform the system. We attempted it in 2019 with Bill C-98 and again in 2020 with Bill C-3.

This bill is a key part of the government's agenda, and I urge my hon. colleagues to join me in supporting its quick passage.

● (1315)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, could the member reflect on the importance of establishing this review body so that Canadians can have confidence in the law enforcement and protection agencies that we have? Could he provide his comments on the importance of that?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Mr. Speaker, back in 2003 the Harvard Business Review issued a publication that I think should be required reading for anybody who has to deal with the public. It was all about fair process in the knowledge economy. Fair process is a really critical issue, as it should be, for everybody who is overseeing the creation of legislation, such as we are doing now, right down to the work we provide in our constituency offices. Fair process means a good hearing. It means objective review of what has been presented, and it allows for independent, objective analysis, review and recommendations.

This is what the legislation proposes to apply to the CBSA, and I think it is probably about three years overdue.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip has been calling for amendments to this proposed legislation to ensure that, if established, the enforcement watchdog would employ indigenous people as both decision-makers and complaints investigators.

This was one of the recommendations that came out of the House committee study on systemic racism in policing. I am curious if the member will push his government to ensure that indigenous representation is top of mind, that these amendments are put forward and passed, and that indigenous investigators are probing complaints when it comes to indigenous people's files.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's question, absolutely that is something that I will definitely advocate and support. I believe that when the committee gets its hands on this legislation, some of the people who are asking to be involved in the system should be called as witnesses, so that they can provide their recommendations directly to the committee and those recommendations can find their way into the final version that comes back to the House.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Fleetwood—Port Kells, both for his congratulations that I am leader of the Green Party of Canada and for splitting his time with me. My chance will come up very soon.

I wonder whether, as a British Columbian member of Parliament, the member has been disturbed by the videos, which I wonder if he has seen, of the arrests and the treatment of indigenous people within British Columbia, particularly those on Wet'suwet'en territories, where land defenders were quite brutalized, and in Fairy Creek as well, where land defenders were also brutalized.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Mr. Speaker, I have been disturbed by all the factors that have come around that particular project, including any mistreatment of people who are out demonstrating and exercising their constitutional rights. I am also disturbed, though, at the destruction of property and lawlessness that may have been taking place there.

I am also aware that police officers usually have a millisecond to make up their minds on how to react to a situation, whereas the rest of us have all of time after that to review what they have done and to pass judgment on them. This is precisely the kind of mechanism that we need to do a deeper dive into these incidents, learn from them and refine how we approach some very ticklish situations.

• (1320)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this place acknowledging that we stand on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation, and essentially this building sits on Algonquin land. To them, I say *meegwetch*.

I am very pleased that we have seen another incarnation of Bill C-20. The fundamental essence of this legislation, for those who may just be joining the debate, is to ensure that two really significant federal law enforcement agencies have mechanisms for civilian complaint.

[*Translation*]

Those two agencies are the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency.

[*English*]

The Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP interact with Canadians and foreigners on a regular basis. The RCMP has had a public complaints commission for many years. It has been inadequate. Initially, it did not have powers to subpoena, to find out from RCMP officers what really happened in any event. The ability to summon witnesses is terribly important.

[*Translation*]

The powers of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP were weaker, but it is unbelievable that we do not have a single entity to handle complaints against the CBSA.

[*English*]

I do not know about my colleagues in this place, but certainly through COVID I had a lot of reasons to be concerned about the structure of the Canada Border Services Agency and the degree of powers granted to individual officers. It will be beyond the scope of this act to deal with some of these issues, so I place them before us now as we go through second reading debate.

This is concerning for all of us. I should not speak for all of my colleagues, but I have a hunch here, because I talked to many of them, regardless of party, during the period of time that we were trying to help Canadians come home to Canada. For instance, those married to permanent residents, not Canadian citizens, had to make their pitch at the border to a Canada Border Services agent, whose decision was final and discretionary to a particular officer. This created no end of misery for Canadian families. I do know that cabinet at the time passed an order in council to try to alleviate the problem, but it is still the case that an individual officer can make a decision on the spot about anyone.

*Government Orders*

My stepdaughter was once going into the United States to take up a new job that she had in California. She had all her paperwork, but the Canada Border Services agent did not like her. He said he did not believe her and did not think she had a job, and he sent her back. There is no appeal. There is no place to go with that. We need to take a broader look at the Canada Border Services Agency.

Some constituents, who were not my constituents, asked me for help. They happened to be a couple I know from Cape Breton Island, where my family lives and where I am from. The couple was at the New Brunswick border with Maine. When they drove up to the Canadian kiosk to say they were going home, the border agent told the wife she could go home because she is Canadian, but her husband could not go home because he is still a permanent resident. They had to leave one spouse at the border with all the luggage, while the other was allowed into Canada because they were not allowed to go back into the U.S. together. These kinds of things are nonsensical. We need to look at the Canada Border Services Agency and make some policy choices and raise some other issues.

We certainly know that we want, as a matter of policy, which I have heard from many people in the House today, the CBSA to be focused on stopping the smuggling of guns. We want the CBSA focused on stopping the smuggling of contraband drugs too. We do not particularly want the CBSA at the border to terrorize racialized people from other countries. We do not want it thinking that its number one job is to find people whose citizenship is not quite right and whose paperwork as a permanent resident is not quite right, and get them deported as quickly as possible.

● (1325)

We have a lot of complaints about the CBSA and there are concerns about racial profiling in the RCMP. There are complaints that need to be heard. However, I really want to emphasize the extent to which the CBSA, in the past, has brutalized Canadians. I will give one example, because it comes from my own experience. I was just discussing it with the member of Parliament in whose riding it happened before he was the MP for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

An indigenous man, born in the state of California, came across the border in the 1980s or 1970s with an indigenous woman from Penelakut Island, from the Penelakut nation of Vancouver Island. They married, they had kids and they had grandkids. There is a thing called the Jay Treaty, but obviously the CBSA had never heard of it. It gives additional rights to indigenous people crossing borders.

In any case, for some reason, CBSA agents decided in 2013 to show up at the door of Richard Germaine from Penelakut Island. They had not sent a note saying that they noticed he did not have all of his paperwork done to be a Canadian permanent resident. They just showed up four days before Christmas and arrested him. I am not exaggerating a bit. They put him in leg irons in the back of a van and drove him off Vancouver Island, taking a long ferry ride, to Vancouver, where they placed him in a cell.

I have seen the cells now, thanks to Senator Kim Pate, who likes to take other parliamentarians on tours of prisons. They are in the basement of the Vancouver airport. The people put there are rarely there for more than 24 hours before they are summarily deported.

Since the time that I toured that facility, they have moved to a different facility for the deportation of foreigners.

This was a railroading; this was fast. This was taking someone from his home, a grandfather, right before Christmas in front of his wife, who was a residential school survivor, and sending him for deportation without due process, because, well, that was what the political mood wanted to do.

We desperately need this legislation. I will be supporting it to get it through second reading and get it to committee. The CBSA, for a long time, has had a high number of complaints, and these have been noted by the Auditor General. They are complaints of racism, homophobia, transphobia and rudeness. It is an agency that desperately needs oversight. I want to make sure that I say, as other speakers have said, that there are wonderful agents in the RCMP and wonderful agents in the CBSA, but this is crying out for reform.

I will be presenting amendments to Bill C-20 because I want to make sure that it is as rigorous as possible and as fair as possible to the people who experience these issues at the border with CBSA. We also need to do much more to examine systemic racism within the RCMP. We need to do much more to pay attention to that. What if people do not feel like they can make a complaint?

We need proactive anti-racism programs in the RCMP. We also need to take a very close look at so-called wellness checks, as in the case of Rodney Levi, a member of the Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation who in June 2020 was killed by an RCMP officer.

Local complaint commissions, efforts at inquiries and coroners' reports are not really where we want to start the efforts to ensure this does not happen again. The place to start efforts to ensure this does not happen again is specific anti-racism training and specific training to root out misogyny within the RCMP and CBSA, and ensuring that we protect the agencies that are created to protect us. We must take steps to ensure that our RCMP and CBSA agents are protected themselves.

We need to make sure that the process set up under Bill C-20 is robust and fair and does its best to ensure that our law enforcement agencies meet our values as Canadians.

● (1330)

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member on her re-election as leader of the Green Party.

*Government Orders*

I am wondering if she could comment on the importance of this legislation and of strengthening this legislation, especially when it comes to the illegal spying against law-abiding protesters. I am thinking right now of Enbridge and the northern gateway pipeline projects, especially when it comes to first nations activists.

Also, the CRCC released a report, after the RCMP was sued by the BCCLA, on Mounties' use of arbitrary searches and broad exclusion zones when it came to Mi'kmaq protesters doing anti-fracking standoffs in New Brunswick. I would love to hear her thoughts on that.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the hon. member for Victoria remembering the Elsipogtog standoff in New Brunswick. It was a non-violent protest and was demonstrated in many ways to be a non-violent protest.

It was also widely supported. The indigenous land defenders of Elsipogtog, part of the larger Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy nations, were widely supported by settler culture New Brunswick residents nearby. There were people on the side of the road supporting the Elsipogtog First Nation. It was letting emergency vehicles through. It was there to protect its land against the hydraulic drilling for what is called fracking.

The RCMP, the night before, had brought the non-violent protesters tobacco, which was a suggestion we were now in a stage of de-escalation and working together, only to have a pre-dawn raid the next morning that involved attack dogs and a fully armed SWAT team moving in. Those kinds of incidents leave a community traumatized. They should leave settler culture Canadians ashamed. The incident was never explored, and there were no answers given to anyone as to why the RCMP chose an aggressive, violent approach to shut down that particular effort to ban fracking.

Fortunately, the government elected right after that event banned fracking in New Brunswick. The current government is wobbly on the point.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in her speech, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands spoke about the experience her stepdaughter had when entering the States. The reality is these various experiences are arbitrary and can be different depending on the person. They can be different depending on the circumstance. They can be different depending on just about any variable.

I am wondering if she can comment on why she sees the set-up of this structure as beneficial for an individual like her stepdaughter, who will have somewhere to go to file a proper grievance or complaint.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, it was a real blow, because she had a job set up and some arbitrary guy decided no, he is not letting her fulfill her life's dream. It was his decision and there was no appeal. Obviously having an appeal would help, but so too would examining the day-to-day operations of CBSA and providing more guidance.

For instance, an officer should not have full discretion to decide whether they like the cut of someone's jib when people are coming into Canada. They should have some criteria. If the criteria has not

been met, they have a reason to say no. However, there is no criteria, and it is often as subjective as the member for Kingston and the Islands suggested. It is arbitrary and discretionary, and it is specific to each officer.

My constituents have had completely different experiences at different airports with different CBSA officers, and on the same fact set there have been completely different decisions. I urge the ministers responsible, as we get Bill C-20 through, to say that CBSA officers should not have unfettered discretion to make decisions that affect people's lives as fundamentally as they do. I know this will be outside the scope of the act.

• (1335)

**Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was not around when this was brought up twice in the past. Bill C-98 and Bill C-3 came out in the 42nd Parliament and 43rd Parliament. They did not come through and both died on the Order Paper.

Perhaps the member could share some of her wisdom as to why she feels these bills did not make it through and why here we are again debating pretty similar legislation for the third time.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, the government of the day, which happens to be the current government, brought forward the legislation without a real commitment to see it through. When legislation dies on the Order Paper, sometimes it is inevitable, but in this case we have been debating it and calling for change.

As I said earlier in a question to another colleague, I remember raising this in Parliament when the minister responsible was Ralph Goodale, the public safety minister. It was not that long ago, but this has been coming up for at least seven years. There is deep concern that we need an oversight body for an agency with the powers the CBSA has.

The hon. member is a member of the official opposition, and I hope this time all parties can ban together and say we cannot let this situation go on. This time, let us get the bill over the finish line and make sure it is good law.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today we are talking about very important legislation, Bill C-20, which would establish a new public complaints and review commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Border Services Agency. It would enact accountability and transparency mechanisms that would provide a foundation for trust and confidence in Canada's public safety.



Employees of both the RCMP and the CBSA hold a broad range of powers. Public trust that those powers are to be used appropriately is crucial to maintaining respect for the rule of law. There is a balance that needs to be established. On the one hand is Canada's public safety and security priorities. On the other hand is respect for fair treatment and human rights. In our system that balance is supported by ensuring civilian review of public safety bodies, such as the RCMP and the CBSA.

This is a stand-alone bill. It would provide these mechanisms not as part of the enabling statutes of the RCMP or the CBSA, but independently of them. By doing this, we underscore the importance of the independent civilian review of organizations entrusted with maintaining public safety.

Both the RCMP and CBSA employees interact with the public on a daily basis, including with vulnerable populations. One of those organizations, the Canada Border Services Agency, currently has no civilian review mechanism to deal with public complaints. The Canada Border Services Agency Act itself is silent on this matter. This legislation would close a long-standing gap by providing a review body for the CBSA.

The RCMP currently has a civilian accountability body in the existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, the CRCC, but over the years there have been calls to update and enhance it. The CRCC itself has advised on the need to strengthen and expand existing review mechanisms for the RCMP.

I want to thank the chairperson, Michelaine Lahaie, and her staff at the CRCC for their thoughtfulness, thoroughness and dedication in recommending the additional accountability and transparency mechanisms included in this bill.

Bill C-20 would see the new public complaints and review commission replace the CRCC. The PCRC would continue the CRCC's existing mandate for complaints and review, but with new accountability tools at its disposal that would apply to both the RCMP and the CBSA. On its own initiative, or at the request of the minister, the PCRC would be able to conduct specified reviews on any RCMP or CBSA activities that do not involve national security.

I would remind the House that national security issues are handled by the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency. The PCRC will have the authority to investigate complaints about conduct and level of service in both the RCMP and the CBSA. If a complainant is not satisfied with how these organizations have handled a complaint, the PCRC can conduct a review. When it is in the public's interest to do so, the PCRC may initiate its own complaint and investigation into RCMP and CBSA conduct.

One of the issues that has underscored the need for a renewed and enhanced review system has been the time it has taken the RCMP in the past to respond to CRCC reports and recommendations. Frequent delays led to a Federal Court decision that the RCMP must provide a response to CRCC interim reports within six months. Over the last year, the RCMP has improved the timelines within which it responds to the CRCC. We want to ensure this improvement continues.

### *Government Orders*

• (1340)

Bill C-20 includes timelines that would codify when a response is required to an interim report, review or recommendation from the PCRC. When the PCRC issues an interim report, the RCMP and CBSA would have six months to respond. Should the PCRC issue specified activity reviews and recommendations, the RCMP and CBSA would have 60 days to respond.

Not only must these bodies report back to the commissioner of the PCRC within these codified timelines, the bill would obligate the RCMP commissioner and the CBSA president each to submit an annual report to the Minister of Public Safety. These reports would detail the actions the RCMP and CBSA have taken within the year to respond to PCRC recommendations.

In short, the bill would give the PCRC tools that the CRCC did not have to uphold civilian review of the law enforcement system.

However, there are other tools in the bill that are designed to enhance, at another level, the trust and confidence Canadians have for public safety in our country.

In their recommendations on ways to enhance the CRCC, the chairperson and her colleagues looked beyond the measures that would improve accountability. They considered ways in which a new review mechanism might enhance the public trust, and respect for, law enforcement in general and the rule of law itself.

Among the challenges is the urgent need to increase knowledge about systemic racism in law enforcement. This includes work done by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, which is in the report entitled "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada".

I am pleased to say this bill would respond to the committee's recommendation that the government clarify and strengthen the mandate, independence and efficacy of the CRCC. It provides for codified timelines for the RCMP's responses to the PCRC reports, for the RCMP to report annually to the minister on implementing PCRC recommendations and it provides for the protection of the identity of the complainants.

That which gets measured gets done, and if we are to respond to systemic racism, we must first gather the data that will inform our solutions. The bill would give statutory authority to the recommendation that the new PCRC will collect and publish disaggregated race-based data of complainants, in consultation with the RCMP and CBSA. Moreover, the bill would provide the PCRC with a mandate to implement public education and information programs. These would help inform Canadians on their rights of redress should they have issues with how they were treated by the RCMP or CBSA officials.

### *Government Orders*

The programs will also increase knowledge and awareness of the PCRC's mandate and thus provide a better understanding of the role of civilian review in upholding the rule of law.

As with the collection of race-based data, the public information mandate will be especially important in helping earn the trust of indigenous, Black and racialized Canadians.

The bill before us is a high priority for this government. Twice before, we have introduced bills to address many of these issues. They died on the Order Paper, but in the process we listened to all points of view and remained determined to strengthen transparency and accountability.

The bill before us now would take advantage of what we have learned. It responds to some of the issues that are long overdue, such as the need to provide a review mechanism to the CBSA. It responds to some of the issues that have presented difficulties in the past, such as the need to respond to recommendations in a timely manner. It responds to issues that have gained more attention in recent years, such as the evidence of systemic racism in the law enforcement system and the urgent need to find solutions.

The government has responded to those issues with a stand-alone bill that highlights the importance of civilian review of the law enforcement and border security systems.

• (1345)

I would add that it is extremely important to ensure that we have such mechanisms in place for people to have their complaints heard.

We heard the example moments ago from the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands of the issue her step-daughter had, and that is not uncommon. We hear about these situations all the time, quite frankly. I have heard of situations similar to that. It is critically important that when people experience these situations, whether they are crossing a border or whether it is something with the RCMP, they have an avenue to have their complaints heard. Sometimes those complaints are valid and sometimes they are not, but I do not think we are doing a service to anybody by not having the tool for those complaints to be heard.

In my opinion, having such a tool is not just a benefit to the complainant but indeed a benefit to the individual or individuals that the complaint is being made against. Quite often, especially in the world we live in today, a complaint can be made and amplified through social media, and if it is sensationalized enough, it can gain traction and people can very quickly be made aware of somebody's grievance with a border agent or an RCMP member. We all see people filming and recording just about everything.

A tool like this, allowing those individuals to bring their complaints forward, would give the opportunity for both sides of the story to be heard and the facts to come out with respect to everything that has been represented with individual circumstances and cases. When we empower individuals within the Canadian government and the roles they play to have such incredible discretionary authority like this, there has to be a mechanism for oversight to allow those who have potential grievances to come forward, so they can be heard as well as all individuals who are mentioned in the

complaint. They would have the opportunity to ensure that the independent review body has the ability to determine whether there is merit in the complaint, and if so, what the next steps should be.

As I indicated in my prepared remarks, it is critically important that not only do we have this oversight, but that it is annually reported back to the minister, which would happen. By having that tool, Parliament, through the minister's office, would have the ability to scrutinize more collectively what is going on with respect to those complaints, how they are being handled and the timelines to ensure that the proper recourse is being taken. Quite frankly, sometimes it takes quite a long time to get a response, and that is unacceptable. We do not need a court to weigh in on what those timelines should be. Those timelines should be codified, as the bill would do, and set in stone. If timelines are not met, we could properly inquire as to why and get to the bottom of what needs to change, if anything.

I am very pleased to see the legislation come forward. A number of members have spoken about the fact that this is the third time it has been here and, indeed, the third time under this government. However, I hope we can all appreciate that the other two times have helped to inform where we are today. I hope that, because this has taken longer, the one silver lining is that we have even better legislation than we may have had otherwise, because we have been able to inform ourselves along the way of the various aspects of the bill that may need to be improved.

I get the sense, from listening to the comments in the House today, that the bill will be supported by all members of the House. I look forward to it moving along so we can finally get this very important legislation in place.

• (1350)

**Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite mentioned that the legislation had been brought up twice before, and I agree with that. However, when Bill C-98 was introduced in 2019 and when Bill C-3 was introduced in 2020, many stakeholders, especially the union that represents CBSA officers, spoke about the fact that they were not consulted on draft stages.

Could the member opposite please inform me if there was much more consultation taking place this time? We do support the bill, but we want to ensure all stakeholders were involved, and that it has been done properly?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, any piece of legislation that comes before the House is not public information until such time that it is tabled, including to members of the governing party. Quite frankly, there is a very important rule of the House that the legislation be tabled at the same time for every member of Parliament to be able to review it.

With respect to the degree to which consultation has occurred in the minister's office, the member would have to ask the minister directly about that. We have question period in seven minutes, and maybe there will be time to do that.

*Government Orders*

What is really important, which I pointed out in my speech, is that having had the benefit of this come through the House twice already, we have heard individuals and organizations speak to various different aspects of the bill and the process. Hopefully we will have had the opportunity to get it right by the time it gets to this point.

Finally, one of the key times in our parliamentary system, in the democratic system that we have for establishing and reviewing legislation, is at committee. When this bill goes to committee, there will be the opportunity for Conservative, NDP, Bloc and Liberal members to invite various different people forward to voice their opinions on this legislation and to get their opinions on the record.

Although, perhaps, the degree to which the consultation has occurred might not be to the satisfaction of the Conservatives, the consultation has just begun in that this bill has now just been introduced and it will go to committee where the real consultation occurs.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I truly admire my colleague's work. I have seen how proactive he is in the House. He is always around to give speeches and ask questions. He really is very active.

Something is bugging me though. It seems that I do not often see his other colleagues show up to work as hard as he does. I wonder if there is a reason for that?

Perhaps he could tell us more about that?

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I guess we know it is a pretty mundane bill when those are the questions being asked in the House.

My role in the government is one of two parliamentary secretaries to the government House leader. The government House leader oversees the day-to-day operations in the House. Therefore, it makes sense that I would be in the House so much, and that my role has led me to being here. I am sorry if the member thinks my interventions, from time to time, are a little overboard. Perhaps he is not entirely wrong, but I am here to do my job. If he is saying that I am here all the time, please refer that back to my boss, so my boss knows I am doing my job too.

• (1355)

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House will be supporting the bill.

There have been concerns raised, and in my speech today I raised issues with the CBSA detaining children due to their immigration status. The fact that this is still a practice in this country is wrong. I think it is vile that in this country we detain children due to their immigration status.

Does my hon. colleague agree with me that it is wrong and that we need to put legislation in place to ban this racist, discriminatory practice that violates the rights of little children in Canada?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I most certainly agree with my colleague that if anybody is detaining individuals based on their

immigration status, citizenship status or race for that matter, it is completely unacceptable and wrong. It is something that we should not do.

I do not know if we need to actually put it in the legislation, because it would appear to me as though that would be unconstitutional on its own anyway. I am not against the idea of putting that in legislation, if that is what the committee determines when the committee does its work. I find it very alarming and very concerning, the suggestion that is coming from the member. I take her word that she is aware of this happening.

That is exactly why we need the measures that are put in this, so that those complaints can be heard and can be dealt with in a manner that has the proper oversight of the very important agencies that have this discretionary power in looking out for our safety.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this particular piece of legislation appears to be supported by the Conservative Party, the Bloc, the NDP and the Green Party, and obviously the government has proposed it. It looks like it will have the unanimous support of the House. The idea of the legislation has now been before us for a good deal of time in different ways and in different legislation. It seems that everyone wants this bill to pass.

Do we know if the Conservative Party is prepared to allow the legislation to pass, or does the member think we might have to bring in time allocation?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, it is a first that it would be my own colleague trying to get me to be hyperpartisan, but I will respond to that question.

As I have said many times in the House, I understand that the role of an opposition is to hold the government to account. I also understand that the most important tool that an opposition has is to delay. It should be using that tool when it finds various pieces of legislation to be so egregious and represent so many problems that it feels as though it needs to put a stop to them.

We see this quite often. We saw it in Ontario's provincial legislature recently when Doug Ford tried to use the notwithstanding clause and how the opposition acted there. It chose that as a hill that it wanted to die on.

Do Conservatives want to die on this hill when it is something that they agree on? I would suggest that they do not, because we know that they support this. Therefore, why not let this bill go to the next stage of the legislative process of becoming a law? Let us do that.

Let the opposition use delay tactics when there are issues so important to Conservatives that they feel as though they need to delay them, not just for the purpose of slowing down government business.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

● (1400)

*[English]***DR. PETER FOWLER**

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to pay tribute to the remarkable life of Dr. Peter Fowler, a giant and an icon in the field of sports medicine. Dr. Fowler sadly passed away last Wednesday with his family by his side. In 1974, along with his mentor Dr. Jack Kennedy, Dr. Fowler established an athletic injury clinic. This venture became one of the largest and most successful sports medicine clinics in North America, known as the Fowler Kennedy Sport Medicine Clinic.

Dr. Fowler treated top athletes, such as Eric Lindros and Steve Yzerman, and served as the chief medical officer to Canadian national teams at Commonwealth and Olympic games. He was invested into the Order of Canada in 2018. He served as the president of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, and was only one of two Canadians to ever hold the position. He was the first president of the International Society of Arthroscopy, Knee Surgery and Orthopaedic Sports Medicine, or ISAKOS, which was considered the most influential sports medicine society worldwide.

Dr. Fowler's legacy will live on through his family and those he mentored. There are many.

May his memory live in eternal peace.

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**INDEPENDENCE DAY IN LEBANON**

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as a young man filled with hopes and dreams, I came to Canada from Lebanon, which is a country rich in tradition.

Here, I found opportunities that led to a career, a family and now the privilege of serving the people of Edmonton Manning in the House. I love Canada, but I will never forget my homeland. Today, Lebanese people celebrate their independence day. It has been 79 years of democracy and of freedom from colonial rule.

Lebanon, today, faces economic and political challenges, but its strength is its people. Working together, they and we can help Lebanon become the beacon of the Middle East and a model of tolerance and openness for the entire world.

Those of us of Lebanese descent are remembering their homeland with appreciation today. The values we learned there have made us better citizens in our new homelands.

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*[Translation]***30TH ANNIVERSARY OF PERFORMING ARTS THEATRE**

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in the House today to mark the 30th anniversary of Salle Odyssee at Gatineau's Maison de la culture.

Over the years, this cultural institution in Gatineau has become a leader in the performing arts world in Quebec, providing an extraordinary experience and atmosphere.

That is not all. Salle Odyssee was named venue of the year at the last ADISQ Gala. That is its 10th Félix award. This well-deserved honour is a testament to the excellent work of staff and the board of directors.

The 2023 winter-spring program was just released. I would like to take this opportunity to invite all my colleagues to enjoy our homegrown artists and to experience Gatineau's cultural life.

I want to thank the entire team at Salle Odyssee at Gatineau's Maison de la culture and wish them a happy 30th anniversary.

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**WORLD DAY OF ARTISANAL FISHERMEN AND SEA WORKERS**

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday was World Day of Artisanal Fishermen and Sea Workers.

As the Bloc Québécois critic for fisheries and as the daughter and granddaughter of sailors, it is natural for me to highlight the fisheries' invaluable contribution to the Quebec and Canadian economies.

I salute the Regroupement des pêcheurs professionnels du Sud de la Gaspésie and the Maritime Fishermen's Union, which are on Parliament Hill this week.

Our friends the fishers can count on us to speak for them in order to promote sustainable fishing and protect their fishing economy. They are the last defence against mass foreign investment. The survival of fishing SMEs is essential to ensuring the vitality of villages and towns that live off fishing. They are keeping local traditions alive. Fishers are experts in resource conservation. We must not only listen to them, but speak for them and ensure their rights.

Long live artisanal fishers.

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● (1405)

**COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS DU QUÉBEC**

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as a father and as the grandson of a Holocaust survivor, I was profoundly shocked by the Collège des médecins du Québec's proposal to legalize the murder of children with disabilities.

Proposals to kill children with disabilities hark back to the darkest chapter of human history. Children with disabilities have inherent value and inalienable dignity. Children cannot give consent, and killing a child is always a heinous act.

The Collège's suggestion that the murder of children is purely a medical issue, not a moral one, is nothing more than cynical sloganeering and a demonstration of the banality of evil.

The Conservatives presented a motion in committee to condemn these comments. Unfortunately, the Conservatives were the only ones to vote for the motion. I urge all parties to join us in declaring that the murder of children should never be tolerated and in condemning the position of the Collège des médecins du Québec.

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[English]

### PRISON CHAPLAINCY

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to an issue that, after 25 years of service as a United Church of Canada minister, including six years working in prison chaplaincy in Yukon, is very dear to me.

In 2013, the Harper government chose to privatize prison chaplaincy, and almost all non-Christian chaplains had their contracts cancelled. Members of minority faiths incarcerated in federal prisons have not had adequate spiritual care since then.

Spiritual care is not a luxury. It is central to the care of a person. It offers opportunities for healing and rehabilitation, leading to better outcomes when they return to society, which I would say is a key goal of our penitentiary system.

Today the National Council of Canadian Muslims, the Islamic Family and Social Services Association and community leaders from across Canada will be meeting with members of the House regarding this important issue. I stand with them and with inmates who are trying to receive the spiritual care they deserve, something that will benefit us all.

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### HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as nationwide uprisings of the Iranian people have entered into the third month, I want to once again express my solidarity with the people of Iran. This uprising, which began on September 16 after the barbaric murder in custody of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, has spread to nearly 240 cities in Iran and globally.

These ongoing rallies across Iran and around the world demonstrate the tremendous courage and the thirst for freedom.

Last Sunday in Toronto, there were hundreds of thousands of people who attended a rally in support of the Iranian people, yet the despicableness of the regime in Iran has shown no limits. Thousands of people have been arrested and hundreds of people have been killed, including many young children.

Standing up against the 43 years of repression is a historic moment for Iran, and we, as part of the international community, shall do everything we can to help Iranians to continue the momentum of their fight for fundamental human rights and freedoms.

### Statements by Members

#### WINNIPEG NORTH

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we often hear how important it is to bring the concerns of our constituents to Ottawa. Let me tell members about bringing the Government of Canada to the residents of Winnipeg North.

Since the summer, we have had the Minister of Health come to Winnipeg North. We have had the Minister of International Trade come to Winnipeg North and the Minister of Foreign Affairs come to Winnipeg North. We have had the Minister of Seniors come to Winnipeg North. We even had the Prime Minister of Canada come and visit Stanley Knowles in Winnipeg North.

This is a government that understands the importance of connecting with real people throughout our country. I am so proud to be a Liberal member of Parliament.

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#### COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are struggling right now. Our affordability crisis is a mental health crisis. Many Canadians are living day to day. Some are living moment to moment. However, there is hope. There is always a peak among the valleys.

In my community, there are many examples of amazing people and organizations who give their time and kindness to make a difference. We have dedicated volunteers who step up and help those most in need, like the Porch Pirates for Good, who in one day collected 16,000 pounds of food for food banks; or the countless Lions and Kinsmen service members who make Christmas parades a reality; and the Santas for Peterborough Seniors who make sure every senior gets a Christmas gift. The list goes on.

Every day there is a volunteer showing up and making a difference in someone's life. If people can volunteer, please do it. It truly does help. I would ask all the members in the House today to join me in acknowledging the volunteers across this country who go the extra mile. The power of one is the power of many. I thank them, from all of us, for their service, their kindness and, most important, their time.

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● (1410)

[Translation]

#### JEAN LAPOINTE

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we lost a great man last Friday.

*Statements by Members*

Jean Lapointe was beloved by Quebecers, particularly for his contribution to the Quebec cultural scene as a singer, actor and author. He was also known for his philanthropy. By publicly admitting that he was an alcoholic, Jean Lapointe helped break taboos and dispel our society's prejudices. He even founded Maison Jean Lapointe and Fondation Jean Lapointe, which help people with addictions. He was then appointed to the Senate, where he served for nearly a decade. In recognition for his service to Quebecers and all Canadians, he was appointed an officer of the Ordre national du Québec and an officer of the Order of Canada.

We thank Mr. Lapointe for his many accomplishments, but his greatest legacy is his humanity because his humanity is what truly touched the hearts of Quebecers and helped our society move forward.

Everyone in the House should look to him as an example.

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[English]

### HOUSING

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, never has a government spent so much to accomplish so little. The current Liberal government promised a life-changing housing plan. Here is the change. Students are living in homeless shelters, health care workers are living in tents and hard-working Canadians are left on the street.

They did everything we asked. They worked hard. They got an education. They got a good job. Now they are left out in the cold. So far, \$4.5 billion is the amount the Liberals have spent on six different housing programs. Now the Auditor General reports that they have no idea whether that money is making a difference or not.

The Liberals have failed. The proof is in the sprawling tent cities across this country. The proof is in the young people who are still living in their parents' basement. The proof is in the seniors who are losing their homes that they have worked their entire lives to pay for. All this, while the Liberals force them to pay more, earn less and pay higher taxes to pay off their sprawling debts.

We already know that the Liberals cannot or will not fix this mess, but the good news is that after the next election the Conservatives will.

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### COST OF LIVING

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with the Christmas season fast approaching, Canadians are concerned about the ever-increasing cost of living. Does the government hear what I hear? I wonder if it hears what I hear.

The cost of diesel fuel, which recently reached over \$3 a litre in my home province, is causing a spike in the cost of all food and goods that are trucked and shipped.

Does it hear what I hear from concerned seniors who are wondering if they can keep the lights on for another month? Does it hear what I hear from students and young people who see the

dream of home ownership slipping away due to rapidly rising interest rates?

Does it hear what I hear from farmers, truckers and business owners who are facing crippling input costs and fuel prices? Does the current government hear the people everywhere who have seen their grocery bills double, and now their home heating cost is tripling?

If it did hear, perhaps it would consider cancelling the tripling of the carbon tax on heating, eating and meeting. That would bring all Canadians goodness and cheer. Does it hear what I hear?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### LEBANESE INDEPENDENCE

**Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, Lebanon, the country of cedars, is celebrating the 79th anniversary of its independence.

The difficult and fateful history of this small country, which can trace its roots to several civilizations, and the richness of its culture make Lebanon a gem of the Middle East to which I am deeply attached.

● (1415)

[English]

Lebanon is a symbol of resilience, community and diversity. I invite colleagues to join me in highlighting the contributions of the Lebanese community in Canada at tonight's event. I am sure this event will reinforce the bilateral relationship between Canada and Lebanon and will bring both cultures closer together.

[Translation]

Democracy is also about sharing ideas as a way of gaining a better understanding of one another, and this evening is an opportunity to celebrate the community, dialogue and peace that the world so desperately needs.

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[English]

### VICTORIA SAFER INITIATIVE

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of a toxic drug crisis. We need a health-based approach to substance use that reduces stigma and addresses the root cause of addiction. It is critical that organizations providing harm reduction services have long-term, stable funding.

The Victoria SAFER initiative is an incredible program run by AVI Health and Community Services. It offers an innovative model of a prescribed safe supply that is community-based, nurse-led and grounded in principles of harm reduction. Participants are welcomed, nurtured and treated with respect. Resources on how to access treatment options are always available.

SAFER has been at capacity since it opened in 2020, and its staff and volunteers have been working around the clock, but it may be forced to close if it does not receive continued funding from the substance use and addictions program by the end of this year. This would leave many of the most vulnerable in our community at an even higher risk of death. The federal government must respond to the toxic drug crisis with the urgency and resources needed to save lives.

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[Translation]

#### MAGDA FUSARO

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is with immense respect that I rise today to acknowledge the exceptional work of the rector of the Université du Québec à Montréal, Magda Fusaro, who is leaving her position at the end of her term in a few weeks.

She has been at the helm of this teaching institution, which boasts 40,000 students, since January 2018. I will remember her as a dynamic woman who remained focused on broadening the horizons of Université du Québec à Montréal, or UQAM, to keep it growing. In my riding, that has translated into the opening of a new campus in Saint-Constant for which I am eternally grateful.

I also commend the patience, generosity and kindness of the tremendous team at UQAM for quickly diving into this project when I first shared the idea with them. I want to thank Magda for believing in the project and giving it her all. Working with her on this project made me appreciate the diligence and efficiency she is so well known for. I want to thank her for her years of service in Quebec education.

I wish you continued success, dear Magda.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### COST OF LIVING

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, do you feel like everything in Canada is broken? You are not alone.

Whether it is the record-high 1.5 million Canadians who now rely on food banks to put food on their tables each month or the Liberal-made inflation disaster that is causing people to choose between heating and eating, or the housing crunch that is forcing 30-year-olds to live in their parents' basements, or the opioid crisis that is taking the lives of the people we love way too soon, the Liberal government cannot get anything right.

We are the breadbasket of the world, yet universities are sending out fundraising letters asking for money to feed hungry students. In Canada, 56.8% of university students are going to bed hungry. The campaign is called "Knowledge Not Hunger". The tired Liberal government has failed Canadians, especially young Canadians.

Instead of trying to build back better, why do you not put it back to the way you found it?

**The Speaker:** I would remind hon. members to speak through the Speaker, not at the Speaker.

#### Oral Questions

The hon. member for York Centre

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#### STANLEY GREENE NEIGHBOURHOOD FOOD DRIVE

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (York Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this past Halloween we challenged the youth of York Centre not just to trick or treat, but also to trick or eat and collect non-perishable food for local food banks. It is my pleasure to share that the Stanley Greene neighbourhood in my riding of York Centre answered the call and collected an amazing 120 pounds of food in one night. Its collective kindness will allow the North York Harvest Food Bank to provide over 100 meals to members of our community who are in need of support.

It takes a village to look out for one another and make sure that no one gets left behind, and I know of no better one than the residents of the Stanley Greene neighbourhood in York Centre. I want to thank Kim Thompson for organizing the food drive and everyone in Stanley Greene who generously came together for the annual pumpkin night walk and to donate non-perishable food items. I look forward to our community surpassing that goal next year.

I also want to thank the staff at the North York Harvest Food Bank who provide such an important service to those facing food insecurity in our communities with integrity and compassion each and every day.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

● (1420)

[Translation]

#### HOUSING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government told Canadians that interest rates would stay low for a long time. As a result, one-third of the mortgages currently taken out by Canadians are variable rate. This means that when interest rates rise, Canadians either pay more or the term of their mortgage increases.

According to the Bank of Canada, this is going to cause financial hardship for many families. The government is driving up interest rates with its inflationary deficits.

When will the government reverse its inflationary policies, which risk bankrupting families who cannot pay their bills?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, people all over the world are going through tough economic times, and Canada is no exception. People are struggling to make ends meet.

*Oral Questions*

That is why we have a plan that will help people pay for their first home and will reduce interest on student loans. We are also going to double the GST credit.

In less than an hour, the Conservatives will have the opportunity to vote with this government to support Canadians. I hope the Conservatives will do the right thing and vote for Canadians.

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[English]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, “Happy Canada Day. Gas bills, heating bills and grocery bills have just gone up,” is the message from Liberals to three Atlantic Canadian provinces that will be hit with a carbon tax increase on July 1. These same Atlantic Canadian provinces have 40% of their citizens already living in energy poverty, yet the Liberals want to triple the carbon tax as we are going into a winter in which heating bills are already expected to double.

Will the government give relief to Atlantic Canadians and all Canadians, on Canada Day and every day, by cancelling the carbon tax?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member will find the answer to the question in the question itself. There will be no increase in carbon pricing in Atlantic Canada before July 1, and not before the winter. In fact, people will start getting the climate incentive payment before the increase in the carbon tax on July 1. There will be no increased cost to Canadians this winter.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, first, the carbon tax has not worked. The Liberals have not hit a single, solitary emissions reduction target in the seven provinces in which the tax is already imposed. Now they want to impose it on three more provinces. Second, Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries for climate action performance. Third, these so-called “rebates” do not pay for the full cost of the carbon tax, and 60% of Canadians who pay this tax pay more than they get back in rebates, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Instead of stating and restating these falsehoods, why will they not give Canadians a break on their heating, eating and housing bills so that Canadians can afford to live?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, eight out of 10 Canadians will get more from the climate incentive payment than what it costs them. That is a fact. Conservatives can debate it and they can go in to their alternative views of the world, but eight out of 10 Canadians will get more.

I am interested to know when they will have a plan to fight climate change. When will they help tackle this issue, which is costing Canadians billions of dollars year after year? That is my question for them.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the real question is when the Liberals will have an environment plan, because they have not hit a single target they have set for themselves. That is not our opinion; that is the finding of

their own departmental reports, and it was the Parliamentary Budget Officer, whom the Prime Minister appointed, who came to the conclusion that the vast majority of Canadians pay more in the carbon tax than they hope to receive in any rebate. Now, a report shows that Canada has come in 58th out of 63 when it comes to climate action, falling behind China and Indonesia.

When will the Liberals finally accept the science and admit they have a tax plan, not an environment plan?

• (1425)

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, “Accept the science, minister,” is coming from the Conservative Party of Canada. Their minister of science did not even believe in the theory of evolution, and they would like us to say they believe in science. That is very rich. I have a news flash for the Conservative Party of Canada: Emissions have gone down in 2019 and 2020. That is a fact.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, their entire premise is based on falsehoods.

The Liberals said the carbon tax would reduce emissions. They have gone up. The Liberals said it would be revenue neutral. Canadians pay more in carbon tax than they get back. The Liberals said the carbon tax would never go up. They plan to triple it.

Now, just in time for Canada Day, on a day when Canadians are supposed to come together and celebrate all that we have in common, the Liberals are going to make the carbon tax apply in three new Atlantic Canadian provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador, P.E.I. and Nova Scotia. Is that a part of some bizarre national unity strategy, to bring Canadians together by making sure Canadians in every region hate the carbon tax?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservative Party of Canada, Canadians believe that we need to do our fair share when it comes to fighting climate change. They believe climate change is real, and they believe we need to be doing something about it.

For 10 years, Conservatives did not do anything about it, and now they are blaming us because of their inaction. That is a bit rich. We are playing catch-up, because for 10 years nothing was done when it comes fighting climate change in Canada. We now have one of the best plans in the world, and our emissions have started going down.

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

**The Speaker:** It is almost like a wave. It starts at this end with the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan, and it moves over. He does have a beautiful voice, but it is very loud. I am going to ask him to tone it down.



*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

The hon. member for La Prairie.

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**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to Global News, China meddled in the 2019 federal election by funding at least 11 candidates. This is very concerning. However, anytime the opposition parties ask the Prime Minister questions, he responds with bluster. This morning, at a press briefing, he compared the opposition parties to Donald Trump, of all people.

My question is simple. If it is not important that China interfered in the election, if it is not important that China tried to finance candidates, if there is no reason to worry, why did he take the time to go and talk to Xi Jinping about it at the G20?

*[English]*

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, protecting Canadian democracy is something this government takes seriously. It is a responsibility, and we will always act to ensure that our Canadian democracy is protected.

That is why we are taking real action on this. It includes our national security agencies, which conduct investigations and use all the tools available to them. We as a government will always ensure those agencies have the resources they need, and we will pursue all options available to protect Canadian democracy.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague should go talk to the Prime Minister, because that is not what he said earlier.

No one is questioning the integrity of the elections. That is not the issue. The issue is that there is a foreign power trying to interfere in our democracy, and the Prime Minister is not telling the truth. He cannot help it: He is incapable of being transparent. Who cares if the candidates targeted by China are Liberals, Conservatives, Bloc or NDP? We just want to know who they are and how China approaches them, so we can prevent it from interfering in our democracy in the future.

What does the Prime Minister not understand about that?

*[English]*

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's comments that this is an issue that impacts all members of this House, not just the Liberal Party but all members of this House.

That is why we established an independent panel, which confirmed that the 2019 election was free and fair. We have our eyes wide open. We passed laws to modernize the Elections Act and to close the gaps on foreign funding. The intelligence community and law enforcement investigate all allegations.

We will always take action to protect Canadian democracy.

• (1430)

*[Translation]***THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it never ends. Big grocery chains, such as Metro and Loblaw, are raking in the profits on the backs of families. They are still using a crisis as a pretext for making obscene amounts of money. Loblaw's profits alone are up 29%. Meanwhile, people are skipping meals to save money, and food banks cannot keep up with demand. The Liberals are refusing to make big grocery chains change their rapacious ways.

When will the Liberals make these fat-cat companies pay their fair share to help Canadians?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is not the only country struggling with the high cost of food. Weather conditions around the world have had an impact on food products.

The Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry has asked our commissioner of competition to make sure that major grocery stores' price increases are justified. We are taking this issue very seriously and will monitor it closely. We need a food system that works well for Canadians.

*[English]*

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is worse than that. Five hundred workers who need to feed their families in Alberta are being laid off, all while their employer, Loblaws, rakes in excess profits to the tune of \$1 million a day. These layoffs are intimidation tactics designed to scare workers. It is clear the Liberals are standing with big corporations like Loblaws, while New Democrats stand with workers.

When will the government stop covering for Loblaws and start protecting workers' paycheques?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know Canadians are concerned about how much they are paying for gas and groceries. Earlier this year, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry contacted the Competition Bureau to make sure it was using all of its tools to detect and deter unlawful behaviours in the food sector. Following up to prevent businesses from taking advantage of high prices and profiting off Canadians, we asked the bureau to immediately look into these matters. We will continue working to make life more affordable for Canadians.

*Oral Questions***CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Liberals continue to throw fuel on the inflationary fire and cause home heating costs to go up. Instead of addressing the real issue, Liberals are spending \$250 million to make Canadians buy heat pumps they cannot even use this winter season. Today we learned the government will impose its crippling carbon tax on all Atlantic provinces, forcing families to take a heat pump handout instead of letting Canadians choose what works best for their own homes.

Why will the Liberal government not do the right thing, get out of the way and axe the carbon tax on home heating?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we have said many times in this House, addressing climate change as an existential threat to the future of the human race is of critical importance to our children and our grandchildren, but we must do so in a manner that addresses the affordability issues and actually has a plan for creating a prosperous future in a lower-carbon environment. We have put into place a number of measures, not simply the \$250 million we announced with respect to heat pumps, which is very important, but the green buildings program and a whole range of other things that are ensuring Canadians can make the transition in an affordable way. Climate change is real. We need to fight it with thoughtful and effective plans.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals failed on the climate and the economy. What the minister fails to acknowledge is that the government has failed to hit a single climate target, failed to lower emissions, failed to deliver a real plan and ranked 58th out of 63 on its failed carbon scheme. Its only answer is a tax plan. Canadians are out of money, and the out-of-touch government thinks heat pumps are going to save them. Contrary to what the finance minister wants us all to believe, the carbon tax is not helping anyone, and neither is cancelling Disney+ subscriptions.

Again, why will the Liberal government not get out of the way and axe the carbon tax on home heating?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember that less than two years ago the Conservative Party voted that climate change was not even real. Then, last year, the leadership of the Conservative Party decided that indeed it was real and brought forward a campaign platform that had at least a weak climate plan, the centrepiece of which was putting in place a price on pollution. All of the Conservative members in this House were elected on that platform, but now, once again, they do not talk about climate change and they attack the idea of pricing pollution. How can we believe anything these folks say?

• (1435)

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the snow is here, and calls are coming in across the country from families who are wearing their winter coats inside their homes just to keep warm and save money on heating costs. The temperatures are dropping across the country, and home energy bills are rising. Many Canadians are faced with the horrible choice of having to cut

back on meals or turn down the heat in their homes just to get through this winter.

Will the Liberal government do the right thing and cancel the carbon tax on home heating?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague talks about some of the difficult choices Canadians have to face. On this side of the House, we understand that. That is why we have been there continuously for the last seven years to help Canadians in need.

My hon. colleague and her caucus have a chance today to support the fall economic statement. It would help Canadian families with the enhanced Canada workers benefit, which is going to come four times a year as opposed to once a year. It will help students with eliminating permanently the interest on the federal portion of their student loans. If the Conservatives really care about Canadians, I hope they demonstrate it today by voting in favour of initiatives that will support them.

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at least a million Canadians will go without heating their homes this winter.

The Liberals do not have an environmental plan; they have a tax plan. They have not met one single environmental target. The Liberals' irresponsible and reckless spending is the cause of this inflationary nightmare. Now they plan to tax their way out of this mess on the backs of Canadians. The people who are least able to afford it will be punished by this tax.

Will the Liberals finally admit they were wrong and cancel this cruel inflationary carbon tax on heating?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, do members know what is cruel? What is cruel is talking about the spending that we did in the pandemic that supported millions of Canadians. The Canada emergency response benefit helped millions of Canadians. The Canada emergency wage subsidy helped millions of Canadians.

We were there for Canadians in their time of need, and we continue to be there. What we have not seen is the Conservative Party of Canada and its members of Parliament be there to support Canadians, but I hope they decide today to do the right thing to be there to help the most vulnerable and support the fall economic statement.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the holidays are going to be pretty dismal for Canadians. With the price of groceries going through the roof, there may not be much on families' tables. With the price of gas hitting record highs, some families will not be able to visit relatives and friends. Add to that the skyrocketing cost of heating. That is the last straw.

Will the government take our advice and eliminate the carbon tax on home heating bills in Canada?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have a robust plan that meets the needs of Canadians who need help when they need it.

Within the hour, the Conservatives will have the opportunity to vote to eliminate interest on student loans and double the GST credit. They will also have the opportunity to cut taxes for small and medium-sized businesses and help Canadians buy their first home. We have an idea of how they will vote. They will vote against these measures.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, he would do well to stop playing politics and show a bit of compassion. We want tangible measures now, not costly solutions that will take months to come in.

Again, I said it yesterday, our leader and every Conservative here is calling for one thing: to cancel the plan to increase the carbon tax. It is clear and simple.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this weekend in Edmonton, Mike and Lory approached me during the All is Bright festival to thank our government for reducing child care fees by half because this helps them to pay their bills at home.

Brad asked me when he would receive the \$500 to help with his housing costs. The answer is that the cheque is on the way because we have done our job.

If the Conservatives want to show compassion and help Canadians, they can vote with us today.

\* \* \*

● (1440)

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment has a lot of explaining to do when it comes to the role Canada played at COP27. He personally did everything in his power to prevent a line about the importance of phasing out all fossil fuels from being included in the final declaration.

The minister has changed a lot since his Greenpeace days, but surely not to the point where he would deny the fact that the only solution to climate change is to reduce our use of oil and gas.

Why did he fight to prevent the countries from recognizing that obvious fact?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my hon. colleague that Canada's work was applauded at COP27 by organizations such as Climate Action Network Canada, which said that we were among the first wealthy countries to move forward on the issue of loss and damages. The executive director of the International Energy Agency recognized Canada as a world leader in the fight against methane pollution.

If I had to choose between the Bloc Québécois, which just wants to pick fights, and Climate Action Network Canada and the International Energy Agency, then I would choose the latter two.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's performance at COP27 was disappointing on three fronts.

First, the Prime Minister did not even attend. Second, Canada invited the oil companies to sit at the head table. Third, the Minister of Environment prevented countries from talking about the importance of phasing out oil and gas.

What grade would our climate champion have given a Canadian government that behaved in this way, back in the old days?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Bloc Québécois should send my hon. colleague next time, since she could have heard me tell journalists from all over the world that we supported Great Britain's proposal to draft a text that effectively eliminates the use of non-sequestered fossil fuels by 2050. That is already Canada's plan, and we have already made that commitment and communicated it to our partners at COP27.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada got a failing grade at COP27. Next up is the biodiversity conference, COP15. What happened in Newfoundland while the minister was in Egypt? Five oil companies got the green light for oil exploration in a marine protected area. Canada does not even allow fishing in that area in order to protect biodiversity, but it is allowing companies to drill into the seabed to find more oil.

What credibility does it have to talk about biodiversity at COP15? Is this conference already doomed to fail too?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague should know that the organization that authorized exploratory drilling operates independently of the federal government. It seems to me that the Bloc Québécois should have a good understanding of the word "independence". It was that agency, not the federal government, that proposed this exploratory drilling.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I spoke with Chris in Grand Falls-Windsor just this morning. He explained how the \$5,000 that was announced yesterday would only be a drop in the bucket to help convert his elderly parents from burning oil to heating their home with a heat pump. His parents struggled last winter, and now their oil bill has nearly doubled. That is without the carbon tax. In the new year, the carbon tax will add another 20% to their home heating bill.

Will the Liberal government stop forcing the carbon tax down the throats of Canadians?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, these are challenging times for Canadians and we want to help. The price of home heating oil has certainly increased over the past year and we want to make sure that people are not forced to choose between heating their home and putting food on the table.

That is why, yesterday, the Nova Scotia regional minister announced a program that would give up to \$5,000 to low and middle-income families to help with the cost of replacing their furnace with new and more efficient heat pumps. Transitioning away from heating oil will save families thousands of dollars on their annual heating bills, reduce pollution and create new jobs across the country.

Today, in Nova Scotia, the carbon price rebate was announced, which will more than compensate for any increase in home heating oil and fuel for cars.

• (1445)

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that member should have better sense. He knows that program is garbage. The carbon tax cult opposite continues to gloat about the need to tax Atlantic Canadians, but the evidence is in. The carbon tax is not working. We rank 58 out of 64 countries in fighting climate change. Canada's emissions are higher now than ever. The carbon tax just fuels inflation.

When will the Liberal government stop forcing its failed carbon tax down the throats of Canadians?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, certainly, affordability is extremely important. We have taken significant steps to address affordability issues, including the investment of \$250 million for heat pumps yesterday.

It is also the case that no matter how much the Conservatives try to mislead the House, eight out of 10 Canadian families actually get more money back than they pay with respect to the price on pollution. Certainly in Newfoundland and Labrador, it will mean money in the pockets of folks there.

As I said before, and it bears stating again, every member of that side of the House campaigned on putting in place a price on pollution in the last election. What do they say to their constituents? My goodness.

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia surpassed the Liberal federal government's

2030 emission targets already and will reach net zero by 2050 without a carbon tax, but those Liberals today are imposing one. That carbon tax is going to add \$360 to a tank of home heating oil when 40% of Atlantic Canadians are living in energy poverty. The Liberals seem more focused on ineffective taxes than they are on actual results.

When will the Liberal government stop forcing Canadians to have the failed carbon tax?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, maybe the member opposite should listen to the Leader of the Opposition, who recognized earlier that this would not take effect before July of next year. I do not know about him, but in July, I do not intend to heat my home very much.

The Conservatives would like Canadians to continue to be dependant—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. minister, from the beginning, so we can all hear the answer.

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault:** Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition said earlier during this question period, this will not take effect before July of next year. In the meantime, we are helping tens of thousands of Canadians get rid of their home heating oil, which is more expensive, more polluting and less efficient.

The Conservatives would like to condemn those Canadians to continue being dependant on systems that will cost them more and more over time as opposed to systems that will save them thousands of dollars every year. That is the unfortunate truth.

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, those Liberals are proud that, in 2023, they are going to add \$360 to a tank of home heating oil. In the 2015 election, the Prime Minister said that provinces that did the hard work of reducing carbon emissions would not have the carbon tax imposed, yet Nova Scotia has already surpassed the 2030 carbon reduction targets of the Liberal government.

I will ask again. When will the Liberals live up to their campaign promise and stop forcing their failed carbon tax on Nova Scotians?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, what we are proud of is that we do have a plan to fight the climate.

With respect to the comments that have been made on the other side, it is absolutely unbelievable that those members are still denying that climate change is real. We can look at Atlantic Canada, and my colleague will ask this question. In his province of Nova Scotia, we have seen the devastation first-hand. We realize that we have to tackle this and we have to tackle it immediately.

Again, I ask my colleague this. Why are the Conservatives against focusing on really fighting climate? It is an emergency that we have to deal with right now.

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### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment is back from COP27, empty-handed. He spent his time defending the interests of big oil companies.

Today, he had a chance to make carbon pricing fairer and ensure that big polluters really pay what they owe. Again, he failed Canadians.

Why is it so hard for that minister to stand up to big polluters?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would quote the words of the Canadian climate action network, which said that, on the issue of loss and damage, which was one of the victories of the COP27 conference, Canada was the “first mover among rich countries to make this thing happen.” We fought for this. We fought for stronger language in the text on eliminating the use of coal all around the world, including in Canada. We fought for stronger text on the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies.

\* \* \*

● (1450)

### HEALTH

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last week, Manitoba's Conservative government announced a plan to privatize health care services in our province. Hospitals in Winnipeg are overflowing after years of cuts. What is its answer? Moving toward a system where the size of one's wallet determines the quality of one's care.

Public administration is one of the five principles of the Canada Health Act and it must be defended. Will the Liberals stand up and stop this attempt to dismantle our public health care system piece by piece?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are all very mindful of the challenges that our public health care system is going through now, with health workers being tired, leaving in large numbers and sometimes thinking about their future, nurses in particular.

That is why we want to maintain and support our public health system. That is exactly why we need to do that in collaboration with and in support of provinces and territories.

### Oral Questions

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, other colleagues in the House and I had the opportunity to participate in the Halifax International Security Forum. It is a forum that brings together political, military and industrial leaders from around the world to talk about today's security challenges.

I remember being a part of the forum last year during the Russian build-up in Ukraine. We were trying to contemplate whether this was just a provocation. A year later, we know that this was not the case, with the terrible, illegal invasion that we have seen and the challenges it has created.

We know the importance of Canada's relationship with NATO. I ask the minister if she can provide an update to the House on the announcement she made in Nova Scotia, which matters to Canada and NATO's relationship in providing security.

**Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada stands firmly with our allies on the side of democracy and the rule of law. That is why we will continue offering unwavering support to Ukraine.

This weekend, Canada announced that Halifax would be the location for the NATO Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic, or DIANA, which will bring together innovators, tech companies and researchers to solve critical security challenges. As we face new threats and pressures, this is exactly the type of leadership that Canada will continue—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Thornhill.

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#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, “I do not feel safe in Canada.” That is the message from Iranian Canadians, and it is being ignored by the Liberals.

Canada's spy agency says that it is investigating multiple death threats on Canadians who stand with the tens of thousands protesting the brutal regime that kills its own people in Iran. These are death threats.

They are pleading for protection from the government. When do they go from the platitudes of monitoring the situation to actually protecting our own citizens here in Canada?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will always stand with Iranian Canadians and with those in Iran as these protests are going on.

*Oral Questions*

That is why we have taken serious action to ensure that the entities that must be treated severely are being treated severely. We will always stand with Iranian Canadians in standing up to the actions of the Iranian government.

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**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Global News reported that, last January, the Prime Minister was briefed by CSIS about a vast campaign of interference by Beijing in the 2019 election.

After two weeks of silence, suddenly and narrowly, the Prime Minister claims that he was not briefed about candidates, but that of course does not address the broader question of whether the Prime Minister was briefed about Beijing's interference.

Was the Prime Minister briefed, yes or no?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would remind the House that the purpose of foreign interference is to sow chaos and throw our democratic institutions into disarray.

That is why we are taking action to combat attempted foreign interference, beginning with our national security agencies who conduct investigations and use all the tools at their disposal. It also includes significant work to shore up Canada's institutions and critical infrastructure, such as Bill C-26, which would bolster cybersecurity and give new tools to the RCMP. I invite all members of the House to support the government in supporting Bill C-26.

● (1455)

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my question was about what the Prime Minister may have learned in January. Non-answers like that and incomplete information from the Prime Minister after two weeks of silence hardly instill any confidence that the Prime Minister is being open and transparent with Canadians.

Again, with respect to January, was the Prime Minister briefed? Did he receive intelligence memos? What does he know about Beijing's interference?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat that safeguarding our Canadian democracy is an issue that we will always take seriously because it poses a threat to the health of our very democracy.

That is why we have listened to the independent panel, which confirmed that the 2019 election was free and fair. That is why we passed laws to modernize the Elections Act. We will always stand up to protect our democracy because it is a responsibility that we take seriously.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, not answering questions is not going to make Canadians feel as confident as they should be about the elections. We are asking a very simple question. We have been asking the government the same question for two weeks.

Was the Prime Minister briefed on foreign interference by the Chinese communist regime in the 2019 election? We are asking a very simple question. He stated that he was not briefed on funding for 11 candidates. Was he briefed at all about the Beijing regime's interference in Canada's election?

[*English*]

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat what I have said in the House numerous times. We need to take a step back to remember what the purpose of foreign interference is. It is to create chaos in this country.

We will stand up for our democracy. We will always ensure that our democratic institutions are protected. That includes providing resources to our security agencies, to the RCMP, to ensure they have the tools to investigate when they need to. We are trusting that we will always stand up for Canadian democracy. I invite all members of the House to join us.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has just returned from the Sommet de la Francophonie, which was held in Tunisia. He earnestly reiterated the importance of protecting and promoting French. However, it is just like the environment at COP27: Canada says one thing, but does the opposite in reality.

Did the Liberal Prime Minister explain to his allies in la Francophonie why his Bill C-13 allows the continued anglicization of Quebec, the only francophone state in North America?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is the first government to recognize that French is in decline across the country, including in Quebec.

That is why we are implementing an ambitious bill with teeth to ensure that we can do our part to reverse the decline of French and support our official language minority communities. The Bloc Québécois and the Conservative Party have been playing political games in committee for the past few weeks.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** That is not true.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, I do not understand why they do not want to move forward with a bill that will make a real difference in the lives of Canadians.

**The Speaker:** I would like to remind the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier that just because he is not looking at me does not mean that I cannot see him yelling in the House.

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

• (1500)

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I hope that the countries of la Francophonie do anything but follow Canada's example when it comes to promoting French. If they follow Canada's lead, they will be introducing bills like Bill C-13 to allow for a shift toward English in the workplace. They will be banning 80% of francophone African students and thinking it is okay if francophone public servants feel uncomfortable working in their own language.

Do the Liberals realize that, if other countries follow their lead, it will weaken la Francophonie throughout the world?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what we need right now are partners in the opposition to help us move forward with our bill, which will make a real difference in the lives of Canadians.

However, what are we seeing right now? Once again, the Bloc Québécois and the Conservatives are playing political games. I do not understand why they do not want to move forward with Bill C-13, which will give francophones in Quebec the opportunity to work in French at federally regulated private businesses. That will also be the case in regions outside of Quebec with a strong francophone presence.

I am at a complete loss for words, and I do not understand them.

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[English]

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, gang-related homicides are up 92% since 2015. I ask members to let that sink in. There were 124,000 more violent crimes this past year than in 2015.

When will the Liberal government learn that its hug-a-thug approach to crime in this country is literally costing Canadians their lives? If we listen to the Liberals, everything is fine. Will they abandon this soft-on-crime approach?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the timing of that question could not be better because this afternoon we are starting clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-21, which would be transformational legislation when it comes to gun control in this country.

However, that is not all we are doing. We are also ensuring that communities have the resources they need to support young people from starting involvement with gangs. We have put a billion dollars into the border to make sure that we are bolstering our border to prevent guns from being smuggled. We know that we need a multi-faceted approach, and that is exactly what we are doing.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the mayor of Laval, most of the criminal activity in his city is linked to illegal firearms and organized crime.

#### Oral Questions

He says that better border control is needed to stop illegal weapons from being smuggled in. However, in the Prime Minister's fantasy world, the solution is to take guns away from hunters and relax penalties for criminals.

When will he put the safety of Canadians first, instead of coddling criminals?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for the first time in Canadian history, we have repealed certain mandatory minimum sentences. This means that we are turning the page on the failures of the Conservative Party and its failed tough-on-crime policies.

As my colleague just mentioned, today we are beginning clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-21, which will help tackle the problem of handguns and assault weapons in Canada. We need to put resources towards that in order to fight crime in Canada.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, it is the Liberals who have failed. Statistics Canada just released a report showing that homicides have increased over the past three years and that 40% were gang-related. More specifically, the rate of gang-related homicides was the highest in 16 years.

Street gangs are elated because they know that the Liberals are going to eliminate minimum sentences, for example with Bill C-5. Street gangs are laughing their heads off. They know very well that they will end up doing what they want and committing crimes.

When will the Prime Minister take things seriously for once, stop saying things that are not true and ensure that the streets are safe across Canada?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is the other side of the House that is saying things that are not true.

After years of Conservative rule, when cuts were made to border services and police departments that fought gangs and gun imports, we have completely reversed the Conservatives' policy. We are investing in border control and anti-gang programs. We are increasing maximum sentences for importing firearms.

We are headed in the right direction. We will make Canada safe.

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#### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian representatives at the 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference worked hard with developed and developing countries to come to an agreement that every country could buy into.

### Oral Questions

Yesterday we heard the Conservatives mislead the House on global carbon pricing.

Can the Minister of Environment and Climate Change set the record straight?

• (1505)

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is not the first false statement on climate change coming from the Conservatives in the House. Yesterday we heard them say that not one country had accepted the global carbon pricing challenge.

Let me set the record straight. Chile, the European Commission, Indonesia, Colombia, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and South Korea—I nearly forgot Germany and the United Kingdom, the world's fourth- and fifth-largest economies—are all countries that accepted our pollution pricing challenge.

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[English]

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals break everything that they touch. In 2015, there were 15 LNG projects proposed for Canada. Zero have been built. Energy east and Keystone XL could have provided paycheques for Canadians rather than dollars for dictators. Neither project was built. In 2015, they inherited a balanced budget, only to spend their way to an inflationary crisis not seen in decades.

When will the Liberals quit breaking everything that they touch and, instead, let Canadians have back control of their lives?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times in this House, it is extremely important that we are moving forward in a way that will build a strong economy in a lower-carbon universe, ensuring that there are good jobs and economic opportunities for our children. It is also important that we are ensuring that good projects actually can move ahead. We have moved forward to reform the environmental assessment process after the Conservatives changed it significantly and created chaos with respect to actually moving through that project.

It is also important, I would say, and as I said before in this House, that we are addressing climate change, that we are doing so in a manner that is going to promote economic opportunity and prosperity going forward, and that is exactly what we are doing.

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### CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is broken. Inflation is at a 40-year high. Small business insolvencies are up. Mortgage renewals will cost, on average, \$7,000 more per year. The government could help by cutting carbon and home heating taxes. Liberals claim to have an environmental plan, and it is broken. In fact, Canada was ranked 58th this week in the climate change performance index behind Saudi Arabia, Russia and Iran.

Will the Liberal government stop making it hard for Canadians and allow them to take back control of their lives?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, these are more alternative facts on climate change in the House today. Emissions have gone down in 2019 and in 2020.

Let me talk about the rebate payments that we announced this morning. A family of four in Nova Scotia will get, four times a year, \$248. In Prince Edward Island, a family of four will get \$240, and in Newfoundland and Labrador, a family of four will get \$328. They will get that four times a year.

We are there to have Canadians' backs and fight climate change.

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### THE ECONOMY

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal coalition is breaking records. Inflation is at a 40-year high, food prices are rising at the fastest pace in 40 years and we are seeing the highest usage of food banks on record. Canadians want to take back control of their lives, but the NDP-Liberal government keeps fuelling the cost of living crisis.

Will the Prime Minister quite making things harder for Canadians who just want to put food on the table?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have a golden opportunity today, minutes from now, to do the right thing and support Canadians by helping first-time homebuyers, by making sure that students do not have any more interest on their student loans and by making sure that we reduce taxes on small businesses. Are they going to break the hearts of Canadians or do the right thing and support them? The choice is theirs. We will always stand on Canadians' side on this side of the House.

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### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we all know that community organizations and non-profits were hit hard by the pandemic, with charitable organizations stepping up to help their communities despite the financial pressures they have experienced. That is why our government announced, in budget 2021, that we would help them help Canadians in need.

Could the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development update the House on the community services recovery fund and how our government is supporting the charitable sector from coast to coast to get back on its feet as we move past the pandemic?



• (1510)

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I was really pleased to announce the \$400-million community services recovery fund for the charitable and not-for-profit sector here in Canada. We are going to be working with national funders, the Red Cross, community foundations in Canada and the United Way to deliver this to folks and organizations on the front lines of delivering the most important services right across this country.

I encourage all members to let organizations in their communities know that they can—

**The Speaker:** The member for Vancouver East.

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### HOUSING

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today is National Housing Day, and one in five Canadians cannot afford a safe place to call home. The Liberals are completely out of touch. They are building homes that families cannot afford and have done little to end homelessness. The cost of rent has soared all over the country. The average one bedroom in Toronto is now over \$2,500, and in Vancouver it is \$2,600.

The Liberals opened the door for housing profiteering, displacing seniors, people with disabilities and low-income renters. Why are the Liberals treating housing like a stock market instead of a necessity?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. We share the same goal, which is to make affordable housing available to all Canadians across the country. That is actually the goal of the first and only national housing strategy. We will keep working to make affordable housing available to all Canadians.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### JUSTICE

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, two Saskatchewan first nation sisters have served nearly 30 years of a sentence resulting from a wrongful conviction. Tomorrow, the Quewezance sisters face a bail hearing, but Saskatchewan appears to be using every trick in the book to keep them in custody. Nearly 50,000 Canadians have signed a petition calling for their release.

What is the Minister of Justice doing on this case, and how much longer will Canadians have to wait for the wrongful convictions commission we need for bringing an end to these injustices?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I know that we share a passion for justice in criminal matters.

I cannot comment on an active case of a wrongful convictions file because of the potential role that the Department of Justice, my

### Government Orders

office and I might have to play down the road. What I can say is that the creation of a miscarriage of justice commission or wrongful convictions commission is in my mandate letter. I have received a report from former justices Harry LaForme and Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré on the potential architecture for such a commission.

I can assure the hon. member and can assure the House that I am working hard to make sure that the miscarriage of justice commission sees the light of day very soon.

\* \* \*

### FIFA WORLD CUP IN QATAR

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move:

That, given that international sporting governing bodies have a moral obligation to support players and fans in highlighting the fight for equality against homophobia, transphobia, and all forms of discrimination in sport, the House condemn the decision of FIFA to threaten to penalize players and teams who wear OneLove arm-bands at the World Cup in Qatar.

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

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

(Motion agreed to)

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1515)

[*Translation*]

### FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

The House resumed from November 21 consideration of the motion that Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:15 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment of the member for Calgary Forest Lawn to the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-32.

[*English*]

Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Speaker:** The question is on the amendment. May I dispense?

**Some hon. members:** No.

## Government Orders

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

● (1525)

[Translation]

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 219)

## YEAS

## Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Caputo	Carrie
Chambers	Chong
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Deltell	d'Entremont
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Hoback
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiple
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson— 112

## NAYS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibea
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchette-Joncas
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Gaheer	Garneau
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gill
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino

*Government Orders*

Miao  
Miller  
Morrissey  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
Oliphant  
Pauzé  
Petitpas Taylor  
Qualtrough  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Sahota  
Samson  
Scarpaleggia  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Simard  
Singh  
Ste-Marie  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Van Bynen  
Vandal  
Vignola  
Vuong  
Wilkinson  
Zahid  
Zuberi— 203

Michaud  
Morrice  
Murray  
Ng  
Normandin  
O'Regan  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Rays  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Saks  
Sarai  
Schiefke  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Sorbara  
St-Onge  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thompson  
Trudel  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandenbeld  
Virani  
Weiler  
Yip  
Zarrillo

Bérubé  
Bittle  
Blair  
Blois  
Boulerice  
Brière  
Cannings  
Casey  
Chagger  
Champoux  
Chen  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Davies  
Desbiens  
Desjarlais  
Dhillon  
Dong  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Ehsassi  
Fergus  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fragiskatos  
Freeland  
Garneau  
Garrison  
Gazan  
Gould  
Guilbeault  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Joly  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khera  
Kusmierczyk  
Lalonde  
Lametti  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
LeBlanc  
Lightbound  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
Maloney  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLeod  
Mendès  
Miao  
Miller  
Morrissey  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
Oliphant  
Pauzé  
Petitpas Taylor  
Qualtrough  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Sahota  
Samson  
Scarpaleggia

Bibeau  
Blaikie  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Boissonnault  
Bradford  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Carr  
Chabot  
Chahal  
Chatel  
Chiang  
Collins (Victoria)  
Coteau  
Damoff  
DeBellefeuille  
Desilets  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
El-Khoury  
Fillmore  
Fonseca  
Fortin  
Fraser  
Gaheer  
Garon  
Gaudreau  
Gerretsen  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hardie  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Johns  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Khalid  
Koutrakis  
Kwan  
Lambropoulos  
Lamoureux  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McPherson  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Morrice  
Murray  
Ng  
Normandin  
O'Regan  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Rays  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Saks  
Sarai  
Schiefke

**PAIRED**

## Members

Calkins  
Ellis  
Lemire  
Sajjan

Champagne  
Jones  
Powlowski  
Savard-Tremblay— 8

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.

[*English*]

The next question is on the main motion. If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes the motion to be carried on division or wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded division, please.

• (1540)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 220*)

**YEAS**

## Members

Aldag  
Ali  
Anandasangaree  
Arseneault  
Ashton  
Bachrach  
Bains  
Barron  
Battiste  
Beech  
Bennett

Alghabra  
Anand  
Angus  
Arya  
Atwin  
Badawey  
Baker  
Barsalou-Duval  
Beaulieu  
Bendayan  
Bergeron

*Points of Order*

Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi— 201	

## NAYS

## Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Caputo	Carrie
Chambers	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeschen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Hoback
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shipley
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thomas	Tochur
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien

Viersen	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson— 112

## PAIRED

## Members

Calkins	Champagne
Ellis	Jones
Lemire	Powlowski
Sajjan	Savard-Tremblay— 8

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

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 24 minutes.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

## POINTS OF ORDER

## DIVISION OF BILL C-27 FOR THE PURPOSE OF VOTING

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising to add to this morning's point of order raised by the NDP House leader concerning the application of Standing Order 69.1 to Bill C-27.

In general, we have reviewed the hon. member's submissions and concur with them. That said, there are a couple of additional citations I want to put before the Chair for your consideration. I will not repeat the arguments, because you already have them before you, Mr. Speaker, but we do agree that the measures proposed in part 3 of Bill C-27 are significantly different from and unrelated to parts 1 and 2 such that they warrant a separate vote at second reading.

As my NDP counterpart articulated, the purpose of parts 1 and 2 of the bill concern privacy protections, the powers of the Privacy Commissioner and the establishment of a new government tribunal. Part 3, meanwhile, would create a whole new law respecting artificial intelligence. The mechanisms under the minister and department's powers are completely unrelated to those in parts 1 and 2. That last point is significant in view of another aspect of the March 1, 2018, ruling of Mr. Speaker Regan, which my colleague cited. Allow me to quote your predecessor, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Regan said:

As each of the first two parts of the bill does indeed enact a new act, I can see why the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé would like to see each one voted separately. However, my reading of the bill is that the regimes set out in part 1, the impact assessment act, and part 2, the Canadian energy regulator act, are linked in significant ways, reflected in the number of cross-references. For example, the impact assessment act provides for a process for assessing the impact of certain projects, but contains specific provisions for projects with activities regulated under the Canadian energy regulator act. There are also obligations in the Canadian energy regulator act that are subject to provisions in the impact assessment act. Given the multiple references in each of these parts to the entities and processes established by the other part, I believe it is in keeping with the standing order that these two parts be voted together.

Deputy Speaker Bruce Stanton also encountered a similar situation in his June 18, 2018, ruling at page 21,196 of the Debates. Unlike the case that I quoted just now respecting the pipeline-killing former Bill C-69, Bill C-27 does not feature any significant or intertwining cross-references. In other words, Speaker Regan found that the two parts should be voted on together because of all the intertwining and cross-referencing in so many parts, and one part mentioning and referencing items in the first part.

This is not the situation we have today with part 3 of Bill C-27. In fact, part 3 of Bill C-27 does not explicitly cross-reference the personal information and data protection tribunal act, which part 2 would enact. Furthermore, there appears to be only one single, tiny, solitary cross-reference to the consumer privacy protection act, which part 1 would enact, and that is solely for the purpose of proposing a definition of personal information, which would be common to both of those laws. That is certainly not enough to warrant any kind of grouping when it comes to votes.

Part 3 is completely separate. It is its own independent section. There is not anywhere near the level of cross-referencing and intertwining that previous Speakers have ruled are justification for deciding not to have a separate vote. Therefore, it is clear in this situation that Bill C-27, should you, Mr. Speaker, agree with the arguments, should be dealt with in such a manner that there can be a separate vote on part 3.

Standing Order 69.1 is a relatively recent innovation. It has only been in the last number of years that Speakers have been given the authority by the House to separate aspects of bills for separate votes. I will read it:

(1) In the case where a government bill seeks to repeal, amend or enact more than one act, and where there is not a common element connecting the various provisions or where unrelated matters are linked, the Speaker shall have the power to divide the questions, for the purposes of voting, on the motion for second reading and reference to a committee and the motion for third reading and passage of the bill. The Speaker shall have the power to combine clauses of the bill thematically and to put the aforementioned questions on each of these groups of clauses separately, provided that there will be a single debate at each stage.

• (1545)

If we think about the context in which this standing order developed and was ultimately passed by the House, it was to allow members more flexibility and latitude to make their votes count on various aspects of the bill. It is important to think about why the House decided to adopt this measure. There had been, over the course of several Parliaments and across different governments at various times, more and more subject material being included in bills, and this was done at the time to give members the option of voting in favour of some aspects of a bill and oppose others and to clarify for their constituents and Canadians which parts of a bill they supported and which parts of a bill they opposed.

The reason I am talking about this context is I do not believe that at the time, the rationale and impetus for the inclusion of this measure in the Standing Orders was meant to be terribly restrictive. The whole point of the standing order was for it to be more permissive to allow greater latitude and flexibility. This is a relatively new innovation that has only been used a small number of times, and in parliamentary terms certainly a very small number of times, and I believe it would not be in keeping with the spirit and intent that was guiding members when we adopted it to start off, early on in its

### *Points of Order*

new use, with being very restrictive, because things around here tend to go in one direction and powers or flexibilities accorded the Chair over time often get more and more rigid as rules and precedents develop around them.

If the Speaker were to adopt a very restrictive interpretation of this standing order, I believe it would take away the point of this innovation, as it was proposed. I do not believe it would take a permissive interpretation of the standing order to agree with my hon. colleague from the NDP and the points that I raise here today. It is very clear that these parts are separate. Part 3 of Bill C-27 is completely independent, stands on its own and is not related, intertwined or cross-referenced in earlier parts of the act.

I only mention the point about restrictive interpretation as one further point to urge the Speaker to consider what the spirit, intent and purpose of this innovation was meant to do, which was to allow members to clearly differentiate which parts of legislation they support and which parts they do not. I would urge you, Mr. Speaker, to keep that in mind as you study the arguments that were put before you. I hope you will find in our favour and allow members to vote separately on part 3.

• (1550)

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will add to the what the hon. opposition House leader said on the point of order.

We should understand a key point of difference in this bill. Parts 1 and 2 deal with the privacy of an individual's personal information and the powers of the Privacy Commissioner to review breaches of it and impose penalties, as well as the creation of a new tribunal. That is all related to an individual's personal privacy, whereas part 3 is about regulating an entirely new industry that has nothing to do with the Privacy Act and the replacement of PIPEDA in artificial intelligence. It gives all the regulatory, administrative, investigative and penalty power to the minister and has no connection whatsoever to the Privacy Commissioner or the new tribunal that the government would create.

I add that for the Speaker's further consideration.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. members for their input. I will take it into consideration when making my ruling.

*Government Orders***PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND REVIEW COMMISSION ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-20, An Act establishing the Public Complaints and Review Commission and amending certain Acts and statutory instruments, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member opposite for his speech on Bill C-20, an act to enact the public complaints review commission. This is going to include not only the RCMP, but also the CBSA. When we are talking about the CBSA, I think it is also very appropriate to ask whether the CBSA is properly financed and resourced for the demanding work we expect of it in stopping the smuggling of guns coming across the border. It is one thing to hold officers to account for misconduct. We should also expect them to be properly resourced so they can do their work.

I wonder if the member could comment on that.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am not sure how this question in particular relates to this piece of legislation. This legislation was specifically about bringing in oversight and review bodies to look at the work of the CBSA and the RCMP and to respond to the complaints out there.

When it comes to properly resourcing our individual agencies and departments, yes, we have an obligation to do that and provide them with resources so they can deliver on our expectations and what we are asking them to do. I think it goes without saying, as I believe every member of the House would agree, that providing the proper resources is absolutely critical, in this case to the CBSA and the RCMP.

• (1555)

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to join my voice to the debate on Bill C-20, an act to establish the public complaints and review commission. This commission would replace the current Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP. It is more than just a change of name. There is also change of provisions.

The commission would have an expanded role to also receive and deal with complaints on the activities of the Canada Border Services Agency, or the CBSA. This hits home to my home community of Langley because my community has the RCMP as its police force and is a border community, with a border crossing between the Canadian town of Aldergrove and the American town of Lynden.

Many people in my community have friends and relatives in Washington state. I am one of them. Four of my grandchildren live in Lynden, Washington, which is just a 45-minute drive from my home in Langley, not counting the time we might need to wait at the border, which is sometimes a long time and sometimes very short.

In the hundreds of times I have crossed the border from Aldergrove into Lynden, I have never had a bad interaction with anybody from the CBSA. I can say the same of the RCMP, not that I have had that many interactions with members of the RCMP, but any that

I have had have always been good and positive. I have the highest regard for people who work for both agencies.

Our police officers and border security guards are at the front line of public safety and we owe them a debt of gratitude. I think of Burnaby RCMP Constable Shaelyn Yang, who was stabbed to death on October 18, just over a month ago, trying to save a homeless man's life. Constable Yang was attending at a city park along with a bylaw officer from the City of Burnaby to serve an eviction notice on a person who was camped in a public park. On approaching the scene, Constable Yang noticed there was evidence of the man overdosing. She entered into the tent with a naloxone kit. She did not come out alive.

I did not know Constable Yang at all, but I know people who did know her, who worked with her, who trained with her and who loved her. Her death is a reminder to her colleagues, and indeed to all of us, that working on the front line, whether it is with the RCMP or other police services in Canada, is dangerous work. To all police officers and other frontline workers, I thank them for their service to their communities. We owe them a debt of gratitude. We are grateful for their service.

It is in this context that I now want to join the conversation about complaints against the RCMP. During my time on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, I have heard from many witnesses about the failings of the RCMP and other police services across the country.

Last year we studied alleged systemic racism in the RCMP. It was an exhaustive study. It was an exhausting study. There were 19 meetings. We heard from 53 witnesses. The study resulted in a report of 125 pages and 42 recommendations. We heard from community organizations providing services to or advocating for indigenous communities. We heard from academics working in the fields of law, law enforcement and social services. We heard from people working with people suffering mental health and addictions. As well, of course, we heard from representatives of various police services.

Whether there is racism in policing in Canada was the question we were tasked with. The first job, as always, is to define our terms. One of our witnesses, Alain Babineau, a law enforcement consultant, social justice advocate and former member of the RCMP gave us a working definition. Quoting Senator Sinclair, he said, "Systemic racism is when the system itself is based upon and founded upon racist beliefs and philosophies and thinking and has put in place policies and practices that literally force even the non-racists to act in a racist way."

*Government Orders*

• (1600)

I have met many police officers. I have a family member who is a RCMP police officer. I went to law school with several former RCMP officers who then went on to become lawyers and with whom I have formed lifelong friendships. I have colleagues who have had full careers in law enforcement prior to coming to the House. I attend church with several people who are RCMP officers, and I can assure the members that not one of them is racist. They are all honest, hard-working people and law-abiding citizens who have, at heart, nothing but the best interests for their communities, neighbours and country.

Our report at the public safety committee was not about whether individuals within the RCMP are racist. The evidence is clear that we do have societal problems. It is not a problem of just the RCMP, the CBSA or the Vancouver Police Department. The problem is in our society.

When we think about racism, we might be tempted to point fingers at others, at the fathers of Confederation and at residential schools and say it was not us. We may think about our ancestors' role in slavery and say it was not us. We were not there.

A little closer to home, we might talk about the Chinese head tax and say it was before our time. Even a little closer to home, in Vancouver, we might think about the *Komagata Maru* incident, when law enforcement agencies turned a ship around and sent it back to India.

To make it current, we could point the finger at the RCMP, but finger pointing is not going to get us anywhere. It is certainly not going to help us find solutions to racism. We recognize that we are all part of society. We are all a product of our shared history. We are all in the same boat, so to speak, but the good news is that we are all also part of the solution.

It is in that context that I hope people would read the report from the public safety committee, and I hope they do read it. The report is simply called "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada".

Here we are today, talking about Bill C-20, an act to establish the public complaints and review commission. This draft of legislation is backed up by the report that I just talked about, that our public safety committee tackled last year.

I mentioned that the report contains 42 recommendations. Five of those 42 deal with what we call, under the current legislation, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission. Evidence we heard at committee made it clear that we have a problem. The current review and complaints structure is dysfunctional, and it needs to be fixed.

Witnesses raised concerns about the transparency of the disciplinary process from the RCMP. For example, we heard from Professor Christian Leuprecht of the Royal Military College. He suggested that the RCMP should be required to make public all disciplinary decisions. That goes to transparency.

Professor Samuels-Wortley of Carleton University pointed out that transparency is required in the disciplinary processes for police who engage in misconduct to ensure public confidence in the system. We want to know what is going on.

Alain Babineau and the hon. Michel Bastarache suggested that the RCMP does not appear to be capable of addressing discrimination within the organization itself, suggesting that change must come from the outside.

All of this evidence, presented to the public safety committee, brought us to 42 recommendations. I am going to highlight just three of them.

The first recommendation was that the Government of Canada should clarify and strengthen the mandate of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, or the public complaints commission. We were not contemplating then that the whole commission would be revamped and given a new name, but so be it.

This would include creating statutory timelines for a response by the RCMP commissioner to reports coming from the commission and requiring that the commission publish its findings and recommendations. It all goes to transparency.

The second recommendation was that the Government of Canada should increase accessibility and transparency by simplifying the process for initiating a complaint. The third recommendation was to allow for a meaningful engagement of indigenous participation in the complaints commission. Let us not forget that the study was about whether there was racism in the RCMP.

• (1605)

Can Bill C-20, the legislation we are talking about, answer those challenges? The answer is, in large part, yes. The legislation creating the new PCRC, the public complaints and review commission, which in many ways mirrors the existing commission, would require the establishing of timelines for dealing with complaints. That was one of the concerns we heard at committee.

It would also require implementing education and information programs so the public can better understand the process, something else we heard complaints about at committee.

It outlines how complaints would be submitted, investigated and reviewed, and that there would be an annual report to the minister, who would then submit it to Parliament. That report is to include information about whether service standards are being met, the number of complaints and data about the complaints, so we can develop policy based on good, reliable data.

There are a lot of details in the bill also about what information the commission might encounter that would be treated confidentially to protect complainants and for security purposes.

There is information about the hearing process and the powers the commission will have, the powers of the superior court of record, including the power and ability to be able to subpoena witnesses and order them to give evidence. The commission will also have the ability to recommend disciplinary action, but not to carry it out.

*Government Orders*

The legislation appears to be straightforward at achieving its objectives. We will be supporting this draft bill at second reading, and I look forward to a deep dive at committee into its details, and to listen to experts.

When we are talking about police oversight, which is the police policing themselves, and border staff oversight when possible discipline might happen, we need to ask the question whether these agencies are properly resourced to do their work. We know that police services across the country are facing a recruitment and retention crisis, like almost every sector in our economy. We have a shortage of new people coming into the police services at the same time that older people are leaving, and all at the same time that we are demanding more from our police services.

Police recruitment is down and crime is up. There has been a 32% increase in violent crimes since 2015, when the current Liberal government took office. There were 125,000 more violent crimes last year than there were in 2015. Therefore, crimes rates are going up, and we are expecting more from our police services. We need to make sure they are fully resourced.

We have similar statistics for the CBSA. There is a shortage of workers. People are retiring, with not enough people coming in, and there is a higher demand with respect to their work.

Another study we recently completed at the public safety committee was about guns and gangs. We learned that most firearms used in violent crimes in Canada are handguns smuggled in from the United States. One of our witnesses stated the obvious. We live beside the largest gun-manufacturing society in the world, and we share the longest undefended border with it. This presents a big challenge for us, and we expect a lot from our CBSA to intercept the guns that are being smuggled into our country. It is not an easy problem to solve.

I know we are talking about Bill C-20, but I want to make a quick reference to Bill C-21. Bill C-21, which would make owning a handgun in Canada illegal, or more illegal than it already is, is not going to solve the problem because the people who are committing violent crimes are already illegal gun owners, to state the obvious, so C-21 does not add much value. It certainly does not keep Canadians any safer. It just further stigmatizes legal gun owners and trained and licensed sport shooters who are good and honest citizens.

• (1610)

Bill C-21 does not help our neighbours, but that is for another day. Today we are talking about Bill C-20, the public complaints and review commission.

Our report on guns and gang violence recommended that funding for the CBSA be increased. If we are going to enhance a complaints review process for our workers, it is only fair that we make sure they are properly resourced so they can do their jobs properly. Let us also make sure they are adequately resourced with both people and money, so they can do the work effectively.

We expect a lot from our border security people. They should expect to receive the full complement of a workforce, financial resources and tools to do their job effectively.

I want to take the opportunity to say thanks to CBSA workers, including many who live in my riding of Langley. We live on a border. There are several land border crossings, and I have a lot of friends who work in one or other of those border crossings.

I want to talk about something else that touches on the police. Our safety committee met with Mr. Justice Bastarache, formerly of the Supreme Court of Canada. He presented his report to us a couple of years ago in the 43rd Parliament, entitled "Broken Lives, Broken Dreams". This retired judge was tasked with the unenviable task of distributing and disbursing court-awarded money under the so-called Merlo Davidson Settlement Agreement to victims of sexual harassment within the RCMP. Merlo and Davidson were the two named plaintiffs in that case.

The judge's report is a stinging rebuke of a culture of sexual harassment within the RCMP. It starts with these words:

For more than 30 years there have been calls to fix sexual harassment in the RCMP.

The report then goes on to talk about the 3,086 claims over that 30-year period. He and his staff conducted 644 interviews with victims. At the end of all his work, they awarded some compensation to 2,034 victims. It is widespread. It is not a good situation.

As I read through the report, I wondered whether my pride in our national police force was misplaced. In our discussion with Mr. Justice Bastarache at committee, I related a story from my childhood, when my parents took me and my siblings to the RCMP Musical Ride. My parents were new immigrants from the Netherlands, and they told us that one of the things they were very proud of about their new country was that we could be proud of our police force, something that is not true, sadly, for every nation in the world.

Mr. Justice Bastarache told me that in his opinion it was still appropriate for us to be proud of our RCMP service. It has a proud history and it is redeemable, but in his opinion it would require outside resources, outside influences, because the RCMP could not reform itself.

I will be voting in favour of Bill C-20 at second reading, for it to go to committee for a deep dive, a line-by-line review. There, I will be looking not only for how the RCMP interacts with the public, who expect the police to keep them safe and to do no harm, but also for how this legislation would steer us towards improving the internal culture of this agency, the RCMP, that we all want to be proud of.

• (1615)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is very encouraging to see the support that is coming forward for this legislation.



*Government Orders*

Earlier today, prior to question period, we had a very clear indication of support, whether it was from the government, obviously, which is proposing the legislation, or support coming from the New Democrats, the Bloc party, or even the Green Party members for the legislation. It has become very clear that the Conservative Party is going to be supporting the legislation.

I would like to think that given the type of support it is getting from the House, there would be a willingness to see it go to committee, given that we have had a great deal of opportunity over not only months but years to have that discussion, both informally and formally, inside the chamber and outside. I know the standing committee is anxious to receive the legislation so it can get down to work on it, listening to the public and so forth.

I wonder if the member is in concurrence with me that we should try to advance this, even if it means getting support to sit tonight. I, for one, would be happy to be here until midnight if there are more members who want to speak to the legislation. Let us see if we can get this legislation passed.

Could the member provide his comments on how important it is to pass the legislation?

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, yes, I want to see this go to committee, and I will be voting in favour. I am assuming that our whole caucus will be. However, we often hear this from the member: If we are all in agreement, why do we not just accelerate it through the whole process?

The process is important. It was important for me to give a speech today. Even if the member did not think it contributed a lot, members of my community think it does. They want to hear me talking about things that are important to them, and this is important to them. Therefore, I do not think we should be accelerating this needlessly. We need to debate it. That is why we are here.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to pick up on what my Conservative colleague was saying. His excellent speech shows that, when there are good-quality, well-thought-out bills that people can agree on, then Parliament works very well, and the long series of gag orders supported by NDP are often unnecessary. I would like to hear his comments on that.

As my colleague said, this bill needs to go to committee because it is quite ambitious and very detailed. In committee, we should hear from many stakeholders who will be affected by this bill, including unions. Who does my colleague think we should call as witnesses?

How useful will the committee be in ensuring that this bill is the best it can be when it gets to third reading?

[*English*]

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, I am looking forward to seeing this bill go to committee for a deep dive, line by line, and yes, we have to hear from experts in the field.

The study we conducted at the public safety committee last year gives a good indication of who should be called as witnesses: people who work with indigenous communities, for example. We definitely need to hear from them. People who work in law enforce-

ment, right from one end of the country to the other, should be called, as we need to hear from them.

We should probably hear from Mr. Justice Bastarache, who wrote the “Broken Dreams, Broken Lives” report. He would have something very important to say to the committee. He would be a good addition.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, of course the NDP thinks it is a good idea, as I do, that this bill pass. The CBSA is the only major law enforcement agency in Canada without an independent review mechanism to oversee the bulk of its activity. That is an oversight that needs to be changed.

I was interested in my friend's comments about interdiction at the borders, and I have done a bit of research. The port of Vancouver alone, with its four terminals, has 1.5 million containers coming every year. CBSA examines only 50,000 of them. That is about 4%. That means 1,450,000 containers pass through just that one port every year that are not examined by CBSA. The average container ship carries 10,000 containers. If 4% are examined, that means some 9,600 containers per ship are not searched.

Therefore, I am just wondering about the member's party's promotion of interdiction as a preferred method of dealing with guns or drugs. Would he not agree with us that there is just no way the CBSA is ever going to have an effective interdiction policy with figures like those?

● (1620)

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, it seems almost impossible. I agree with the member. The task is so large.

Most of the guns that are used in a crime in Canada are smuggled in from the United States, not from China, not in containers coming into the port of Vancouver. Maybe some are, but most, like 80% of handguns, are smuggled in from the U.S.A., so let us focus on them.

I was talking to some border security people in my riding about the ArriveCAN app, and they said it was a waste of time. They were sitting there looking at their computer screens as cars were driving by, instead of doing what they normally do, which is to look at the person who has their window rolled down, using face-to-face contact and body language. That is the way they are going to interdict illegal things being smuggled in, including handguns.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I just want to drill down into the answer the member gave to the member from Winnipeg a couple of questions ago.

*Government Orders*

Can he explain to the House why it is so important that he speak for 30 minutes on this issue? I heard what he said. He said it is important that he express his position on this, but let us just analyze this for a second. He spoke for 30 minutes. If all 118 Conservatives spoke for 30 minutes on this, that would put us in the position of having to debate this bill for literally weeks, if not months, just to get it to committee.

Is the member basically saying that occupying all this time for him to give his speech is more important than the legislation getting adopted? Is that what he is saying? In theory, that is what he is saying. He is saying, "I need to speak to this for 30 minutes." If we let everybody do that, it literally will not go anywhere.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Madam Speaker, I would just reiterate that it is important for me to speak to this. It is important to my constituents that I speak to this. I have been involved with the public safety committee, and I am somewhat informed on the issues, so I think it is completely appropriate for me to speak to this. I am sorry if the member thinks it is not important that Conservative members who want to speak to the issue should be able to.

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before I begin, I just want to let members know I will be sharing my time with the member for Milton.

I am rising today to speak to Bill C-20. It is a bill that would establish "an independent body, called the Public Complaints and Review Commission", which would "review and investigate complaints concerning the conduct and level of service" of the RCMP and the CBSA and "conduct reviews of specified activities" of the RCMP and the CBSA. The bill also:

authorizes the Chairperson of the Public Complaints and Review Commission to recommend the initiation of disciplinary processes or the imposition of disciplinary measures in relation to individuals who have been the subject of complaints;

amends the Canada Border Services Agency Act to provide for the investigation of serious incidents involving officers and employees of the [CBSA];

and

amends the English version of federal statutes and orders, regulations and other instruments to replace references to the "Force" with references to "RCMP"

This is not the first time I have risen to speak about the importance of oversight for the CBSA. We hear very regularly how important oversight is for open and transparent government, and how important it is for us to ensure that Canadians and everybody within the Canadian border has the ability to be treated fairly, the ability to conduct their affairs within a certain decorum of respect, and the ability to enter our country and not be judged based on their shell.

As much as I respect the work the CBSA has done over the years and decades with its ability to bring in and to recognize and go through hundreds and thousands of people on a regular basis through over 1,000 ports of entry within our country, I wonder what its impact is on people who may look different, who may have different abilities or who may not speak the same language our CBSA officers speak. It is not a question of whether our CBSA officers are able to contribute and support our borders and our entry points across the country. It is a question of how we are maintaining and supporting the integrity of Canadian values in this country. It is a matter of whether we are ensuring that everybody who comes in has that equality of opportunity and has the due process.

As we give discretion to CBSA officers, as they process these intense applications on a day-to-day basis, I ask whether those applications are processed in a manner that is fair, objective and in keeping with the values we hold dear as Canadians. As hundreds and thousands of travellers, permanent residents and citizens cross the border on a daily basis, I wonder about how CBSA officers are ensuring the integrity of the process, and I wonder about the cases that have been missed.

I know the news recently has been about a number of refugees from Egypt who came in through the Vancouver port. They were intercepted by CBSA officers and are now alleging that they have been discriminated against. As Muslims who have come in from Egypt, they have been linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, and they have no means of recourse from the CBSA officer who took them in. They do not know what their refugee applications could and would have looked like.

• (1625)

They have spent years trying to find a home, having really wanted Canada as their home, and are now in a situation in which they do not know where they belong. Had we installed this legislation at the moment when it was first introduced a couple of years ago, I wonder if they would still be in that same situation.

This legislation would give people the opportunity to really delve deep into whether or not their claim, and the way they are treated as they enter into or exit Canada, is fair. It is a way that we, with our Canadian values, would feel respected and proud.

I can tell members that I doubt those refugee claimants out of Vancouver who have had dealings with the CBSA without any recourse, and with the way that they have been treated by the CBSA out in Vancouver in those specific cases, feel that they have been treated fairly. However, if there were adjudication, an independent complaints system to listen, take in the facts and understand what had transpired in the case, I doubt those people in Vancouver would be feeling the way they do.

I commend each and every member of the CBSA. I know the great work they do in saving lives, going through people day by day, protecting the national security of this country and ensuring that we are secure as Canadians. However, if there is no oversight to the discretionary power given to CBSA officers who are dealing with people on a day-to-day basis, we wonder just how open and transparent we can be. We wonder what equality of opportunity looks like.

Canada is a country that is revered across the world. We take in a lot of people who are looking for homes, and we have become the adopted home for hundreds and thousands of people, including me. I wonder how we can improve that process.

How can we ensure the entry points to this safe haven that is Canada can be improved? How can we ensure the people who are having to deal with those first officers as they try to enter the country are treated with respect, dignity and without bias regardless of where they come from? An independent oversight body would allow us the privilege of providing that oversight and equality of opportunity to everyone who is seeking refuge within our country.

This legislation has been delayed in coming. It is so necessary and important that we include this independent oversight body to ensure our borders are not only protected but also that they are free from the bias, the subjectivity, that our Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects Canadians from on a daily basis.

We have to move forward on this legislation, and I am really looking forward to it going through committee and finally receiving royal assent, because I believe this is how we continue to achieve equality of opportunity in our country.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her very interesting speech, in which she explained how the CBSA's existing complaint management system can result in injustice, especially toward certain minorities that may be targeted.

Just before that, my colleague from Kingston and the Islands said that, every time someone rises to talk about Bill C-20, they are just wasting time and delaying passage of the bill.

Does my colleague think she wasted our time with her speech?

[*English*]

**Ms. Iqra Khalid:** Madam Speaker, this chamber, this place, is for debate. It is for expressing the opinions of my constituents, and for each and every one of our constituents. I know for a fact that my constituents want this bill to go forward. I know for a fact that each and every member across the aisle, and I have sat and listened to their speeches, have something to contribute to this bill.

I would like to see this bill sent to committee as soon as possible. I would like for this bill to be implemented into law. I really am looking forward to having an oversight for the CBSA, and I encourage the member to support this bill in its entirety.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I was listening to the words of the member today, and I appreciate the words around being treated fairly and with respect. My question for the member is regarding the LGBTQ+ community, which we spoke about in the House today. This relates specifically to respect and being treated fairly for those who have been misgendered by the RCMP.

I would like the member's thoughts on how this would allow persons who have been misgendered to file a complaint, which right now is not available to them.

• (1635)

**Ms. Iqra Khalid:** Madam Speaker, this bill, this proposition of having an oversight body, is really about equality of opportunity. It is about righting wrongs, regardless of what those wrongs are. It is

### *Government Orders*

about using our Charter of Rights and Freedoms as a baseline to ensure Canadians are protected within our country. It is about transparency. It is about openness.

I am looking forward to this bill having a positive impact on transgender communities, the LGBTQ2+ communities and all racialized communities and religious minorities.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I listened to the member's speech, in which she mentioned all the work our border officers do.

We can all agree that the complaint or oversight mechanism is a good thing for those whose rights were violated. Does the member think it is also important to consider the people who work at the border to safeguard our rights? They have been mistreated and are under a lot of pressure because their numbers have declined.

How is the government planning to consult these workers and listen to their perspective to make sure they do not have to bear a greater burden or be put under even more pressure?

[*English*]

**Ms. Iqra Khalid:** Madam Speaker, our frontline service members, the ones who really get out there and provide those services at the front end, are doing our country a wonderful service. They are to be commended for their wonderful efforts.

What this bill is trying to implement is a way to ensure the services being provided at that front end are objective and fair. Those who feel they have not been properly treated or received those services fairly would have a way to recommence themselves and would be able to find a way to make themselves whole again. I, for one, commend—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to rise today in the House to speak to Bill C-20, a very important bill.

[*English*]

I am glad to be here today, standing on traditional Algonquin territory.

We are debating Bill C-20, which would enact a new stand-alone statute, the public complaints and review commission act, to provide an external review regime for both the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Border Services Agency. When it comes to law enforcement and border protection, nothing is more important to the proper functioning of these systems than trust and accountability. Canadians are watching and indeed the world is watching.

*Government Orders*

The RCMP and the CBSA provide world-class services to keep Canadians safe, and Canadians rightly expect nothing less than consistent, fair and equal treatment. It is about balance. Public safety is of course paramount, but so too are human rights. To ensure our system remains balanced in this way and to maintain public respect for the rule of law, it is essential we pass Bill C-20 and establish a robust civilian review system.

Under this new PCRC, enhanced reporting requirements would apply, as would an independent review mechanism for the CBSA. By establishing these mechanisms independent from the enabling statutes of the RCMP and CBSA, we are walking the talk. We are demonstrating the importance of the very independence we seek to enshrine in law, distinct from the organizations in question.

I would like to use my time today to delve into some of the details of this bill.

First, Bill C-20 would add specific new accountability and transparency mechanisms. These would entail codified timelines for the RCMP or CBSA to respond to reports, reviews and recommendations from the PCRC. There would also be timelines for information sharing between the RCMP and the CBSA, as well as the PCRC. For example, the RCMP and the CBSA would have six months to respond to an interim report of the PCRC, and when the PCRC has issued a report after having reviewed specified activities of the RCMP and the CBSA, the latter would have 60 days to respond.

Not only must these bodies report back to the chairperson of the PCRC within these codified timelines, but the bill would also obligate the RCMP commissioner and the CBSA president each to submit an annual report to the Minister of Public Safety. These reports would detail the actions the RCMP and the CBSA have taken within the year to respond to PCRC recommendations.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the RCMP for its efforts to improve the timeliness of responses to the CRCC over the past year. The provisions of this bill would ensure this timeliness continues.

Another highly important aspect of Bill C-20 is the provision compelling the PCRC to report on disaggregated race-based data. Canadians have said it loud and clear, and we agree, that eradicating systemic racism in law enforcement is an urgent priority. Collecting, establishing and publishing race-based data on complainants is one of the ways that knowledge gaps around systemic racism would be filled.

In addition, Bill C-20 directs the PCRC to implement public education and information programs to increase knowledge and awareness of the new commission's mandate. With increased public information and engagement through such mechanisms, the bill aims to earn the trust of Black, indigenous and all racialized Canadians. Of course, this all builds on the work done by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and its report entitled "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada". We are following through on that report's recommendation that the government clarify and strengthen the mandate, independence and efficacy of the CRCC.

What this bill also does, on top of improving RCMP review, is to close a long-standing gap regarding review of the CBSA. Currently, public complaints are handled through internal CBSA processes and there are no independent mechanisms available to review public complaints regarding CBSA employee conduct or service.

Make no mistake; this is a very ambitious and truly important bill. However, as we have had multiple opportunities to introduce such legislation, with both Bill C-98 and Bill C-3 dying on the Order Paper in 2019 and 2020 respectively, we have also seized the chance to continue building out this bill.

This work has been accomplished through extensive consultations with stakeholders, the broader public and governance experts like Mel Cappe, and particularly with the CRCC itself. I must single out the CRCC chairperson, Michelaine Lahaie, for her dedication. Many of her thoughtful and thorough recommendations have shaped this bill into a framework for accountability and transparency, and that is why we are here today.

● (1640)

I began my time today by asserting that Canada's new law enforcement and border services organizations are world class, and I stand by that statement. It is exactly why this legislation is so critical. To remain world class and to uphold Canada's hard-won reputation for equity and fairness on the international stage, we must keep up with our international counterparts.

This bill would do exactly that, aligning our border agency review function with that of countries like the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. Internally, Bill C-20 would also align the new PCRC's review functions with other public safety accountability bodies, such as the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and the newly created National Security and Intelligence Review Agency.

*Government Orders*

To sum up, Bill C-20 is much needed and long overdue. Without it, the CRCC does not have all the tools it needs to uphold civilian review of the law enforcement system, and the Canadian public does not have the tools it needs to continue trusting, or indeed rebuild trust in many cases, in the services that the system provides. This bill responds to the urgent priorities that date back years and those that have more recently come to the forefront, such as systemic racism.

I know my hon. colleagues share our concern for both public safety and the right of all Canadians to live free from discrimination, and I urge everyone in the House to join me in supporting the expeditious passage of this legislation.

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the worries I often have when legislation is brought forward or things are announced in the House is that resources will not be available to do the work that needs to be done. For example, with our sanctions regime, we do not have the resources for CBSA to do what it needs to do. With regard to forced labour, only one shipment relating to force labour was identified by CBSA and it was returned. My worry is that when we put this legislation in place, there will not be resources to make sure it is effective.

What steps will the government take to ensure that there are adequate resources for this work?

• (1645)

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, resources come in various shapes and forms. There are human resources and financial resources. Indeed, the latter will be available. We will ensure that all the money necessary will be available to build up a new organization of accountability. That is a commitment that I know this government has already made.

On the issue of human resources and making sure there is enough personnel, for example, to fill all the important positions within the CBSA, the RCMP and this new accountability measure, we are going to rely largely on immigration in this country to fill a lot of those positions. Canadians these days are simply not having as many children as the economy requires if we would like it to grow, and this is one of those important areas where we need to rely on immigration for our workforce and the human resource capital that Canada so desperately needs.

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Madam Speaker, there are five CBSA crossings in my riding, and over my seven years as a member of Parliament, I have heard many times from my constituents about both positive and negative issues with the CBSA, and even more so lately with COVID and the shut-down of borders. In particular, the issue right now is when they are going to go back to their regular hours, but that is another conversation. It is not the conversation today.

The Liberals have been saying for the past seven years that this is going to happen, yet it has taken this long just to get here. Why has it taken so long to get the bill to this stage, and why is it being rushed at this point?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, as I stated in my speech today, this bill has indeed died on the Order Paper twice now, and we do not want that to ever happen again. This bill has

been debated over and over. It was also modified on those two occasions to fit more current studies being done at various committees and to fit things that we review and decide on collectively as priorities.

Why is this important now? It is because time is of the essence on the bill. I do believe, as it has died twice on the Order Paper, that it is important to act expeditiously. I do not suspect there is an election on the horizon, but at the same time, the House has important work to do, and this is one of the opportunities we all have to come together and collectively make some progress happen before the holiday break.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. It was clear and precise. My colleague alluded to the fact that we have been wanting to do this for seven years. I would like to remind him that this was deferred in 2019 or in 2020, it does not matter. In 2004, in other words, 18 years ago, Justice O'Connor recommended creating this type of process.

That being said, I will just pick up on the question from the NDP member. I have absolutely no clue what kind of an investment this represents. Are we talking about millions of dollars? My colleague proposes relying on immigration to fill the positions; that would be about 10 to 50 positions. What would enacting the bill mean, both financially and in terms of human resources?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and his attention to this very important bill.

I do not have the funding details associated with this bill right now. It is not yet entirely clear. I believe that every member in the House understands that this bill is very important. It is not a question of funding or money, it is a question of addressing systemic racism and dealing with the other concerns of our constituents.

• (1650)

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak to Bill C-20, an act establishing the Public Complaints and Review Commission and amending certain acts and statutory instruments.

I would like to begin by saying that the Bloc Québécois supports this bill at second reading. This bill would give citizens recourse against the Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, which can, on occasion, abuse its authority.

### *Government Orders*

There is currently an independent oversight mechanism in place, but its mandate covers only matters of national security, so it needs to be expanded. Citizens who wish to file a complaint must do so directly to the CBSA, but the information is not public and, because the mechanism is internal, it is not totally neutral and objective.

As a result, there is no external review body to deal with public complaints against the CBSA, and that is what this bill seeks to correct. The Bloc Québécois supports Bill C-20 at second reading because we believe that an independent complaint process is both necessary and good for the public. As my colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles said, it was in 2004, 18 years ago, that Justice O'Connor recommended that an independent process be put in place to handle public complaints against the CBSA.

For example, in early January 2020, the Privacy Commissioner of Canada found significant flaws concerning searches of travellers' electronic devices, which demonstrated the importance of having an independent body to review complaints. The bill must be referred to a committee quickly so that it can be studied and the concerns of different groups, including unions, can be heard. I will come back to this later to explain what this will change, and I will speak about the perspective of unions and victims.

First, this bill seeks to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act to change the complaints process for citizens and provide the opportunity for travellers to file complaints against CBSA officers.

This bill is similar to Bill C-3, which was introduced in the 43rd Parliament, and Bill C-98, which was introduced in the 42nd Parliament. Both died on the Order Paper for the sole reason that they were never a priority for the government. All parties supported Bill C-98, but we never voted on Bill C-3. We are wondering if this bill will now be a priority.

Bill C-20 contains a number of things. It replaces the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with a new body called the public complaints and review commission, or PCRC. This new body will be mandated to review and investigate complaints concerning the conduct and level of service of RCMP and Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, personnel. It will also conduct reviews of specified activities of the RCMP and the CBSA.

The bill authorizes the chairperson of the PCRC to recommend the initiation of disciplinary processes or the imposition of disciplinary measures in relation to individuals who have been the subject of complaints. It amends the Canada Border Services Agency Act to provide for the investigation of serious incidents involving officers and employees of the CBSA.

The most important point of this bill is that it enables this new body to review the CBSA's activities and to investigate public complaints involving both officers and employees. Under Bill C-20, the public complaints and review commission can receive complaints from the public about the RCMP or the CBSA, but the complaints will generally be sent directly to the RCMP and the CBSA first for an initial investigation. If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation of the RCMP or the CBSA, then they can ask the PCRC to look into it. Basically, here is what that means.

In such a case, the PCRC could present its findings and make recommendations. The RCMP or the CBSA would have to respond in writing to the PCRC reports by the deadlines set out in the acts and regulations. An external mechanism will therefore be put in place.

What is more, complaints related to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages or the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada will not be dealt with by the PCRC. However, the PCRC will forward any such complaints to the appropriate organizations.

The PCRC will be made up of civilians who are not former members of the RCMP or the CBSA. This is an independent external process. Another thing about this bill is that the response timelines for the RCMP will be codified, because many felt that the RCMP responded too slowly to the reports of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or CRCC. The bill will therefore replace the CRCC with the PCRC and a deadline will be imposed.

• (1655)

The bill also requires the commissioner of the RCMP and the president of the CBSA to submit an annual report to the Minister of Public Safety outlining what the organizations have done during the year to address the PCRC's recommendations. The minister will be required to share the report with the House of Commons and the Senate within 15 days.

There will also be a more targeted collection of information to determine whether racism against certain groups is an issue. It will be documented. The bill also calls for a public education and information campaign to inform travellers of their rights.

The PCRC will be responsible for tracking serious incidents—such as a death, serious injury or violation of laws—and making them public. It may send an observer to ensure that CBSA and RCMP investigations are conducted impartially. The PCRC may review, on its own initiative or at the request of the Minister of Public Safety, any RCMP and CBSA activity that is not related to national security. The reports would include findings or recommendations on RCMP and CBSA compliance with legislation and directives, and the adequacy, appropriateness, sufficiency or clarity of RCMP and CBSA policies, procedures and guidelines.

One difference from Bill C-3, which was a similar bill introduced in the 43rd Parliament, is that the PCRC will be established by a specific piece of legislation, whereas in the previous version, it was established by amendments to existing laws.

The PCRC will not be able to compel the CBSA and the RCMP to take disciplinary action, but both agencies will be required to report to the minister to justify their response to the recommendations, and these reports will be made public 15 days after the minister receives them.

The bill aims to create an independent process for reviewing complaints and the work of the Canada Border Services Agency. This new entity, the public complaints and review commission, will also replace the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. This new commission, the PCRC, will deal with both the RCMP and the CBSA.

The new entity created by Bill C-20 will make it possible to file complaints directly with the CBSA and directly with the PCRC, depending on the complainant's preference. The complainant decides. If an individual is not satisfied with the response they get from the CBSA or the RCMP, they can ask the PCRC to review a complaint that has already been filed.

The process is nevertheless long and complicated. There is a good chance that most individuals will give up before the end of the process. For example, if an officer makes a sexist or racist comment towards a traveller, filing a complaint with the CBSA, waiting for a response and then sending the complaint to the PCRC could be more complicated and demanding for most travellers than just ignoring the comment, which is quite sad. The committee will have to examine whether the process proposed by Bill C-20 is adequate or if it should be revised.

Creating this new external body is necessary, according to Mary Foster, from Solidarity Across Borders. In 2019, she said that "making a complaint to the CBSA about the CBSA doesn't really lead anywhere". Having the option of challenging the findings of an investigation is therefore essential to maintaining public trust.

All parties supported Bill C-98 in the 42nd Parliament, but, as I said earlier, a vote was never held on Bill C-3.

Now we are once again discussing a bill that is good for the public because the existing system does not include an adequate complaint mechanism for people. Civil liberties groups have long called for the creation of an independent complaint-handling body like the one for the police.

For example, under the Access to Information Act, the Canadian Press obtained a list of complaints that travellers submitted directly to the CBSA.

According to the documents, in 2017-18, nearly 900 complaints were filed, about 100 of which were deemed founded, including cases of travellers being on the receiving end of border officers' racist or rude comments. Complaints against the CBSA are currently handled internally, with little transparency. That is the problem Bill C-20 may fix.

Second, from the union's perspective, the Customs and Immigration Union's national president, Mark Weber, is concerned that Bill C-20 could put more pressure on the labour-management relationship, which the union says is already strained. We have to keep that in mind.

He says that officers are placed on leave without pay, sometimes for a year or more, pending the outcome of investigations. He also notes that customs officers frequently work overtime and can be exhausted, which does not help. We need to ensure that customs officers have adequate resources, which the Bloc Québécois often asks for, considering the government's lack of interest in our borders. We

### *Government Orders*

have been asking for this frequently and for a long time. The Bloc Québécois would like the union to be involved in the process that leads to passing Bill C-20, particularly in committee.

• (1700)

The staffing shortage at the CBSA is a well-known problem. This is causing delays and tension between officers and travellers. The government will also have to address this problem.

The CBSA has a great deal of power, including the power to detain and search Canadians and to deport people. It is therefore incomprehensible that the CBSA still has no external investigation mechanism.

In its legislative summary, the Library of Parliament cites the case of Maher Arar, a Syrian-Canadian citizen who was arrested during a layover in New York on his way home to Canada.

In 2004, a commission of inquiry into the Arar case led by Justice Dennis O'Connor suggested creating a new civilian agency to oversee the activities of both the RCMP and the CBSA, as I said earlier.

In other words, 18 years later, the CBSA still does not have one. Only the RCMP has this external oversight mechanism. However, the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency is already responsible for overseeing national security activities, and only national security activities.

I want to make it clear that the Bloc Québécois is not putting the blame on CBSA or RCMP officers as a whole, nor is it putting the CBSA on trial. Rather, we feel the government is responsible for the lack of oversight over the CBSA and the lack of transparency, which is inappropriate for such an important agency. We think the Liberals and the Conservatives should be held to account for tolerating all this for so long.

As I said—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I absolutely have to make an announcement before five o'clock.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Foreign Affairs; the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, Public Safety; the hon. member for Spadina—Fort York, Cannabis.

The hon. member for Shefford may continue.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I understand that that is part of the work of Parliament, and I will pick up where I left off.

I repeat that the lack of resources allocated to the agencies does not help. Some customs officers might be exhausted, which can lead to tense situations with certain travellers. A recent CBC article talked about how the number of complaints against CBSA officers has been growing over the past two years and about how a new complaints commission is in the works.

### *Government Orders*

Bill C-20 will replace the oversight body that deals with public complaints against the RCMP with a civilian review and complaints commission that will handle complaints against the RCMP and the CBSA. If Bill C-20 is passed, the new civilian review and complaints commission will be able to look into any CBSA activities that are not related to national security, either on its own initiative or at the request of the minister.

Mr. Weber, the union president, said that he would like the new organization to deal with managerial misconduct as well. That is important to note. He also mentioned that if a complaint points to a systemic issue, the commission should tackle that issue rather than focusing on the one person the traveller interacted with. He stated that CBSA officers are often stuck working mandatory overtime and process hundreds of people a day.

The number of misconduct investigations of border officers grew last year, despite a dramatic reduction in international travel due to the pandemic. The misconduct primarily involved granting permits or disrespecting travellers, to name just a couple of examples. The Canada Border Services Agency reported 215 founded investigations of its officers last year, compared to 171 in 2019. We can see that there was an increase. However, that increase came after border restrictions were put in place to control the pandemic. The number of trips into and out of Canada dropped significantly, yet the number of complaints increased.

Last year, the total number of recorded trips in and out of the country by air and land was just over 25 million, a far cry from the nearly 94 million trips logged in 2019. The agency noted, however, that not all of the misconduct cases involved travel. The case numbers vary year by year, and it is important to note that not all misconduct is connected to public complaints or international travel, according to CBSA spokesperson Rebecca Purdy. Jean-Pierre Fortin, former national president of the Customs and Immigration Union, also pointed out that some ports of entry still had high amounts of traffic over the past year.

Third, looking at it from the complainants' perspective, the 200 or so investigations conducted last year resulted in 170 officers being reprimanded, largely with temporary suspensions. Just eight CBSA officers have been fired since 2018, according to an access to information request obtained by CBC News. One officer was let go for interfering in the immigration process. The internal investigation revealed that he had tried to help an immigration lawyer by illegally removing material from a client's file that would have raised questions and issuing a temporary residence permit. Other officers have been let go for belittling clients, making inappropriate comments towards co-workers, abusing their authority and sharing private CBSA information.

The border agency, which employs about 14,000 people, said discipline is managed on a case-by-case basis and is based on the severity of the allegations coupled with mitigating and aggravating factors. The CBSA's statements have done very little to convince Janet Dench of the Canadian Council for Refugees. She believes that there is a need for independent oversight and that there are probably more cases of abuse that we are not currently aware of. This is just the tip of the iceberg, if you will. Ms. Dench is pushing for outside, independent oversight of the CBSA, which is the only

public safety agency in Canada without an independent oversight body. She calls the current set-up ineffective.

A bill that would have expanded the mandate of the civilian body that handles public complaints about the RCMP to also cover the CBSA failed to clear the Senate before the end of the last parliamentary session. The federal government has yet to reintroduce the bill, but the CBSA said that, so far this year, it has opened 41 founded investigations, resulting in three terminations.

Documents obtained by CBC through an access to information request showed that, over a two-year period from January 2016 to mid-2018, the CBSA received 1,200 complaints about its own employees, including potential cases of harassment and misconduct. The number of complaints deemed founded was not disclosed, nor was information provided about measures taken to resolve the founded complaints, which included 59 allegations of harassment, 38 allegations of criminal association and five allegations of sexual assault. As the status of women critic, this really concerns me.

A woman deported to Guatemala alleged that CBSA officers seriously injured her by pushing her to the ground and kneeling on her back. The CBSA did not confirm whether its agents used force to arrest the woman in this specific case.

● (1705)

Data provided to The Canadian Press through the Access to Information Act show that between 2017 and 2018, 105 cases of complaints of officer misconduct were deemed founded, representing about 12% of the 875 misconduct complaints filed in that time.

The International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group says the definition of "founded" is far too vague to help lead to changes within the agency's culture or for the public to be properly informed and that the limited information shows cause for concern, particularly the allegations of racism and name-calling.

According to one of the reports, a female traveller said that a CBSA officer was rude and yelled at her until she passed out. The officers reported that she was found to be in medical distress and received appropriate care. According to the findings of the investigation, the officer did not play a role in the traveller's medical distress. Other travellers filed complaints because interpretation services were not available and they were denied an interpreter. The government is using the example of a Privacy Commissioner report to illustrate why Bill C-20 is necessary.

In conclusion, all of these stories are very familiar to me, since I worked for a member of Parliament from a riding on the border. I took a lot of interest in the fact that governments, both Liberal and Conservative, have cut back on investing in border crossings over the years, creating resource shortages and placing a tremendous amount of additional pressure on staff. When I was working for that member of Parliament, the issue was hours of operation and staffing reductions.



I would like to say one last thing. There needs to be a neutral space to independently analyze the complaints and abuses that could occur in the two agencies affected by the bill we are talking about today. We must also keep in mind that this agency and these officers need to see money being reinvested. We should be concerned about the workers who give their time to this very important agency. We need to restore public confidence because everyone will benefit.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have made reference to this before, how great it is to see that the Bloc and, in fact, all members who have spoken to the legislation thus far are going to be supporting it. That is great. It includes members from all political entities in the House.

I guess what I would ask is related to the importance of establishing and reinforcing public confidence. When I think of the commission that is being created here to deal with both the Canada border control and the RCMP, its independence and the ability of the chairperson to be able to come up with a disposition in situations where it is warranted, where inappropriate behaviour, for example, has taken place, I see that as a very strong thing, because it reinforces public confidence in the system.

I am wondering if the member could provide her thoughts with regard to how important it is to have a public that is confident in the system itself.

• (1710)

[Translation]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Winnipeg North for his question, which is central to the concerns that resulted in this bill.

Unfortunately, since the start of my mandate, I have too often worked on files concerning the issue of independent investigation, as in the case of the Canadian Armed Forces. Reports and studies have shown for many years that there needs to be an independent process so that investigations of allegations of assault can be conducted outside of the armed forces, in a neutral space.

I have also had the opportunity to stand in for my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matap dia on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, where I saw the same thing. When I was there, we were studying cases of abuse in the RCMP, and we asked that investigations be conducted independently so that the public would once again trust the RCMP.

That is also what athletes are currently asking for, in particular the gymnasts who came to testify yesterday at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. They want an independent and neutral space where victims can report assaults with the utmost confidence.

These are very delicate issues that can leave victims highly vulnerable. It is not easy to call out this type of situation. The victims must have full confidence in the system. This is really a crucial issue, and it is at the heart of the bill.

### Government Orders

[English]

**Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this was a Liberal promise back in 2015. The Conservatives are for this bill, which is being processed through right now. It has been before the House twice already. It has died both times.

I am wondering if you are optimistic and hopeful that this time, we are going to get this through successfully—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mend s):** I will remind the hon. member that he speaks through the Chair.

**Mr. Doug Shipley:** Madam Speaker, are you optimistic that it is going to get through this time and become the good bill that it is needed to be?

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

**Mr. Doug Shipley:** Madam Speaker, the Conservatives will be supporting this. We will be reviewing it at the committee, which I sit on. I am looking forward to that. Maybe we could hear a few words about that.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, judging from your magnificent smile, I have every reason to believe you are optimistic this bill will pass. Your body language suggests complete confidence.

I thank my colleague for his question. I certainly hope so, given the many studies that have come out.

As I said earlier, we have had reports for such a long time, be it for the Canadian Armed Forces or the RCMP. Even for Canadian Heritage and Sport Canada, we are awaiting studies.

In 2022, now that we have seen far too many cases in various federal agencies, I hope we have reached that point. It is not just my hope, it is my belief that we are at that point. It is important to take concrete steps to bring about the cultural shifts we need to see.

I hope I have shared Madam Speaker's optimism that this bill will pass and become law.

[English]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I, too, welcome the progress of this bill, even though it is at a snail's pace.

Having a review commission with CBSA would allow us to examine some of its questionable practices, one of which I want to ask the member for Shefford about today. CBSA routinely places refugees and migrants in detention, most often in provincial jails. That is often several thousand people a year. Four provinces, B.C., Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia, have cancelled their contracts for placing people in detention. Quebec has not.

Does the member for Shefford support CBSA's policy of routinely placing migrants and refugees in provincial corrections facilities in Quebec?

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, but I am going to split it into two and try to answer both parts quickly.

First, on the question of time, I realize that I did not answer sufficiently in my previous response. We can only denounce the fact that this bill is still not in place and that there have been delays in getting this common-sense bill passed. The Liberals, like the Conservatives, have been slow and have decreased investments so much in border crossings and services that we have ended up in a situation where staff are overworked, tired and exhausted, which does not help matters. I really want to emphasize those two aspects.

On the other point, one thing is certain. Migrants must be treated with dignity. I would like to emphasize once again the issue of the safe third country agreement. What should be at the heart of everything related to refugees is that behind the number of refugees arriving at our borders, there are people, there are faces. They are human beings who absolutely must be treated with dignity. Unfortunately, this is not happening under that agreement.

• (1715)

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from Shefford on yet another brilliant speech.

We gladly welcome the creation of the PCRC. Let me share an anecdote. I have an old friend who is a Canadian citizen, but is originally from Martinique. She has family there and often flies there and back. Nine times out of 10, she is taken aside at customs and she or her luggage is searched. She told me that it made no sense and that it was about racism, that it made no sense for her to be selected. She does not look like a criminal or a trafficker in any way, but nine times out of 10, she is searched at customs.

In my entire life, I have had to open my suitcases only once. I hope that I am not drawing attention to myself. I talked about this with an employee at the Canada Border Services Agency, and he said that my friend was just unlucky.

My question for my colleague from Shefford is this: At the same time that the PCRC is being created, should we not also be asking the Canada Border Services Agency to do some soul-searching? Should the CBSA not be doing some work on training its employees on the reality of racism?

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I thank my most hon. colleague from Drummond for his question and commend him for all of his work.

I will come back to what he said, but, as I said in my speech, there is also a part of the bill that will enable us to better document these cases of racism and to collect data. I spoke about it in my speech, but I thank my colleague for bringing me back to the subject.

It is thanks to that data that we will be able to make changes. It takes facts and figures to get an overall picture of what is happening, and that is what the bill will enable us to do, so that we can avoid the type of situation that his friend has all too often experienced.

We all have stories about times when it was more complicated to cross the border than usual. Having worked for an MP who had border crossings in his riding, I heard some pretty crazy things. This bill will enable us to document it all to prevent this sort of situation from happening. I hope that the CBSA will do some soul-searching so that it can build public trust.

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivi re-des-Mille- les, BQ):** Madam Speaker, when we talk about borders, a whole range of topics or themes comes to mind. That has often been problematic. There is the issue of vaccination, the whole COVID period, what the Americans wanted and what we did not want, Roxham Road, third countries, wait times, trust between the two governments and so on. In short, the border is typically a problem or a source of conflict between the United States and Canada. I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on this.

Why has the current government not succeeded in reducing border-related tensions over the past seven years?

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche:** Madam Speaker, I would say that this lack of interest by federal governments goes back much further than seven years. From 2007 to 2011, I was an assistant to a member of Parliament who had border crossings in his riding, and even back then, there was tension. It was palpable.

As we saw during the pandemic, the government does not seem concerned about our border crossings and has failed to competently manage what happens there. It was clear that it did not pay enough attention to this issue. This is one of the criticisms that can be levelled at the government. We saw it during the pandemic, the borders were real—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mend s):** Order. We have to resume debate.

The hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

• (1720)

[*English*]

**Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for South Surrey—White Rock this evening.

It is an honour to rise in Parliament today to speak on behalf of the residents of Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

I am pleased that the government has finally brought up Bill C-20 for debate. The bill seeks to create the independent public complaints review commission to review complaints against RCMP and CBSA employees. This proposed commission aims to replace the current review body for the RCMP and create, for the first time, an independent review body and forum for complaints about the conduct of CBSA employees.

The brave men and women who wear the RCMP and CBSA uniforms are tasked with protecting our borders, our national security and our safety. The immense responsibility that comes with this line of work requires oversight. The creation of a coherent, independent oversight body for the RCMP and the CBSA is certainly necessary. Hopefully, this is something that all Canadians can agree on.

While Conservatives are supportive of the intent of this legislation, I cannot help but be concerned that the bill will suffer the same fate that previous iterations of it have in the past. Both Bill C-98 in the 42nd Parliament and Bill C-3 in the 43rd Parliament died on the Order Paper despite Conservatives supporting both bills in an efficient manner.

This government claims that the creation of oversight bodies for all federal law enforcement agencies has been a priority since 2015. If that is the case, then why has this legislation, which would accomplish that goal, died on the Order Paper, not once, but twice.

Another concern of mine with the bill is the apparent lack of consultation with stakeholders. When Bill C-98 was introduced in 2019, and when Bill C-3 was introduced in 2020, many stakeholders, especially the union that represents CBSA officers, spoke out about the fact that they were not consulted in the drafting stages of this legislation. Once again, we are hearing from indigenous communities that they were not consulted in the drafting process, and the government has made no assurances that there will be indigenous representation and leadership positions on the review commission.

Before discussing the specific merits of the bill, I want to acknowledge and thank all the public safety professionals who work tirelessly to protect our national security and ensure the safety of all Canadians.

My colleagues and I on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security have heard repeatedly that our border agents are strained due to a lack of funding and resources, and that both the RCMP and CBSA face critical labour shortages. We saw evidence of that in the past year with travel delays affecting individuals across the country. Just recently, the union representing CBSA employees said that it needs between 1,000 and 3,000 new hires to process travellers entering the country efficiently.

Another example of the impact of labour resource shortages at the CBSA comes from testimony that my colleagues and I heard at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. Mark Weber, the national president of the Customs and Immigration Union, told us that, as of 2019, only one-millionth of rail cargo was effectively being examined by the CBSA. According to him, due to this lack of capacity, there is almost a zero per cent chance that any illegal weapons that enter the country by rail will ever be found. With a 92% increase in gang-related homicides since 2015, it is clear that resources must be turned towards stopping the illegal guns that are smuggled across our border from the United States.

Conservatives believe that to protect our borders and national security, the CBSA needs appropriate resources in both manpower and equipment for officers to do their job effectively. We must lis-

### *Government Orders*

ten to the needs of our frontline public safety professionals and ensure they have all the resources they need to protect Canadians.

I also want to draw attention to the mental health issue that our frontline public safety professionals are facing on a daily basis.

A few weeks ago, I met with representatives from the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment, which does outstanding work to promote the mental health of public safety professionals, including CBSA and RCMP officers. They made it clear that the toll of the work these individuals do places an unprecedented strain on their mental health, and supporting their mental health is critically important. According to them, nearly half of public safety professionals experience symptoms consistent with one or more mental disorders, and one in 10 will attempt to die by suicide. Investments in the mental health of our public safety professionals and ensuring that the departments they work for are being properly resourced would be a welcomed step towards public confidence in our institutions.

• (1725)

There are aspects of this legislation that my Conservative colleagues and I support fully. We believe that an independent review commission would improve oversight and help both CBSA and RCMP officers be more effective in their roles as stewards of public safety.

In 2021, the Standing Committee for Public Safety and National Security, which colleagues past and present have done excellent work on, released a report entitled “Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada”. One of our recommendations from that study was to make drastic changes to the public complaints system for the RCMP. I am pleased to see that recommendation addressed in this bill. However, during the previously mentioned study, committee members heard repeatedly that the RCMP commissioner failed to respond to reports from the RCMP’s current Civilian Review and Complaints Commission and complaints themselves faced massive delays.

Just recently, in 2021, a British Colombian civil liberties group sued RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki, arguing, as reported, that “the time it takes her to respond to public complaints is undermining police accountability.”

### *Government Orders*

Conservatives are committed to finding solutions to these accountability and oversight issues, which are clearly prevalent. The government must take steps to ensure that complaints are addressed expeditiously. As I mentioned previously, public safety professionals are often faced with psychological stress due to their working conditions. For example, CBSA employees must routinely search vehicles, persons and belongings to ensure the safety of our borders and prevent criminal activity such as drug smuggling and trafficking. These officers should have clear guidelines on what is expected of them, so they may feel confident carrying out the duties of their positions without fear of reprisal. While these changes appear to be promising, I would like to ensure that the commissions complaints process is fair and balanced.

As I mentioned, this system should be efficient, but this system should also be cautious and thoughtful when dealing with complaints and when recommending disciplinary actions. Bill C-20 would require the public complaints and review commission to submit an annual report to the Minister of Public Safety, with a summary of all complaints and anonymized data about complainants.

Bill C-20 also aims to raise public awareness about the complaint process through education and information campaigns. Easily available and clear information about the public complaints and review commission would ensure that complainants are not bogged down by endless bureaucracy when trying to put forth a complaint. I agree that these measures would ensure greater transparency and confidence in our law enforcement agencies.

While I applaud the steps that the CBSA and RCMP have already taken to address and prevent discrimination, such as anti-racism and anti-bias training, some measures in this bill, such as the collection of disaggregated data, are a promising step towards addressing disproportionate outcomes in Canada's law enforcement and criminal justice system. However, to reiterate, I am concerned about the government's lack of consultation with indigenous communities while drafting this legislation. The government should always consult with stakeholders who will be affected by its legislation while it is being drafted rather than placing the onus on committees to do that work for them after it has been tabled.

Finally, I would like to ensure that this review commission is free from political interference. Time and time again, RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki has been subject of political controversy and accused of political interference, most recently with the enactment of the Emergencies Act and the investigation of the Nova Scotia mass shooting.

Conservatives see clearly that there is a pattern with the government's tendency to interfere in RCMP investigations. We must ensure that we take steps to restrain the ministers' authority over this commission and that it remains wholly independent. Canadians could not trust the government to stay away from court proceedings and RCMP investigations in the past. How do we know they will stay away from this commission?

Our frontline public safety professionals do outstanding work and often put themselves in danger on the job. I want to thank them once again for keeping the public safe, day in and day out. Canadians are right to expect an oversight body for federal law enforce-

ment agencies that is efficient, effective and rigorous. Conservatives are certainly supportive of this principle.

My Conservative colleagues and I are cautiously optimistic about this legislation. I look forward to studying it in committee with my colleagues across all parties.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to follow up on a thread that I started with his colleague from Langley—Aldergrove, which is testing the theory that we can interdict our way out of dealing with drugs, guns or other things coming across our borders.

I have done some research and the U.S. border between Canada and the U.S., the longest undefended border in the world, has 12 million vehicles cross it every year. That includes Canadian vehicles going into the U.S. and coming back, and U.S. vehicles coming in. That is about a million vehicles per month. I have already pointed out that at the Port of Vancouver we have about 1,450,000 containers every year that the CBSA cannot inspect.

Does my colleague really think that interdiction at either the Canada-U.S. border or at ports is going to make a serious dent, or would a wise policy of trying to go after these goods that are coming across our borders, or do we need—

• (1730)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

**Mr. Doug Shipley:** Madam Speaker, I believe in deterrence. As I mentioned earlier in my speech, we had someone from our rail institution saying one one-millionth of all cargo that comes across is checked. I think that is just atrocious. That is a ridiculous number. I cannot even fathom what that is. It is next to nothing.

There is a common saying in law enforcement that we want voluntary compliance of the law, and I believe that if there is some deterrence and some fear, quite frankly, at the border crossing that one could get caught, then yes, I think people would stop doing it.

I think right now our unattended border is poorly managed. Being from just north of Toronto, I hear constantly, and we studied it recently in our committee, about the issue with illegal guns coming across our border. We need to do something about it. We cannot just throw up our arms and say, "Come across." Yes, we do need to have some deterrence there, and we do—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry. I do need to allow time for more questions.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I find it tough. The member said that there are illegal firearms coming across our border and we need to do something. Members will remember Stephen Harper and what he did. He reduced the amount of border crossing support, ultimately not recognizing the importance of properly funding Canada border control, and we actually lost agents.

My question is more so in regard to that, at the end of the day, we are talking about bad apples. There are bad apples in border control and the RCMP, but the overwhelming majority, whether it is the RCMP officer or the border control agent, should be complimented for the efforts they put forward day-in and day-out, 24 hours a day. During this debate, I do not think we should lose perspective of that. Would the member not agree that this commission would assist in restoring and adding value to the public confidence in the—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am chairing here, so if anybody else is interested in doing that, they may want to approach their leader.

The hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

**Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I do have to mention I grew up in a law enforcement environment. My father has been, for 32 years, on the Ontario Provincial Police, so I have nothing but the utmost respect for law enforcement, and I mentioned that many times in my speech. Yes, I agree that there are bad apples in every organization. Hopefully this commission and this oversight will help weed out that, and the people who put on that uniform day-in and day-out and do a great job will be proud to have it.

As you mentioned, the bad apples would be weeded out, and that is why the legislation is here. I look forward to it coming into effect and going forward with it.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I remind the member that he is to address all questions and comments through the Chair.

The hon. member for Shefford.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to build on the question my colleague asked earlier.

When I worked as the assistant to the member for Brome—Misisquoi, the president of the Customs and Immigration Union, Jean-Pierre Fortin, visited our office. In the early 2000s, we saw the negative effects of the Conservative government's cuts to border crossings. Those cuts created a lot of extremely frustrating situations for the workers.

My colleague brought up the issue of illegal weapons at the border and how it is important to better control them. I would like to hear what he has to say about that.

[*English*]

**Mr. Doug Shipley:** Madam Speaker, I do have to apologize, but I had a very tough time hearing the question. I think the question was about the commission overall, and yes the Conservatives are in favour of it. We are looking forward to it being in place. It has been a long time overdue. It was a promise in 2015, and it is time to bring it in now.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to bring a British Columbian perspective to the debate on Bill C-20, the public complaints and review commission act. This legislation would create a framework for reviewing complaints against Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers and Canada Border Services agents.

These law enforcement professionals work tirelessly to keep our communities safe, and they deserve the respect and support of this House. Unfortunately, the federal government is complacent about protecting Canadians, making a difficult job even harder for border agents and RCMP officers. B.C. cities, including my home of Surrey, are facing an onslaught of crime, including gang activity, property damage and violence.

It is no wonder. In 2019, the Liberals passed legislation that directed a principle of restraint when imposing bail conditions. Under this soft-on-crime policy, police are often forced to release known criminals on a promise that they will show up in court, a practice known as catch and release.

This approach is not working in B.C. Last December, in Surrey, a man with a criminal record of 23 convictions of assault attacked a mother and her 11-month-old child. Also last year, another man stole a ferry vessel from Victoria harbour. He was arrested, released and later caught shattering the windows and doors of local businesses. In Kelowna, one man is responsible for 346 complaints to local police in the last six years, leading to 29 convictions for assault and property crime. This is not unusual.

The BC Urban Mayors' Caucus has sounded the alarm bells, calling for action to prevent this cycle of crime. The Surrey Board of Trade, an organization normally associated with economic development in my region, is expressing its concern with crime on the streets. It recently said:

The economic development of any community relies upon its reputation as a safe, viable region in which to locate and do business, with supporting infrastructure, community assets and, most importantly, customers willing to walk in the door. However, if customers feel unsafe, they won't come. If the reputation of a region is suspect, businesses won't come.

*Government Orders*

The breakdown of public safety has hit my community of South Surrey—White Rock and nearby areas hard, but the problem extends far beyond B.C. It is a national mess. We all watched with horror this summer the mass killing on James Smith Cree First Nation in Saskatchewan. The perpetrator had been charged with over 120 crimes and convicted 59 times, but none of that prevented him from taking 10 indigenous lives.

To make matters worse, the Liberals have rewritten sentencing for serious crimes, putting criminals back on the street sooner than they ought to be. They lowered sentences for crimes like assault with a weapon, abduction of a minor and participation in the activities of a criminal organization, making these crimes eligible for summary convictions. The Prime Minister expanded house arrest for other serious offences, including sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, motor vehicle theft and arson.

The government is also failing when it comes to gang prevention. Just yesterday, a prominent member of the Indo-Canadian community in Surrey—

• (1735)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, forgive me, but I rise on a point of order. This is completely off topic. The issue we are talking about is directly with respect to the oversight bodies that are going to be set up for the CBSA and the RCMP. The member, like so many Conservative members who have spoken today, has gone way off topic. Perhaps the Speaker could encourage the member to get back on topic.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that there is some latitude during the debate. However, I would also remind parliamentarians that when they are debating, the subject matter needs to relate to the bill before the House. I assume they will make sure they mention the bill during their speeches.

The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Madam Speaker, in response, I take great offence to the member's point of order, because I mentioned the bill at the beginning. I set it out. I am talking about the kinds of things RCMP officers and border services agents, who will be the subject of these complaints, are dealing with on a daily basis. What they deal with on a daily basis is very relevant to why we should have a complaints commission, and that is exactly what I am talking about.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I again want to remind members that there is some latitude. I also want to remind them that this is not about mentioning the bill just once. Throughout the debate, members can bring it back to parts of the bill, but we need to try to make sure that the information being provided is as closely related to the bill as possible.

The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock.

• (1740)

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Madam Speaker, I am going to repeat a bit because of the interruption.

Just yesterday, a prominent member of the Indo-Canadian community in Surrey told me of significant gaps in the evaluation of

gang prevention programs. He noted that some programs have not been evaluated since 2012. That is 10 years ago. He asked, "How can you monitor effectiveness, assess performance targets or implementation lessons learned if you continually lag behind in program evaluation?"

The government likes to make announcements with big dollar figures, but if the money does not help at-risk youth access employment and deal with their trauma, then the government is failing. Just last week, with the support of the NDP, the Liberals eliminated mandatory prison time for serious gun crimes, including robbery or extortion with a firearm, weapons trafficking, discharging a firearm with intent, using a firearm in the commission of a crime, and reckless discharge of a firearm.

While the Prime Minister is bringing in bills like Bill C-20 and letting drive-by shooters and gunrunners back into our community, he had the gall to come to Surrey recently to announce new gun control measures. His plan targets legal firearms owners, including hunters, sport shooters and collectors, forcing them to hand over their property to the government. On the one hand, he is punishing and confiscating the assets of law-abiding citizens, and on the other, he is giving criminals a break. It does not make sense.

Meanwhile, in the middle of the opioid crisis, the Prime Minister eliminated mandatory prison time for drug dealers. For context, over 31,000 Canadians have lost their lives to overdose since he became Prime Minister. Now the crime of producing heroin, cocaine, fentanyl or crystal meth is not subject to a mandatory minimum sentence. The same goes for drug smuggling and drug trafficking. What are the 13 NDP MPs from B.C. doing about it? They voted for this reckless plan.

All of this comes as the violent crime rate is spiking to a level not seen since the end of the Chrétien-Martin era. It is up 32% since the Liberals took office. Just last month in Burnaby, Constable Shaelyn Yang was stabbed to death. My thoughts and prayers remain with her family and the B.C. policing community.

The member with whom I am sharing time today, the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, just had the heartbreaking job of attending the funerals of two Barrie police officers who were killed in the line of duty in October. He knows the pain that this tragedy inflicted on his community and beyond. These stories are becoming commonplace in Canada.

Under the watch of the Liberal Party, homicide rates are up nearly 30%, gang-related murders are up 92% and sexual assaults have increased by 61%. Police-reported hate crimes have increased 72% over the last two years. I will be unequivocal—

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, we have Bill C-5 before us, which deals with minimum sentences. We have Bill C-21, which deals with guns. Now the member is going over some statistics. I realize there is a great deal of latitude. I am just pointing out that she might want to save parts of her speech for other pieces of legislation that are more—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Again, I want to remind the member, which he mentioned himself, that there is some latitude with this type of bill. I have the bill before me, and there is a lot that can be brought forward during the debate based on the bill. I want to remind members to please be respectful.

The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock can continue.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Madam Speaker, I have faith in your pronouncements, not in the heckling from the other side.

I will be unequivocal. Our justice system is broken and the blame rests with the Prime Minister. He changed the system to cater to the sensibilities of left-wing activists who want to defund the police, rather than support communities who want safe streets for their children and grandchildren. The new justice system puts criminals first and the victims last. It took the justice minister almost a year to appoint a new victims ombudsperson. It puts the wants of one offender ahead of the needs of a whole community. It frees the felon while tying the hands of law enforcement.

Despite these challenges, the RCMP in White Rock and Surrey do yeoman's work to serve and protect the residents of my riding, as do the CBSA agents who work at the Peace Arch and Pacific Highway border crossings, which includes dealing with migrants illegally crossing into Canada daily, not at points of entry. They are the first line of defence for my community against human trafficking and the illegal importation of guns and drugs.

The Liberals threw CBSA a curve ball last year when they implemented the costly and ineffective ArriveCAN app. Their \$54-million boondoggle frustrated travelling seniors, hampered our tourism sector and put border agents in the untenable position of enforcing the mandatory use of the app. As always, CBSA agents conducted themselves with professionalism.

With that said, the public should always have a right to question the decisions and actions of any law enforcement agency, including the RCMP and CBSA. We lean into and support these agencies, but also believe in transparency and accountability. That is why Conservatives will support Bill C-20. This legislation requires the RCMP and CBSA to share information related to public complaints with a new body, the public complaints and review commission. The commission would make recommendations for potential disciplinary action to the relevant law enforcement agency with legislated timelines to respond.

The bill would require both the RCMP and CBSA to report on actions taken in response to the commission's recommendations. The legislation would also require the commission to report disaggregated race-based data to Parliament.

While I will vote for the bill, I am taking this opportunity to raise a word of caution. We cannot allow our public safety institutions to erode any further. Come the next election, whenever that may be, voters in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island can count

on Conservatives to clean up the mess made of our cities and of our borders. We will restore safe streets and protect the rights of victims.

I have been talking about Bill C-20 throughout.

• (1745)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, with all due respect, she did not. What she did was she talked about guns, she talked about various different crimes, and she talked about her position on this government, which is all very important. I listened to her speech from beginning to end, and there were only two or three sentences at about the nine-minute and 30-second mark where she actually brought it back to the bill by saying that what we are going to vote on is the oversight on all of this stuff.

I am wondering if she would like to take the opportunity now to comment on why it is important to have this oversight committee set up to look into the conduct, the actions and, indeed, the complaints brought forward. That is what this bill is really about.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Madam Speaker, it is actually a commission, not a committee. I do not believe the member, who kept referring to me as “she” as opposed to being more respectful and using the term of either “member” or even my riding, was listening to my speech.

The whole point of my speech was that we are supporting Bill C-20. We believe in transparency and accountability. We believe the idea of a commission to put forward complaints, filter through and facilitate them is a good idea, but it was also to point out the very hard work and challenges that both the RCMP and CBSA agents face on a daily basis. That was the point.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one thing we could all agree on in this place is that the tragedy of the opioid overdose crisis is something that is of concern to everybody.

I would point out, though, that opioid overdose deaths did not begin in 2015. I represent Vancouver Kingsway, and in the Lower Mainland thousands of people died of the opioid overdose crisis before that. I would posit that one of the reasons, if we talked to the families of people who died, is that most of these people were getting their drugs from organized crime, which does not care at all about the drugs being sold. They are buying tainted, dangerous drugs on the street from organized crime, and this is the cause of their death.

I am just wondering. What would my hon. colleague say to that? Does she think that we could interdict our way out of that?

*Private Members' Business*

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Do not call her “she”. She gets offended by that.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Pardon me, Madam Speaker. Does the hon. member believe that—

● (1750)

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We all heard it. I would just ask that this member apologize.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I only heard the member for Vancouver Kingsway commit the same sin that I did and that was to accidentally call the member “she”. I apologize.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I just want to remind members to be respectful of each other, and I am going to leave it at that. I think it is not appropriate to get into a debate about the word “she” at this point. I know that the hon. member was referring to the member, so I think that this is all an interpretation.

The hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway can finish his question.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Madam Speaker, I certainly meant no disrespect.

Does the hon. member believe that we can interdict our way out of this problem? What does she think about the prospect of trying a new approach, other than the failed war on drugs, to try to make sure that people can at least get the drugs they are addicted to from a pharmacy or some other place where they can be assured that the quality of the drugs they are getting will not kill them?

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Madam Speaker, we believe, on this side of the House, in trying to help lives lost to drugs. We believe in recovery. We believe in helping people make better choices and get to better places in their lives, so that they can get back to being productive. We also believe in being compassionate. I have spent a lot of my volunteer time, over many years now, working with recovery programs and working with those who are the subject of addiction, something that touches on so many lives in Canada and so many of us here in the House and our families.

I appreciate the respect that the member for Vancouver Kingsway showed me in the way he spoke to me, as opposed to the previous member from the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

I am just going to relate my question to the previous comment from the NDP, where he talked about people who are gang members poisoning our people with drugs. I wonder if my hon. colleague would comment on the fact that the NDP is similarly, at the same time, lowering sentences for people who are doing this very pernicious activity and inserting this risk into the community.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Madam Speaker, my friend, also having been a prosecutor before he came to this place, is well aware of the havoc that is wrought by drug dealers, drug smugglers and those who would traffic to our children and even incorporate

them into gang life at a very young age, partly through getting them addicted to drugs.

Yes, it is very serious that the NDP are supporting the Liberals in their soft-on-crime approach.

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity, as the member of Parliament for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, to speak in this debate on second reading of Bill C-20, an act establishing the public complaints and review commission and amending certain acts and statutory instruments.

Bill C-20 would enact a new stand-alone statute establishing a public complaints and review commission for both the RCMP and the CBSA, replacing the existing civilian review and complaints commission for the RCMP. The bill would also enact additional accountability and transparency mechanisms, including codifying timelines for RCMP and CBSA responses to PCRC interim reports, reviews and recommendations. The bill also includes a provision for mandatory annual reporting by the RCMP and CBSA on actions taken in response to the PCRC recommendations, as well as provisions for mandatory reporting of disaggregated race-based data by the PCRC.

The bill would provide for a mandatory PCRC public education and information program. The bill would provide a statutory framework for governing the CBSA responses to serious incidents. I would like to provide—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It being 5:54 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper. The hon. member will have eight minutes and 15 seconds the next time this matter is before the House.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1755)

[*Translation*]

### PENSION PROTECTION ACT

The House resumed from November 18 consideration of the motion that Bill C-228, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985, be read the third time and passed.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton for introducing Bill C-228, which seeks to protect our workers' and our seniors' pensions.



I would like to begin by describing the current situation. Right now, companies offer pension plans with specific eligibility criteria and benefits. However, when such a company goes bankrupt, the pension plans may not contain enough money to cover the cost of all the promises the company made to its employees. That has happened a number of times in this country's history. One example is Nortel, once the largest employer in the national capital in Ottawa. When that tech giant went bankrupt, the pension funds were insufficient. There was not enough money to pay the pensions promised to the company's retirees. Many employees have asked me why the company was not required to use the proceeds of the sale of its assets to make up that shortfall.

Under the legislation that was in place at the time and is still in force today, in the event of bankruptcy or insolvency, a company must sell all its assets and pay back anyone who has loaned it money and all the individuals or entities to whom it owes money. Obviously, when a company goes bankrupt, it does not have enough money to pay all its creditors, and this means that some people will lose out. Those who lose out may be the banks that have loaned money to the business or the suppliers to the business that have not been paid. In some cases, it could be the pensioners, because there is not enough money in the pension fund to pay the promised pensions.

There is no good solution, and inevitably, some people will lose out. In most cases, it is good people who lose out when there are bankruptcies. Also, when a bankruptcy occurs, pensions are in a difficult situation, because big companies typically go bankrupt when the economy is in bad shape or when stock markets are falling. It is possible that both situations may happen at the same time, depriving the pension funds of the money needed to pay out the pensions.

Businesses should obviously set aside sufficient funds to guarantee that, in the event of bankruptcy or falling stock markets, it will have enough money to fund these pensions. However, right now, businesses do not have to pay these pension liabilities before paying other creditors. That is legal and the courts decide who gets what.

Some are opposed to the idea of giving priority to pension funds as the bill proposes. They believe that this will make it more difficult for a business to raise money from investors and get loans from banks. Bankers will not want to lend them money because, in the event of bankruptcy, the money will go to the pension fund. It is true that it will be more difficult to repay other creditors if the pension fund does not have enough money, but this bill would incentivize CEOs to properly fund their pension fund so that investors will be confident that, in the event of a bankruptcy, the money will be there.

● (1800)

Personally, I think this bill is not only compassionate towards people who have worked and expected to receive this money, but also a way to force the market to consider whether the pension fund is adequate today, not 20 years from now, when the company declares bankruptcy.

### *Private Members' Business*

This will force CEOs to invest enough money today to secure the future and the retirement of their workers. If they want to get loans, they will have to prove themselves to the market.

People who work their entire lives and are promised a pension should receive it, and that is why the official opposition will support this bill and we will work to bring it into force.

[English]

I would like to thank the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton, who represents working-class people in her constituency. We know of the grand refineries that do so much of the necessary energy refining for Ontario and that turn our raw materials into final end-use products. These are the hard-working people who should be able to count on their pensions. That is why our colleague, the member for Sarnia—Lambton, has brought this initiative forward.

As a quick background, right now, when a company goes bankrupt, all the creditors are roughly on equal footing unless they have secured credit and unless they have collateralized their loan against a particular asset within a company. This means the money can run out as the liquidation happens before a pension shortfall is corrected. This happened to Nortel when it went bankrupt in Ottawa: The largest private sector employer at the time went bankrupt and the pension fund was down. Often, bankruptcies happen when the economy crashes, and that is just when the stock market crashes, which means the funds invested in the pension fund drop dramatically. That awful convergence of factors means that pensioners could be down 30%, 40% or 50%.

This bill would put pensioners at the top of the list and give them superpriority in the event of bankruptcy so that when assets are sold, the pension fund gets made whole before other creditors get paid. Some will say this will make it harder for businesses to raise money. That is only the case if their pension is not properly funded. If it is funded properly, the investor will not have to worry about being knocked back behind the pensioners in the event of bankruptcy. The pension fund will already have sufficient dollars with a significant buffer that will protect the viability of the pensioners, and all the other creditors will be in the same position they were without this bill.

What the bill would do is incentivize CEOs to make the investments today to make sure their pension funds are in good shape down the road. What happened during the 2008 financial crisis was similar to when Warren Buffet said: When the tide goes out, we find out who was not wearing a bathing suit. That is the case with pension funds. When the tide goes out and the economy crashes, we find out which companies were not investing enough in the viability of their plans. They are then in trouble and are looking for a bailout from everyone else, including the workers who have to take a shortfall.

*Private Members' Business*

I would like to think that CEOs today would put aside the money for that ugly day down the road when there is a recession so that if God forbid they go bankrupt or God forbid the markets crash, their pension fund is secured. This bill would incentivize them to do that. If they do not, lenders will be worried about lending to them. A lender would go to them and say, "Listen, I would like to buy your bonds or give you a directed loan, but I'm concerned that your pension fund isn't fully solid and that I would fall behind that fund in the event of a bankruptcy." That would put real-time, immediate pressure on the management of every country to solidify its pension funds in the here and now while times are good in order to raise debt and raise capital for the future.

It is for that reason, and for the reason that we must be compassionate to those who have worked hard all their lives, who are counting on those pensions to pay for their golden years and who have earned them, that we have made a promise and that the promise will be kept. That is why the Conservatives are proud to be supporting the bill by our fellow colleague, the member for Sarnia—Lambton, to secure and protect the pensions of our hard-working Canadians.

• (1805)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise to speak to the bill that is before us today.

It is really important for us to recognize that Canadians deserve peace of mind when it comes to careers, the amount of effort that is put in and the sense of commitment of workers to employers. I recall many years ago, out in the Transcona area, walking a picket line and talking with a number of individuals who were working for a particular manufacturer. At the time, the amount of money they were receiving, after a number of years working for the company, was a relatively small amount towards a pension. I am talking under the \$500 level. For me, personally, I like to think that over the years—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am going to interrupt.

I would ask members who are having discussions to please take them outside of the chamber out of respect for the members who have the floor.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the point I was trying to make on this is that Canadians from coast to coast to coast invest the most valuable resource we all have, which is time and commitment. When it comes to the work environment, that sacrifice is often made because of the benefits or contributions that are being made toward things like a pension.

I do not think there is anyone in the House who would try to devalue or take away from the importance of pensions. We have, virtually since forming government back in 2015, in many ways taken a look at how we can support Canadians with respect to pensions. It is one of the reasons one of the first actions we took was to reduce the age of eligibility from 67 to 65 for people to collect the OAS. It is one of the reasons we had discussions with all the different stake-

holders, specifically our provinces, to deal with the issue of CPP contributions. Unlike the Conservative Party, we see CPP contributions as a pension, for deferring income to once a person retires.

Much like the defined pension plans we are talking about within this legislation, there is an expectation, and that expectation will be met through CPP contributions. When people in the private sector are contributing toward a pension, there is an obligation for the private sector to contribute to that pension, so that after a person has worked a number of years or however long it might be, they will be entitled to receive those benefits. It is a contract, an agreement of faith in which there is a responsibility for private sector pension plans, defined or not, to be able to maintain that commitment. The unfortunate reality of economics and, I would suggest, poor management by different private sector companies, have led to that contract being violated.

The leader of the Conservative Party made reference to Nortel. Nortel is a good way to amplify the issue, and I think that is why there is a great deal of sympathy toward it. We all agree that we should be doing what we can to increase the protection of these pensions. In Nortel's situation, so much money was lost because the corporation did not do its part in terms of maintaining its contributions to a fund when ultimately the company disappeared. The people who were hurt were the workers.

I like to think that over the years, as a parliamentarian, I have been a very strong advocate for workers. Virtually from day one, back in 1988, when I debated late into the evenings on the issue of final offer selection, from that point to walking picket lines to understanding the importance of advocating for workers and always doing what is in their best interest, that is something I have strived for as a parliamentarian. That is why, when we formed government, I was very pleased with some of the first pieces of legislation we brought forward. They were to protect the workers, albeit through the unions. Bill C-4, for example, repealed two pieces of private members' legislation, and it was good that it did.

We can talk about other commitments that have been made even within this debate with regard to the fall economic statement, where we have the labour mobility tax deduction. We have had a great deal of discussion lately with respect to the whole idea of banning replacement workers in strike or lockout situations, and there is a great expectation from me and others that we will be able to move forward on that file.

• (1810)

We have brought in legislation that has passed on pay equity. As the member will know, when we bring in legislation, especially labour legislation, it is critical that an appropriate amount of consultation has been done. I was interested in listening to the leader of the official opposition when he focused his entire discussion on the pension issue. I respect that because that is what the legislation dealt with, virtually from first reading coming into this, so that, when we had the draw, members had the opportunity to look into it and start doing the things they needed to do to feel comfortable voting on the legislation.

Because the member was effective at working with some of her colleagues, she was even able to get it advanced. I applaud her on taking the initiative to make that happen. To me, it shows her genuine attitude in recognizing, first and foremost, that there is a serious and fundamental problem. There is no one inside the House who would not appreciate this, when we get private sector companies operating in bad faith and not financially supporting those pension funds to the degree they should be supported so that, in the case of a collapse, those funds are not there.

I really look forward to tomorrow when we are going to have the vote on the legislation. Based on the comments I hear, I am anticipating that, in all likelihood, the legislation will be passed. I have not personally made my decision on it, but I can say that I am exceptionally sensitive to the needs of pensions. We in Parliament, and politicians, have a fairly good pension and it is guaranteed. We sacrifice a great deal, but no more than what the factory worker puts on the floor. I want the benefits to which the factory worker is entitled to be realized, as I want the pension of the member herself to ultimately be realized.

The issue of pensions is something that, the older we get, the more we want to focus on. From discussions I have had, I think the government needs to move toward ensuring that our way of life is enhanced as much as possible as we grow older. That is why I support many of the measures that we have taken. I am very much intrigued by what is being proposed before us, and I look forward to the actual vote tomorrow.

• (1815)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Madam Speaker, many expressive words come to mind as I rise to speak to Bill C-228 today in the House, a few hours before voting at third reading. My words are “privilege”, “honour” and “pride”.

Why? As parliamentarians we play a part in history. We have the opportunity to do something historic, namely to correct an injustice that has existed for far too many years by protecting retirement funds, the nest eggs of workers and retirees, in the event of a bankruptcy.

I do not think there should be any hesitation tomorrow when it comes time to vote. We should all stand up unanimously in the House to tell all workers and the unions that have been lobbying for years to convince parliamentarians to remedy this situation that we will finally do them justice. That is my plea today.

I would also like to commend the Conservative member for Sarnia—Lambton and thank her for her bill and for the work that was done on it across party lines with the NDP and my colleague from Manicouagan. It is really something when we are able to work together to advance the rights of workers. I really encourage the Liberals to join us. I heard the parliamentary secretary say in his speech earlier that he was still undecided about tomorrow's vote. What is there to be undecided about? There should be no hesitation on this issue.

If even just one company were to go bankrupt today, the human suffering would be terrible. A company going bankrupt results in job losses, relocations, unemployment and complete reorganization.

### *Private Members' Business*

When, on top of that, a company puts itself under creditor protection and pension plans are insolvent or have not been properly funded, retirees are faced with enormous losses to their pensions.

Consider the Cliffs mine on the north shore, or Nortel, or Aveos. There are situations like these—and this is a long list—where workers and retirees have seen all the savings they socked away during their working years melt away like snow on a sunny day.

We must remember one fundamental thing. Retirement is a deferred salary, compensation that is deferred until retirement. When a company goes bankrupt and that fund is unprotected, thousands of workers are put at risk. This concerns many workers in Canada.

I also really want to commend all the work done by my colleague, the member for Manicouagan. When Cliffs' mine on the north shore went bankrupt, she went to bat, took a stand and worked hard to introduce a bill that would protect pensioners and to ensure that this never happens again. There was one hour of debate, but at least there was debate, because, at the time, the government was against this idea. It made people aware of the fact that this should never happen again. Since then, there have been many such bills, but not one of them has passed and actually fixed the problem.

• (1820)

The latest bill on this subject was introduced by my colleague from Manicouagan in 2021. It was Bill C-372, which passed at second reading and received the committee's unanimous approval. Unfortunately, it died on the Order Paper because a pointless election was called.

I said the passage of this bill would be a historic event. Fortunately, battles for pension funds are already being waged in the context of collective bargaining for unionized workers. This often causes conflict, because employers would like to make cuts to pension funds.

How many battles, strikes and disputes have hinged not only on pay, but also on pension funds? This is a difficult struggle for workers. Some workers have been left to fend for themselves after giving a company 30 or 40 years of their lives and contributing to a retirement fund. This kind of thing happens because we have never been aware of their reality or done enough to take a stand and fix the problem.

We have an important role to play as parliamentarians, because it is up to elected officials and the government to change things and bring in a safety net for our workers. The purpose of this bill is not to make pension plans priority creditors, but rather preferred creditors. The status of preferred creditor for wages is currently maintained in the event of bankruptcy.

*Private Members' Business*

I really must emphasize that there is no reason to hesitate. I often hear the Liberals say here in the House that they are there for the workers, that they will never let them down and that they want to protect their pension funds. Well, now is the time to walk the talk. Beyond the rhetoric, if they really want to protect workers, it is important to strengthen labour rights and protect pension funds in the event of insolvency or bankruptcy. That is what needs to be done. This should not even be a question.

It is also important to pass anti-scab legislation. Workers have been calling for this for years. It should have been brought in years ago. Labour disputes persist because, once again, employers under federal jurisdiction take advantage of the current situation to hire scabs, and this keeps the disputes going. One day, we are going to have to stand up for workers on this issue as well. It is time to stop consulting and start taking action.

Employment Insurance also needs to be reformed. The Canadian Labour Congress, the United Steelworkers and major labour organizations regularly come to the Hill to lobby to talk to parliamentarians about the reality of the working world today and to convince them to fix the situation. I do not even understand why the government is still dragging its feet on this.

The bill to protect retirement funds seeks to provide a guarantee in the event of misfortune such as an economic crisis, a recession or even a pandemic. In such situations, there are losses. In the case of Cliffs Natural Resources, even though the United Steelworkers managed to get a bit of money to the North Shore through legal means, pensions were still slashed by 9%.

A worker or retiree who is currently 80 is not going to go back to work. They end up using all of their savings just to survive. We cannot leave a single person in such a situation.

Canada is known for protecting basic rights and workers rights in the event of a bankruptcy. We have to protect their nest egg. I think it will be to our credit to adopt this bill unanimously. I want to acknowledge all the unions and every parliamentarian who decided to stand up and make this possible.

• (1825)

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this important bill today.

As a left-leaning progressive politician and union man, it is really important for me to be here in the House to support the initiative of the member who introduced this private member's bill. This initiative is completely in line with the values of the NDP, which has been the political party of workers since its foundation.

We have always been there to fight to give workers decent working conditions, decent work schedules, decent insurance, and adequate and decent wages so that they and their families and children can have a good quality of life.

With that perspective, the fight to protect people's retirement plans and pensions when a business goes bankrupt has always been a major concern for the NDP, as the working class party and the labour party. This is not the first time we have debated this issue. I

must point out the work of NDP colleagues in the previous caucus who fought for this, who were pioneers and who worked very hard.

I am thinking of Chris Charlton, Wayne Marston and Scott Duvall, who, before retiring from political life, took up this cause. All the work done by my current colleagues in the NDP caucus and past colleagues has ensured that today we are about to arrive at a solution that, although not perfect, is positive.

However, I cannot help but point out that when Chris Charlton, Wayne Marston and Scott Duvall introduced similar bills to protect the rights of pensioners, the Conservative Party systematically voted against them.

Today, we find ourselves in a new situation. I am pleased to note that the Conservative Party seems to have gone on the road to Damascus and seen the light. They have had a change of heart, and I hope that it is not being opportunistic in order to portray itself to voters as the friend of workers for the next election, but that it is something more deeply rooted and serious.

I always welcome spontaneous conversions, but I also remember that, when he was a minister in Stephen Harper's government, the Leader of the Opposition was one of the harshest critics of workers' rights. He levied sustained, systematic attacks against worker and union movements with bills such as C-377 and C-525, which would have weakened or even wiped out unions in Canada and Quebec. That is always on my mind, so I am always a little apprehensive, a little suspicious because, as a minister, he repeatedly attacked the union movement that stands up for workers' rights. I think people need to be aware and keep that in mind right now. Nevertheless, I applaud the work of the Conservative Party member who introduced this bill, which the NDP obviously supports because it is about time.

We have seen extremely tragic situations where people who dedicated their lives to a business, to a company, who set money aside, wound up in extremely difficult, trying situations when their company went bankrupt.

For example, when Sears went bankrupt, people in Quebec, Ontario and western Canada saw their pensions drop by 20%, 25% or 30% per month. These people lost hundreds of dollars because they were not priority creditors under the law. Bankers and investors took precedence over the workers who had, in some cases, devoted their entire lives to these companies and counted on them. This is not a question of charity, a gift to these workers. It is their money. They set aside wages for years, decades, to cover their golden years. It is their money.

It is good that today, as parliamentarians in the House of Commons, we can act soon to help these people, to protect them and to avoid dramatic situations like those we have seen with Sears and many other companies.

• (1830)

I will tell a quick personal story. I was a teenager when my grandfather died. I am from Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, and my grandfather Urgel worked at Singer for 44 years. Singer was the big factory that drew people to the town for work. It employed thousands of people. My grandfather worked there for 44 years and then he retired. A few years later, Singer went bankrupt. Not only did it go bankrupt, but its executives took off with the pension fund. Those folks just took the money and ran.

The Singer pensioners had to fight in court for years. They had to hire lawyers to get some of their money back. Unfortunately, by the end of the long legal proceedings, my grandfather, like many of his co-workers, had died. My grandmother did finally receive a small portion of the pension that Singer had stolen from them. This is just a family example, not a personal one, because it did not affect me. However, I was told this story, and it really did affect my family. The fact that no one had any protection at the time, the fact that the workers were not considered priority creditors ahead of the investors and bankers, really affected my family.

The NDP chooses to put people first and stand up for them ahead of the banks, and we are not afraid that people are going to stop investing in Canada and that the sky is going to fall because of it. In fact, I think we can go even further. When the rules of the game are known and they are the same for everyone, then investors can make informed investments, knowing what the rules are, what the consequences of bankruptcy will be and who will be paid first because it is their money first and foremost.

The bill could have been improved. My NDP colleague, the member for Elmwood—Transcona, tried to do so by proposing an amendment in committee to protect not only pensions and retirement plans, but also severance pay. Oddly enough, the committee chair ruled that the amendment was out of order, that it fell outside the scope of the bill. However, this friendly amendment had been welcomed by the member of Parliament who is responsible for this bill. It is therefore rather odd that the Liberal chair of the committee would reject a friendly amendment, which seemed to me to be perfectly in order since it concerned the rights of workers in the event of a company's bankruptcy. It was done in exactly the same spirit, and the majority of the committee members agreed with the amendment.

That decision was upheld by a Speaker's ruling. The NDP tried to pass a unanimous consent motion to undo the Speaker's ruling, which is something that can be done and is well within the rules. Unfortunately, some Liberal members refused to overturn the Speaker's ruling, refused to respect the will of the committee, and refused to protect the rights of workers when it comes to severance pay. Usually, in the House, we do not know who said no. However, oddly enough, the member for Winnipeg North said he was not the only person who said "no". In saying that, he himself admitted, as the member for Winnipeg North, that he had said no to this request from the NDP for unanimous consent to respect the will of the ma-

### *Private Members' Business*

jority of committee members. However, he never explained why he, as the member for Winnipeg North, or why the Liberal Party members were against protecting severance pay in the event of bankruptcy.

For a party that claims to be a friend of unions and a friend of workers, that is rather odd and contradictory. I look forward to hearing the member for Winnipeg North explain to us why he opposed this measure when he is a democrat and respects the will of the committee. While the three opposition parties agreed on this amendment, he said no in the House and opposed workers' rights. I look forward to hearing the member for Winnipeg North explain why.

• (1835)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak to my colleague's bill, Bill C-228. I would like to thank the member for Sarnia—Lambton for introducing this bill and providing me with the opportunity to participate in this debate.

This bill comes at an important time for Canadians. Bill C-228 seeks to protect the pensions of workers in the private sector so that when a company goes bankrupt, pensioners receive the benefits they have worked long and hard to receive. It combines elements from previously introduced bills and would do three things. First, it would require that an annual report on the solvency of pension funds be tabled in the House of Commons. Second, it would provide mechanisms for companies to transfer funds to keep their pension funds solvent. Third, in the event that a company does go bankrupt, pensions would be paid out ahead of large creditors and executive bonuses.

For better clarity, not only does the bill seek to ensure that pension funds remain solvent by requiring annual reporting that demonstrates the pension funds are fully funded, but it would protect Canadian workers' pensions, as it creates mechanisms to help companies keep their pension plans solvent. Should a company's pension fund become insolvent, they will be able to transfer money into the pension fund without any tax implications. Encouraging companies to keep their pension funds solvent and providing them mechanisms that help them to achieve that is something that ultimately helps and protects working Canadians.

The solvency of pension funds is especially important now, as we are in a cost of living crisis. Seniors in particular are struggling at this time, as they live on fixed incomes that are being stretched by rising prices and inflation, which the government is fuelling with its inflationary spending. The government continues to deny the consequences of its inflationary spending, but we are confronted by them daily.

*Private Members' Business*

Canadians call me every day asking how the government expects them to keep up with the rising prices that are being caused by the government's out-of-control spending. The government has created an unpredictable economy with record-high inflation. Now, with its plan to triple the carbon tax, Canadians living on fixed incomes are being pushed to their limits.

With the unpredictability of the economy, record high inflation rates and the Liberal plan to raise taxes, the protection of pensions is vital. Canadians need to be secure in the knowledge that their pensions, which they have contributed to for many years, will not be at risk of disappearing overnight.

As inflation continues to rise, those who rely on pensions from the private sector are more vulnerable. They have to worry not only about their monthly payments being stretched thinner and thinner, but also that the company paying their pension may go bankrupt and use the pension fund to pay off its debts.

Over the past two years, we know that many businesses have struggled, many have not survived and many may be on the verge of making the decision to close their doors. Should this happen, many people may find their pensions at risk. Pensioners should not have to worry about the security of their pension. The dream of retiring for Canadians should not be washed away because the pension fund of their company was used to pay off debts and give bonuses to executives.

That is why our party believes that pension plans should be invested by independent trustees for the benefit of employees and should be held at arm's length, not accessible by a company or its creditors. By doing this, the pension fund will be solely focused on serving the workers who are contributing to it and drawing pensions out of it, and we will remove the ability for corporations to interfere with pension funds or cause them to become insolvent.

Another important aspect of this bill, supported by the independence of pension funds, is that in the event of bankruptcy, paying out pensions would become a priority, ensuring that seniors are not left behind. This will ensure that the many years of hard work by Canadian workers will still be rewarded with the pensions they have earned. It will also ensure that even in the case of bankruptcy, the dream of retirement will not be lost. Canadians will still be able to depend on the investments they have made in their companies' pension funds and plan for the future.

• (1840)

I am sure many of my colleagues in this place have heard from Canadians that they are finding it difficult to plan for their future when there is so much uncertainty due to the Liberals' inflation and the rising taxes.

This bill provides an opportunity for members to vote in favour of giving Canadians security in their golden years, allowing them to retire and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

The purpose of this bill is very clear. We want to protect the pensions of hard-working Canadians. The bill seeks to bring more stability to private pension funds and ensure that Canadians do not lose out. It is a step towards giving Canadians more certainty and

control over their own lives and hard-earned money, making sure the money they have earned ends up in their own pockets.

I know similar bills have been introduced in the House previously, and I am happy to see that Bill C-228 has had broad support among other parties. Again, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Sarnia—Lambton and hope to see more initiatives in the House to help support Canadians.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here at this, the final reading of this bill, before the vote tomorrow and hopefully the bill's going on to the Senate.

It has been a long journey. Over the last at least 10 years, possibly longer, there have been numerous efforts to bring forward bills to get the pension protection Canadians deserve.

Basically, when I looked at the work that had been done, in every one of them there was something that not everyone could agree on, so I cherry-picked from all the different ideas that people could agree on and said, "Let us at least do something. Let us move in the direction of good."

That is how Bill C-228 came into being. Previously, there was a bill, Bill C-253 in the last parliamentary session, which made it to the industry committee. It was on the priority of pensions.

This bill would do three things.

It would table a report in the House on the solvency of pension funds, so we can have greater transparency and know which funds are in trouble.

It would create a mechanism for us to transfer funds into an insolvent fund from elsewhere in the business, with no tax implication, so we can fix the problem before it becomes a difficulty for the pensioner.

Then, in the event of a bankruptcy, we would pay out pensions in priority over secured creditors like large banks, preferred creditors, and unsecured creditors. That will put pensioners in a much better position. Pension funds will be solvent, in general, and when there is a bankruptcy, large creditors are way more likely to be able to survive one company's going bankrupt than an individual who has paid into their pension and is counting on it for their retirement.

The bill has had much study. It has heard input from all kinds of stakeholders, and we are here today with what I think is a really good balance of all the rights of the pensioners and those of the suppliers. I think we have a very acceptable balance.

I want to thank a number of people, the member for Elmwood—Transcona, the member for Manicouagan and the member for Joliette, as well as all the finance committee members. There have been numerous people who have helped this bill along, provided their input and provided suggestions to improve it. I want to thank the member for La Prairie, who traded his private member's spot for today in order to move this up quickly and get it over to the Senate.

It just shows that there is broad support for the bill. When we look at the concerns that were raised about the bill, there was one amendment that was made at committee to include severance pay and termination pay in the priority. I supported that. I said I supported it at second reading, but it was ruled out of scope by the Chair and eventually back in the House, where the Liberals wanted the Speaker to rule on it. I think the Speaker was correct in saying that committees do not have the power to put things in that are out of scope, but then we brought a unanimous consent motion.

The member for Elmwood—Transcona brought the motion to have the House decide to put that amendment back in. Unfortunately, at that point, the Liberals did not support that amendment, and the motion did not receive unanimous consent.

That amendment is now out of the bill. That was the controversial part. I think we can agree that the rest is the right thing to do for Canadians.

I am happy to hear the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader say tonight that he has not yet made his decision on how he is going to vote. I would encourage him to vote yes to Bill C-228.

Now is the time, in this parliamentary session, for us, after 10 years of bringing various and sundry bills, to finally do the right thing for Canadians and protect people who have worked their whole lives and paid into a pension fund. It is time to give it the priority it needs to have.

I look forward to the vote tomorrow, and I look forward to having all parties in the House support Bill C-228.

• (1845)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The question is on the motion.

[*Translation*]

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

The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

[*English*]

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu:** Madam Speaker, I would request a recorded division.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 23, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, on Saturday I was invited to attend a rally in Edmonton hosted by the Iranian community, highlighting and showing solidarity with the ongoing protests. My wife was working, so, as I often do, I packed the five kids in the car and we went to this protest together.

I had told my children about the situation in Iran and that morning they were making signs to bring. I was so proud of them, my nine-year-old daughter and my kids all the way down, participating in this act of activism and solidarity with people of Iran, along with me. Then as—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry. I hate to interrupt the hon. member.

I would ask members who are having conversations at the other end of the chamber to please exit. Again, I just want to remind members to please exit if they are having conversations, as it is interrupting the proceedings.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, I was just saying that on Saturday I brought my five kids with me to a rally in solidarity with the people of Iran. We were making signs in the morning. It was a great family experience, engaging my kids in important social justice activism.

However, as I was preparing for this and thinking about what I was going to say at that rally, I was looking at the latest news from Iran and it absolutely broke my heart to read the story of a young Iranian boy, Kian Pîrfalak, who also went to a protest with his parents and was killed. He was killed by the so-called Iranian security forces.

His story brought into sharp focus the horrors of what is happening and the grievous injustices of the Iranian regime that have been happening for decades, especially now as people are standing up, fighting back and risking their lives for freedom and justice. We have heard the names of Kian, of Mahsa Amani and of so many others who have been killed by this regime. We honour those who are fighting back, who are seeking justice, who are boldly saying that there is no solution but revolution, and who recognize that this time will be different and that we desperately need a change of government and change of regime in Iran. I am proud to pledge my solidarity and support to the people in that fight.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Often, politically, we see that, when there is something big going on, politicians want to put themselves into that parade. They want to be part of capturing this movement, and we have seen this from the government. We have seen all kinds of efforts by the government, including statements, questions and so forth, to associate itself with this movement. I would welcome a late conversion to the cause of Iranian freedom by the government, but the fact is it still has not taken the key step that the people of Iran and of the Iranian community here in Canada have been asking for, which is listing the Iranian regime's IRGC, its primary implement of terror, as a terrorist organization.

It really is baffling. The Deputy Prime Minister has recognized that the IRGC is a terrorist organization. During a press conference she said that, yes, the IRGC is a terrorist organization, yet the government has refused to list it as a terrorist organization under the Criminal Code. How are we and how is the public to make sense of this? The government says that this is a terrorist organization, but it says, at the same time, that we are not actually going to recognize it as a terrorist organization within the legislative instrument that is designed to recognize and ban terrorist organizations.

Recognizing a terrorist organization is not just a symbolic matter. It is about preventing it from being able to do business here in Canada. It has recently been revealed that the Iranian regime is directly behind death threats toward Canadians. Therefore, we have this regime that is enacting terror against its own people and against people throughout the Middle East, is threatening the lives of people here in Canada and has taken the lives of people from Canada, such as through the downing of Flight PS752.

The government has acknowledged that this is a terrorist organization, yet it failed to list it as a terrorist organization. If the government really wants to show that it is serious about showing solidarity, we have had enough photo ops, enough statements and enough meetings. When will it list the IRGC as a terrorist organization?

• (1850)

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the brutal killing of Mahsa Amini by the so-called morality police and the Iranian regime's deadly response to the peaceful protests are once more displaying Iran's shameful disregard for human rights and the regime's support for terror. Our government, along with our international partners, are committed to holding Iran accountable for its actions in accordance with international law.

I would like to reiterate the robust measures Canada has imposed against Iran and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or the IRGC, in response to these recent incidents as well as long-term actions against Iran's systemic human rights violations and ongoing behaviour that destabilizes regional security.

Canada imposes rigorous sanctions against the Iranian regime and its leadership under the Special Economic Measures Act, or SEMA, which explicitly targets the IRGC and several suborganizations, including the IRGC air force and the air force missile command. Since the beginning of October, Canada has already listed 42 individuals and 12 entities under the SEMA, in addition to the 202 previously listed Iranian entities and individuals.

Measures under the SEMA prevent Canadians from dealing in any property belonging to listed persons. This effectively freezes all assets in Canada that belong to the sanctioned persons. Contravention of these provisions can carry heavy criminal penalties.

Additionally, Canada lists Iran as a state supporter of terrorism under the State Immunity Act. This listing, together with the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act, allows victims to bring civil actions against Iran for losses or damages relating to terrorism. Once Bill S-8, an act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, becomes law, it will align the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, or IRPA, with SEMA to ensure all foreign nationals subject to sanctions under SEMA will also be inadmissible to Canada.

Furthermore, on Friday, October 7, the Prime Minister announced that Canada will be pursuing a listing of the Iranian regime, including the IRGC leadership, under the most powerful provision of the IRPA. The Iranian regime, including its top leaders, more than 10,000 officers and senior members, will be inadmissible to Canada in perpetuity for their engagement in terrorism and systemic and gross human rights violations.

Moreover, the UN Security Council passed a number of resolutions to impose sanctions on Iran, which are implemented into Canadian law under the United Nations Act. As a result, 84 Iranian individuals and entities are sanctioned under this act. Similar to the Canadian measures under SEMA, engagement in certain activities and transactions involving listed individuals and entities is prohibited in Canada and for any Canadians outside of Canada.

The Criminal Code also sets out a terrorist listing regime to help prevent the use of Canada's financial system to further terrorist activity and to assist in the investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences. Several of Iran's key proxy actors are captured by this scheme. For example, Canada has maintained the Criminal Code listing for the IRGC Qods Force as a terrorist entity since 2012. This force is recognized as responsible for terrorist operations and providing arms, funding and training to other terrorist groups.

The government continues to be unwavering in our commitment to keep Canadians safe, including by taking all appropriate action to counter terrorist threats in Canada and around the world.

• (1855)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, it is sadly typical of the responses we get from this government to read pre-prepared scripts that do not actually answer the question.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

The question for the parliamentary secretary and for the government was this: Why has the government chosen not to list the IRGC as a terrorist organization?

We had a vote in the House, which I believe the parliamentary secretary participated in as did the Prime Minister, where all members of the Liberal caucus voted in favour of our motion to list the IRGC as a terrorist organization. That was four years ago. They did nothing after that. They still have not listed the IRGC as a terrorist organization.

Now, it is all well and good to talk about sanctioning individuals, but when we sanction individuals and not organizations, then new individuals can still use the resources of that organization. They are still able to operate here in Canada, they are still able to recruit here in Canada and members of the organization who are not sanctioned can come to Canada with impunity.

It is a simple question. The government voted to do it, and the Liberals still have not answered why they have not listed the IRGC. Can they answer the simple question?

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member chooses to ignore the measures that we have already taken. Listings under the Criminal Code provide the legal and institutional framework—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member had an opportunity to ask a question. He may not like the answer, but there is no debate going back and forth. I am calling the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan out of order. I would ask the hon. member to allow the parliamentary secretary to speak.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, it is obvious the hon. member does not want to hear the answer and ignores what I have been saying.

Listings under the Criminal Code provide the legal and institutional framework to implement measures to freeze and forfeit terrorist property and to help investigate and potentially prosecute someone for certain offences.

Canada is committed to standing up for human rights and to intervening against those who violate them. Canadians can have confidence in the continuing efforts of the government to further constrain the actions of Iran that threaten public safety and violate basic human rights.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this evening I am following up on a question that I raised in the House on October 28. The question I raised at that time was a follow-up on some encouraging news that had been passed on to me by the hon. member for Oakville North—Burlington: that the Minister of Public Safety would, for the first time since the Liberals took office seven years ago, be initiating a discussion with the RCMP on the subject of placing automated external defibrillators, or AEDs, in police cruisers.

As I always note when I am speaking on this subject, placing AEDs in all RCMP cruisers would save over 300 lives per year at a one-time cost of only \$2 million. That boils down, over a 10-year period, because AEDs last about 10 years, to about \$3,000 per life saved.

I also noted on that occasion that 300 lives per year is about 30 lives per month. I suppose I could have added that this is a little less than one life per day, so time is of the essence. Since each human life is as precious as yours, Madam Speaker, or mine, it seems to me that every day that passes is a day too long.

That said, I note that the minister's response to the question I raised on October 28 was very encouraging. He said, "I have engaged my office to be in touch with the RCMP to ensure that it has all of the tools it needs."

Nearly a month has gone by since that time, which means that another two dozen or so Canadians, whose lives could have been saved had there been an AED in the RCMP cruiser responding to their particular 911 call, have now died. Of course, this cannot be blamed on the minister, whose sincere interest in the subject I do not doubt, but bureaucracies move slowly, and naturally I would like to know what kind of progress has been made on the minister's promise. What kind of engagement, to use the minister's term, has been undertaken?

The hon. member for Oakville North—Burlington, who is of course also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, has very generously offered to give me a private briefing. I am very grateful to her for making such a generous offer, but I think it would be good to get the progress that has been made so far onto the public record. I will therefore ask her to provide the House with this information, and I will listen with considerable interest to her response.

I note as well that my interest in learning the details is sufficiently great that I will also take advantage of the option of placing a question on the Order Paper with regard to this progress so that further details can be made part of the public record. I am very grateful indeed that the parliamentarians who came before us had the wisdom to include that particular wonderful tool of openness in government in our standing orders.

Finally, I note that the parliamentary secretary mentioned, in response to an earlier question that I posed to her on October 17, that the possibility exists of using public-private partnerships to fund the acquisition of AEDs. Specifically, she stated, "If the hon. member had a private company that wanted to donate AEDs to all RCMP vehicles, I would be happy to work with him on that." I remain interested in this possibility, as the parliamentary secretary knows, and I would ask if she could offer any further details on what the government might be willing to consider.

• (1900)

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member again, not only for his interest in placing automated external defibrillators, or AEDs, in RCMP vehicles, but also for the work he has done to ensure that his local police service has AEDs.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Since our last discussion in this place, I have reached out to the RCMP to ask about a private donation of AEDs. I also reached out to the hon. member to suggest that perhaps he and I could have a conversation in person rather than through question period or late shows to try to advance his idea, which I would be more than happy to work with him on.

The information I can provide him tonight is that any donation would need to be accompanied by a detailed proposal outlining the amount of money being donated, which individuals or entities are proposing to donate the funds, and the rationale behind such a donation. Additional steps would be needed to determine what device or series of devices would be required for use nationally in RCMP vehicles.

While the RCMP procured a limited number of AEDs, these devices were purchased for use primarily within facilities or for short-term events. An in-depth needs analysis would be required to evaluate operational parameters such as climate, temperature and durability. A needs analysis is needed to ensure that any device purchased would operate to a known standard regardless of the weather, temperature or location in Canada, as AEDs generally cannot be stored in sub-zero temperatures.

Given the operating environment of RCMP members across Canada, this is an important consideration. Furthermore, the analysis would need to consider the best place to house these devices within RCMP vehicles, being mindful of the other equipment officers require for their daily duties. Beyond the requirements of an in-depth analysis, there are several operational rollout and financial considerations that would need to be assessed, including the additional costs required for the ongoing maintenance and replacement of the devices.

Furthermore, given the unique contract policing role that the RCMP plays in Canada, decisions taken by provincial, territorial and municipal governments play a significant part in how the RCMP purchases, trains, maintains and equips frontline members with new equipment. The procurement of AEDs would be subject to the same consultation process with our contract partners. Finally, any other ethical obligations and due diligence related to such a donation would be carried out.

While AEDs are not mandated, as we know, the RCMP recognizes the benefits of AEDs in specific locations and has developed a limited AED program, which is guided by the RCMP national occupational safety manual. In the context of RCMP facilities, AEDs have been approved for installation and use in select operational areas. The RCMP are committed to the communities they serve. In maintaining this commitment, all officers are required to be trained and recertified every three years.

I will reiterate to the hon. member that this is something we absolutely can work on together. I think it is going to be hard to work together on this in this format in the House of Commons, though.

• (1905)

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Madam Speaker, that was a very informative answer from the parliamentary secretary. It was very helpful.

This is not so much in the nature of a question, but rather a comment on the response that the RCMP gave to the parliamentary sec-

retary. Some of the issues that are presented are, I understand, real issues, but some of them are red herrings. I just want to alert her to that.

An example is the storage and weather issue, and the idea that batteries, including those in AEDs, do not work as well in cold weather. These are problems that have been overcome in other police forces. Defibrillators can be put into a heated pack and stored in the back of a police car, where typically it is not as cold as the ambient outdoor temperature. These are problems that exist for the Ottawa police, for example, for the Toronto police, which also have AEDs, and for numerous other police forces in Canada.

I would note that the parliamentary secretary also mentioned the fact that officers are already required to get training, so training costs are in fact zero. The cost I cited to her, which I would be happy to demonstrate, is one that includes battery replacement and necessary servicing.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I would like to reiterate to the hon. member that there is absolutely no doubt that AEDs save lives. I think some of his comments are valid. However, the weather in Ottawa is very different from what it would be in Nunavut. I think those are considerations, but I do not think those considerations are ones we cannot overcome. However, I think we need to work together.

Again, I will give the member my commitment, and perhaps we can find some time to sit down together and come up with a plan on how to present a proposal to the RCMP to move forward on the suggestion, which I have no doubt whatsoever would save lives.

CANNABIS

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon colleague for spending his evening with me on this very important matter.

As I mentioned last week, Izabela and other parents from my riding of Spadina—Fort York have told me about the proliferation of illegal cannabis shops operating in our community. Many of these illegal stores are using targeted ads and promotion to attract children, and these unscrupulous illegal businesses are also selling copycat edibles that look like candy. However, some of the products have actually poisoned children.

The problem exists because there has been a serious lack of enforcement of the many regulations that legitimate Canadian cannabis businesses must follow. Ignoring these rules has allowed the black market to flourish. Many of these illegal businesses make upwards of \$50,000 a day, according to some reports. Most are operating 24-7, selling their unregulated and contaminated products that, and I cannot emphasize it enough, target children. Some have even set up businesses right across the street from a school.

Some parents have tried to organize against these illegal cannabis shops, but they have been warned to stay quiet or face retaliation. People are also afraid to even sign a petition against these operations using their real names, and they only do so anonymously.

Parents are left feeling threatened, helpless and hopeless. The growth in these illegal businesses is unacceptable and very dangerous to our youth. Moreover, the millions that are gained from selling illegal cannabis is often used to buy firearms and fund organized criminal activities, major crimes like money laundering and human trafficking.

While I commend police in Spadina—Fort York, especially 14 Division, for their work in trying to shut down these illegal stores, they cannot do it alone. I hope the federal government will assist police in closing these illegal operations, so I want to ask my hon. colleague what the government is prepared to do to crack down on these illegal pot shops.

• (1910)

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his conscientious concern on this issue and his consistency and advocacy on behalf of his constituent Izabela, whom I have also heard from on Twitter. I would also like to take a moment to thank Izabela for her community advocacy and her concern, particularly for youth and their health in Toronto.

The Cannabis Act is there to protect the health and safety of Canadians while serving as a flexible legislative framework that adapts and responds to the ongoing and emerging needs of Canadians and helps displace the illegal cannabis market. The act also established a national framework to strictly regulate and to restrict youth access to cannabis in Canada, and under the Cannabis Act, federal, provincial and territorial governments share responsibility for overseeing cannabis production, distribution and sale in Canada.

[Translation]

It is the responsibility of the provinces and territories to determine how cannabis is distributed and sold in their jurisdictions. This includes establishing rules concerning how cannabis can be sold, the location of stores, the eligibility conditions for working in cannabis distribution and cannabis retail outlets.

[English]

The government shares the concerns regarding illegal cannabis sales, which is why the Cannabis Act contains strict penalties for those who sell illegal cannabis, which includes the sale of cannabis to minors. Individuals convicted of illegally selling or distributing cannabis are subject to sanctions, including those set out in the act, which range from fines to imprisonment for up to 14 years.

Government departments across Canada are working closely together to address illegal cannabis sales. Federal, provincial and territorial governments and law enforcement agencies all work closely together to disrupt the illegal cannabis market and inform Canadians about the health risks of these unregulated products.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

Law enforcement plays a critical role in directly supporting the purposes of the act. The act provides law enforcement with the authority to take action against illegal cannabis retail sales and hold those who operate outside the legal framework accountable. We have invested in public education campaigns to educate Canadians about the risks of illegal cannabis and how to recognize the difference between legal and illegal cannabis, including the packaging. The government launched the “Reduce your risk: Choose legal cannabis” campaign in May 2022.

Additionally, in response to reports of the accidental ingestion of illegal edible cannabis products by children, Health Canada has issued two advisories to raise public awareness of the dangers associated with illegal cannabis products. The most recent advisory included images of illegal cannabis products to show Canadians how similar some of the products look to popular name-brand snack foods, and tips for recognizing legally sourced cannabis. We also provided guidance on how to store cannabis securely to prevent access by children and youth.

[Translation]

The government will continue to support its provincial and territorial partners, as well as law enforcement agencies in the fight against the illegal sale of cannabis.

We remain determined to take measures to prevent young people from having access to cannabis, to protect the health and safety of Canadians from untested and unregulated products and to eliminate the illegal cannabis market.

[English]

I would like to thank the member for his attention to this important concern and underscore that this is fundamentally a matter of shared jurisdiction across all levels of government, in this case municipally with the Toronto Police Service, provincially with the OPP and provincial licensure of sales licences, and of course federally as I have laid out today in this response.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Madam Speaker, I want to share one more example of what is happening on the ground in my community.

These illegal pot shops actually enticed children into their illegal dispensaries with popcorn during Halloween. They are plastering promotions throughout the neighbourhood. Without any fear of the authorities, they are targeting children with their ads. Canada prohibits tobacco and alcohol ads that target minors.

Would my hon. colleague agree that targeting ads used by illegal cannabis shops to attract children should also be prohibited?

• (1915)

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden:** Madam Speaker, before I continue my rebuttal, of course I am opposed to any illegal advertisement. If the advertisements are indeed illegal, then they are contrary to all of our laws. If they are an illegal product, then advertising an illegal product in an illegal means is clearly an infraction of the law.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

[*Translation*]

At this point, the government's priority continues to be protecting young people from the health risks of cannabis.

[*English*]

That is why, in addition to complying with all the provisions of the act, cannabis licence holders must comply with strict requirements under the cannabis regulations, which include using child resistant packaging and using plain packaging and labelling that is not appealing to youth.

Absolutely, all of the concerns that my colleague has laid out tonight demonstrate a wilful opposition to the laws. In addition, I

am happy to continue this conversation at some other time with my colleague. I know we are running short on time this evening. I want to thank him again for his attention to this important matter.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** 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 7:16 p.m.)

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# CONTENTS

Tuesday, November 22, 2022

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Petitions

#### Charitable Organizations

Mr. Viersen ..... 9803

#### Forced Labour and Child Labour

Mr. Viersen ..... 9803

#### Age Verification Software

Mr. Viersen ..... 9803

#### Indigenous Affairs

Ms. Kwan ..... 9804

#### Addiction Recovery

Mr. Julian ..... 9804

#### Human Rights

Mr. Genuis ..... 9804

#### Human Organ Trafficking

Mr. Genuis ..... 9804

#### Falun Gong

Mr. Genuis ..... 9804

#### Military Chaplaincy

Mr. Genuis ..... 9805

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 9805

### Points of Order

#### Division of Bill C-27 for the Purpose of Voting

Mr. Julian ..... 9805

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Public Complaints and Review Commission Act

Bill C-20. Second reading ..... 9806

Ms. Michaud ..... 9806

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 9807

Mr. MacGregor ..... 9807

Mr. Caputo ..... 9808

Mrs. Brière ..... 9808

Mr. Trudel ..... 9808

Mr. MacGregor ..... 9809

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 9811

Mr. Caputo ..... 9812

Mr. Trudel ..... 9812

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9812

Mr. Genuis ..... 9813

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 9813

Mr. McCauley ..... 9815

Mr. Trudel ..... 9815

Ms. Kwan ..... 9815

Mrs. Shanahan ..... 9816

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9816

Mr. Caputo ..... 9816

Mr. Genuis ..... 9816

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 9819

Ms. Gazan ..... 9820

Mr. Barsalou-Duval ..... 9820

Mrs. Roberts ..... 9820

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 9820

Ms. Gazan ..... 9821

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9822

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 9822

Mr. MacGregor ..... 9822

Ms. Kwan ..... 9822

Mr. MacGregor ..... 9823

Ms. Michaud ..... 9824

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9824

Mr. Caputo ..... 9824

Mr. Barsalou-Duval ..... 9827

Mr. Angus ..... 9827

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9828

Mr. Blanchette-Joncas ..... 9828

Mr. Hardie ..... 9828

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 9829

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 9830

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9830

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) ..... 9830

Ms. Collins (Victoria) ..... 9831

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 9832

Mr. Shipley ..... 9832

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 9832

Mr. Shipley ..... 9834

Mr. Barsalou-Duval ..... 9835

Ms. Gazan ..... 9835

Mr. Lamoureux ..... 9835

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Dr. Peter Fowler

Mr. Fragiskatos ..... 9836

### Independence Day In Lebanon

Mr. Abouttaif ..... 9836

### 30th Anniversary of Performing Arts Theatre

Mr. MacKinnon ..... 9836

### World Day of Artisanal Fishermen and Sea Workers

Mrs. Desbiens ..... 9836

### Collège des médecins du Québec

Mr. Genuis ..... 9836

### Prison Chaplaincy

Mr. Oliphant ..... 9837

<b>Human Rights in Iran</b>	
Ms. Sgro .....	9837
<b>Winnipeg North</b>	
Mr. Lamoureux .....	9837
<b>Community Volunteers</b>	
Ms. Ferreri .....	9837
<b>Jean Lapointe</b>	
Mrs. Brière .....	9837
<b>Housing</b>	
Mr. Aitchison .....	9838
<b>Cost of Living</b>	
Mr. Bragdon .....	9838
<b>Lebanese Independence</b>	
Mr. El-Khoury .....	9838
<b>Victoria SAFER Initiative</b>	
Ms. Collins (Victoria) .....	9838
<b>Magda Fusaro</b>	
Mr. Therrien .....	9839
<b>Cost of Living</b>	
Mr. Steinley .....	9839
<b>Stanley Greene Neighbourhood Food Drive</b>	
Ms. Saks .....	9839

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Housing</b>	
Mr. Poilievre .....	9839
Mr. Boissonnault .....	9839
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Poilievre .....	9840
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9840
Mr. Poilievre .....	9840
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9840
Mr. Scheer .....	9840
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9840
Mr. Scheer .....	9840
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9840
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Therrien .....	9841
Ms. Damoff .....	9841
Mr. Therrien .....	9841
Ms. Damoff .....	9841
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Boulerice .....	9841
Mr. Boissonnault .....	9841
Mr. Desjarlais .....	9841
Mr. Fillmore .....	9841
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Hallan .....	9842
Mr. Wilkinson .....	9842

Mr. Hallan .....	9842
Mr. Wilkinson .....	9842
Ms. Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk) .....	9842
Ms. Gould .....	9842
Ms. Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk) .....	9842
Ms. Gould .....	9842
Mrs. Vien .....	9843
Mr. Boissonnault .....	9843
Mrs. Vien .....	9843
Mr. Boissonnault .....	9843
<b>Climate Change</b>	
Ms. Michaud .....	9843
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9843
Ms. Michaud .....	9843
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9843
Ms. Michaud .....	9843
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9843
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Small .....	9844
Mr. Fillmore .....	9844
Mr. Small .....	9844
Mr. Wilkinson .....	9844
Mr. Perkins .....	9844
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9844
Mr. Perkins .....	9844
Ms. Petitpas Taylor .....	9844
<b>Climate Change</b>	
Ms. Collins (Victoria) .....	9845
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9845
<b>Health</b>	
Ms. Gazan .....	9845
Mr. Duclos .....	9845
<b>National Defence</b>	
Mr. Blois .....	9845
Ms. Anand .....	9845
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Ms. Lantsman .....	9845
Ms. Damoff .....	9845
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Cooper .....	9846
Ms. Damoff .....	9846
Mr. Cooper .....	9846
Ms. Damoff .....	9846
Mr. Berthold .....	9846
Ms. Damoff .....	9846
<b>Official Languages</b>	
Mr. Beaulieu .....	9846
Ms. Petitpas Taylor .....	9846
Mr. Beaulieu .....	9847
Ms. Petitpas Taylor .....	9847
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Mr. Seeback .....	9847
Ms. Damoff .....	9847



Mr. Paul-Hus .....	9847
Mr. Lametti .....	9847
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	9847
Mr. Lametti .....	9847
<b>Climate Change</b>	
Mr. Scarpaleggia .....	9847
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9848
<b>Natural Resources</b>	
Mr. Patzer .....	9848
Mr. Wilkinson .....	9848
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Dowdall .....	9848
Mr. Guilbeault .....	9848
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mrs. Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) .....	9848
Mr. Boissonnault .....	9848
<b>Social Development</b>	
Mr. Turnbull .....	9848
Ms. Gould .....	9849
<b>Housing</b>	
Ms. Kwan .....	9849
Ms. Martinez Ferrada .....	9849
<b>Justice</b>	
Mr. Garrison .....	9849
Mr. Lametti .....	9849
<b>FIFA World Cup in Qatar</b>	
Mr. Desjarlais .....	9849
Motion .....	9849
(Motion agreed to) .....	9849

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

<b>Fall Economic Statement Implementation Act, 2022</b>	
Bill C-32. Second reading .....	9849
Amendment negatived .....	9851
Motion agreed to .....	9852
(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee) ..	9852
<b>Points of Order</b>	
<b>Division of Bill C-27 for the Purpose of Voting</b>	
Mr. Scheer .....	9852
Mr. Perkins .....	9853
<b>Public Complaints and Review Commission Act</b>	
Bill C-20. Second reading .....	9854
Mr. Van Popta .....	9854
Mr. Gerretsen .....	9854
Mr. Van Popta .....	9854
Mr. Lamoureux .....	9856
Mr. Garon .....	9857

Mr. Davies .....	9857
Mr. Gerretsen .....	9857
Ms. Khalid .....	9858
Mr. Garon .....	9859
Ms. Zarrillo .....	9859
Ms. Chabot .....	9859
Mr. van Koeverden .....	9859
Ms. McPherson .....	9861
Mr. Kitchen .....	9861
Mr. Desilets .....	9861
Ms. Larouche .....	9861
Mr. Lamoureux .....	9865
Mr. Shipley .....	9865
Mr. Garrison .....	9865
Mr. Champoux .....	9866
Mr. Desilets .....	9866
Mr. Shipley .....	9866
Mr. Davies .....	9868
Mr. Lamoureux .....	9869
Mr. Shipley .....	9869
Ms. Larouche .....	9869
Ms. Findlay .....	9869
Mr. Gerretsen .....	9871
Mr. Davies .....	9871
Mr. Caputo .....	9872
Mr. Samson .....	9872

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

<b>Pension Protection Act</b>	
Bill C-228. Third reading .....	9872
Mr. Poilievre .....	9872
Mr. Lamoureux .....	9874
Ms. Chabot .....	9875
Mr. Boulerice .....	9876
Mrs. Block .....	9877
Ms. Gladu .....	9878
Division on motion deferred .....	9879

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Mr. Genuis .....	9879
Ms. Damoff .....	9880
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Mr. Reid .....	9881
Ms. Damoff .....	9881
<b>Cannabis</b>	
Mr. Vuong .....	9882
Mr. van Koeverden .....	9883

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