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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1400)

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### SPORTS

**Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, safe sport should always be the primary goal of every sport, ahead of winning games, tournaments or medals, because athletes only get one childhood. Athletes should look forward to practice, going to the gym and being on the field or on the rink. They should look forward to being physically fit, being trained by coaches committed to developing good athletes and good people, having fun around other athletes and sharing the love of sport with family and friends.

For decades, sport has had a dirty hidden secret of abuse, harassment and sexual assault, despite victims and families courageously coming forward to the media and the stakeholders in the sport system. Four years ago, our government started to build a safe sport system in our country. We have many miles to go, and to get there we need a national public inquiry. Athletes are waiting. We cannot afford to fail our children.

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### CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it came upon a midnight clear with the stars brightly shining. It was a holy night when angels were heard on high. Hark, now hear the angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king.” It was the first noel when the angels did say, “Born is the king of Israel.” Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, lay the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

In the little town of Bethlehem, the hopes and fears of all the years met that night when God came near. The shepherds said to themselves, “Oh come, let us adore him.” The three wise men said, “We three kings of Orient have come from afar.” God did rest these merry gentleman, and the wise still seek him today.

Whether up and out, or down and out, these same glad tidings, which are for all people, will bring us peace on earth, goodwill and joy to the world. Because of that night so divine, he is indeed our Immanuel and is with us in these uncertain times. My prayer is that he would stay near us forever and keep us in his loving care until our night is long past and our morning is nigh.

From my family to everyone's, we wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

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• (1405)

### COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, reflecting on the year as it draws to a close, we cannot ignore the challenges that many members of our communities across the country are facing. We also know that kindness, generosity and empathy are the lights that shine the brightest at this time of year. We all have stories that come to mind of goodwill and compassion, the radiant moments when people are connected by our shared humanity.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to celebrate the people who give and bring our communities closer together: the members of the carpenters' union, local 1386, who donated 104 turkeys to the Oro-mocto area food bank; the thousands of families who have opened their hearts and homes to Ukrainians fleeing war; and the people who volunteer their time to contribute to the important mission of Meals on Wheels by delivering food while breaking isolation with a moment of connection. To everyone who digs deep to give what they can, I give my thanks.

I am reminded of a quote by Scott Adams: “there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.” I am filled with hope at the prospect of watching ripples of kindness illuminate our homes in the year to come.

*Statements by Members***FIREARMS**

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, some of the greatest memories that I have are my time whitetail deer hunting with my grandpa Jack, my father Kim, my brothers, my friends and my sons. There is little that is more rewarding than spending precious time with family and friends in the field, sharing laughs and creating stories to share for many generations. It is not about the hunt. It is about spending time with the ones we love.

The Liberal government wants to take away this incredible opportunity for generations to come to carry on this legacy, by introducing legislation to make lawful duck and deer hunters' tools and farmers' tools illegal. The sneaky tactics introduced in Bill C-21 are one more example of a Liberal government that is out of touch. Frankly, it has no clue whatsoever what it has introduced, let alone the freedoms it is stripping from the hands of law-abiding Canadians. Levi is my grandson, and I will not accept that he will not get the same opportunity with his "Pip", me.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GILLES BOYER**

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a community is the reflection of its people. These are the extraordinary people who make a community like Vaudreuil-Soulanges famous across Canada.

Today I would like to pay tribute to one of these people. Gilles Boyer is an exceptional man who dedicated his life to the well-being of the population of Vaudreuil-Soulanges. As president of the Kiwanis, founding member of the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de Vaudreuil-Soulanges, president of Le Zèbre Rouge for almost 15 years and member of the board of directors of the Fondation du centre hospitalier Vaudreuil-Soulanges, Mr. Boyer is an example of selflessness and of what a Canadian can aspire to become.

He is all heart and, even after retiring, he still helps young and old carve out a place for themselves in our community and in the world.

I would like to thank Gilles for everything he has done, and for what he is still doing for our community of Vaudreuil-Soulanges. He has made a difference in very many lives. We are a far better and stronger community thanks to him.

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[English]

**FOOD INSECURITY**

**Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the 2022 "Food Price Report", food prices are expected to rise up to 7% next year. For a family of four, it predicts the average grocery bill to ring in at \$16,300, a staggering increase of \$1,100. A key culprit in this increase is the Liberal carbon tax, which will cost a typical farm thousands of dollars once it is tripled, which will increase the cost for farmers, for producers and for truckers to transport, all resulting in ballooning grocery costs.

Just today, a new poll shows that 53% of Canadians are fearful about not being able to put enough food on the table. That is not okay. A Canada where food prices are at near record highs and food bank usage is ballooning is not a Canada I recognize nor am I willing to accept. This is unsustainable, and it is high time that the government takes action to help lower the cost of food in Canada.

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● (1410)

**FIREARMS**

**Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the Yukon, a rifle in the house means a moose hunt in the fall and a winter of meat in the freezer. Conversations about upcoming hunts are as common as musings on the weather.

Last spring, students from Porter Creek high school in Whitehorse went on a bison hunt, where they learned to harvest the meat while honouring the animal that had given its life. They learned while living out on the land, setting up wall tents, keeping a fire and maintaining a snowmobile. Closer to home, my son helped our neighbours butcher a moose after a hunt last fall. While cutting meat and making sausages, he learned to appreciate the life and effort that went into the welcome gift packs of meat that we later received.

The need to address gun violence is very real, both in rural and urban Canada. Equally pressing is the need to preserve our ability to hunt, whether as indigenous peoples, Yukoners or Canadians. As Yukon's MP, I will do my best to ensure that as we work together in the House to prevent one further death from gun violence, we will honour hunting as a way of life. It is the true Canadian thing to do.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ELECTIONS AT JEAN-NICOLET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I enthusiastically welcome a delegation of students and teachers from Jean-Nicolet elementary school, a school in my riding of Bourassa. They are visiting Ottawa today. Every year, teacher Kerline François organizes an election campaign with her students to teach them how our democratic system works.

This year, I swore in prime minister Youssef Jaafari, deputy prime minister Alexis Garcia-Briones, justice minister Jamesley Cacéus, minister of sport and recreation Francesca Joyce Ketcha, minister of the environment and social solidarity Ennymabel Arvelo Joaquim, minister of arts and communication Lina Dib, and minister responsible for the public service and the auditor general Mirbel Saintilnor.

I wish them all an excellent term as sixth-grade council of ministers. We are assured a succession. I would like to congratulate their teacher and thank her for accepting my invitation.

[English]

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our Conservative tough-on-crime laws have been systematically stripped away by the Liberals letting violent criminals be back on the street instead of in jail where they belong. The results are tragic.

The Toronto police reported that shootings in 2019 skyrocketed, over 400%, to 492 shootings from 117 in 2014. In 2014, murders in Toronto were 76, but in 2019, under the Liberals, Toronto suffered a staggering 240 murders. The Liberal approach has seen violent crime increase 32% since the Prime Minister took office, and gang-related homicides have increased a whopping 92%.

The NDP-Liberal soft-on-crime coalition has made life easier for violent criminals, and it has failed to stop the flow of illegal guns across our border. Instead, the Liberals are targeting duck hunters, farmers and sport shooters while the revolving-door justice system is putting gang members back on the street, where they continue to terrorize our communities. This is bad public policy, which only the ducks, deer and clay pigeons support.

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### EASTER SEALS AMBASSADORS

**Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Katelyn and Meghan Rogers on recently being named the 2023 Easter Seals ambassadors for Prince Edward Island. Katelyn and Meghan were born with cerebral palsy and are 10-year-old twins who attend Eliot River Elementary School in my home community of Cornwall. Their appointment is also significant as it marks the first time P.E.I. has ever had two Easter Seals ambassadors.

I am personally excited for Katelyn and Meghan as new ambassadors and their motto, “Believe in yourself and don’t give up”. In congratulating Katelyn and Meghan, I congratulate their proud parents, Kevin and Andrea Rogers. I look forward to following the 2023 Easter Seals campaign and seeing Katelyn and Meghan’s great advocacy work on behalf of all Islanders with disabilities.

I would also like to thank outgoing ambassador Vaeda Matheson for her three years in the role, spanning the course of the pandemic. While the pandemic introduced challenges to the traditional Easter Seals campaign, Vaeda’s dedication and commitment has been evident throughout her time in the role.

I say congratulations to all for what they are doing to bring more awareness to people with disabilities.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### HOUSING

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Christmas is coming and I would like to dream a bit. I dream of more housing co-ops for families, singles and seniors. I dream of social housing for students and persons with handicaps, and a roof over the heads of people experiencing homelessness, first nations members and veterans.

### Statements by Members

I could also hope for more projects like L'appart à moi, which allows people living with Down's syndrome and intellectual disabilities to rent an apartment. Some of these renters from my riding are here today.

I would like to thank Marie-Claude, Marc, Valérie, Cloé, Mylène, Nadia, David, Étienne, Raphaël and the entire L'appart à moi team for contributing to my vision of a fairer and more united world. I would like to thank them all for allowing us to dream of a world where everyone is entitled to the highest level of fairness and a warm, safe and affordable home.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[English]

### GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, everything the Liberal government touches is broken. There is a backlog of 2.6 million people stuck waiting for answers from Canada, with 57% of those files beyond the processing time set by the government. It is frustrating.

Toronto’s Pearson Airport is ranked as the most delayed airport in the world. It is embarrassing. In the GTA, food bank use was 60,000 people per month before the pandemic and 120,000 people per month during the pandemic. Now it is over 182,000 people per month because of the inflationary policies of the government. It is alarming.

Everything is broken. These are just three examples. I could easily give 30. Canadians expect better. Conservatives, under our new leader, stand ready to fix it and give Canadians the competent government they need and deserve.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### DUNAMIS AWARD WINNERS

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the excellence of our businesses and entrepreneurs in Laval never ceases to amaze, and I am very proud to congratulate the five businesses in Alfred-Pellan that received Dunamis Awards from the Laval chamber of commerce and industry.

Recognizing commitment and contributions to the business community, the Dunamis Awards are bestowed on local businesses. Les Champimignons, an ingenious family-run company, won the award in the start-up category. Congratulations to Annie, Peter, William and Brandon.

*Statements by Members*

Josée Dufour of Axiomatech won the businessperson of the year award for ages 40 and up. La Ferme Jeunes au Travail won the award in the social economy or co-operative category. Direct Impact Solutions won awards in the export and services categories. Fondation Cité de la Santé won first prize, business of the year. I would like to congratulate them for their perseverance and resilience. I would also like to congratulate all of the finalists.

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[English]

**LOCAL AUTHOR**

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Lindsay Ford, a children's book writer and illustrator in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, continues to entertain with fun and engaging books. Her latest book, titled *How Do You Eat an Elephant?*, is the story of a child starting at a new school and feeling overwhelmed, yet overcoming these challenges one small win at a time.

These stories grab the attention of all ages, addressing important issues and highlighting local characters. How can one not be entertained by a book like *The Granny That Never Got Old* or another titled *Howard*, a story about Vancouver Island's giant gnome?

The book *Tommy Tutu* is inspired by a true story as well. Wearing a pink tutu to school, the main character navigates staying true to self while overcoming challenges around social norms and bullying.

Please remember to support the wealth of local talent we have in our ridings. It is books like these that bring us together and celebrate diversity, all the while teaching important lessons. What a wonderful gift this is.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**QUEBEC**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I salute the Quebec National Assembly, which is the only national parliament of Quebecers and which unanimously chose to renounce or, better yet, condemn the oath of allegiance to the king.

I salute the courage and determination of the three Parti Québécois MNAs and the government's swift action, at the very time when the Conseil de presse du Québec was condemning the moderator of the last English-language debate, who basically gave a voice to every prejudice against Quebec, against the French language and against the rejection by Quebec of the church's interference in affairs of state.

That makes us racist, so much so that they are refusing to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Jean Paul Riopelle, a giant among giants in Quebec visual arts. I propose that they give us back Riopelle's works. We will celebrate his centennial with style.

As long as we are renouncing the oath of allegiance to the king, let us renounce the monarchy itself. Instead of being a conquered people and subjects of the king, let us be good neighbours.

Long live Quebec!

• (1420)

[English]

**GOVERNMENT SPENDING**

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, recent Auditor General reports exposed what appears to be a competition among the Liberal cabinet on who can be the most incompetent. Billions of dollars were spent by the housing minister with no clue whom they were housing. Indigenous Services Canada paid out hundreds of millions for remediation because it repeatedly ignored calls to fix infrastructure. Natural Resources and Environment Canada used fake data and made-up technology to bolster its hydrogen strategy.

If we think things cannot get any worse for this competition, along comes the minister of the CRA and ESDC saying, "Hold my beer." Twenty-seven billion dollars, at a bare minimum, has been paid out to ineligible corporations and \$4 billion to ineligible individuals including prisoners, people outside Canada and also the dead.

Liberal cabinet ministers should compete on serving Canadians better, not on who can waste more Canadian taxpayer dollars.

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**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked 33 years since the horrific day that shocked Canadians across the country, the day that 14 bright young women were separated from the rest of their class and shot to death because they were women.

[Translation]

I would like to say that misogyny and femicide are behind us, but that is not at all the case. Since today is one of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, I would like to shed some light on our current situation.

[English]

A woman is killed in Canada every two and a half days. In 2021, 173 women were killed at the hands of men in this country and, so far in 2022, 14 women have been killed in the province of Quebec alone.

[Translation]

We need to work together, the government, provinces, territories, municipalities, schools and parents, to make Canada a safer place for all Canadians and put an end to gender-based violence. We will always remember those 14 souls that were taken from us on December 6, 1989.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

### THE ECONOMY

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians were hit with yet another interest rate hike today. The Bank of Canada imposed that hike, but it had to do so because of this government's inflationary deficits. Even the Governor of the Bank of Canada indicated that the deficits are increasing inflation, which in turn leads to higher interest rates.

For a family that bought an average house with an average mortgage, that is \$7,000 more in interest a year. That is impossible. The more the government spends, the more Canadians pay.

When will the Liberals stop making Canadians pay?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows very well that the Bank of Canada is an independent institution.

It is true that this is a difficult time for Canadians. It is not true that the investments that we made in Canadians have caused inflation. One need only look at the report of the former governor of the Bank of Canada, Stephen Poloz, which indicates that our investments prevented a period of deflation.

Within the hour, the Leader of the Opposition will have the opportunity to help Canadians by supporting Bill C-32 to implement the support measures set out in the fall economic statement.

[*English*]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians were hit with another interest rate uppercot today as inflationary deficits by the Liberal government are driving up inflation and interest rates. The Governor of the Bank of Canada has even said these deficits are driving the higher cost. One mother told the CBC that she signed into a 1.9%, variable rate mortgage because she believed the government when it said that the rates would be low for long. She now says, "I should punch myself on that decision. Why did I listen to all these people?"

How is this mother going to pay the extra \$1,000 a month in mortgage payments they are putting on her back?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would be careful if I were the member opposite. He asked people to listen to his advice, when his idea to hedge on inflation was to go buy crypto. Shame on that advice. It is irresponsible and not appropriate.

We are going to eliminate interest on student loans and apprentice loans. We are going to make it more affordable to buy a house. We are going to get workers the money they need faster. In one hour, the Conservative chorus can sing with us and support Canadians, or it can do what it has always done and vote against it.

## Oral Questions

• (1425)

### FIREARMS

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are singing from a very different song sheet than the inflationary government.

Do members know who else is singing from a different song sheet? The Liberal MP for the Yukon. He has confirmed what Conservatives have been saying all along. He says, "I'm not happy with this [gun bill], and I'm not in a position to support this bill at this point with those amendments in play." He also says, "This is really upsetting. Many, many Yukoners...regularly hunt, either as a food source or for the recreational aspects of hunting." Even their own back bench is getting the message.

Canadians do not want to ban hunters; they want to stop criminals. Will the government get the message?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are doing precisely that, including some of the provisions within Bill C-21, which will give additional tools to police, including raising maximum sentences to go after hardened gun traffickers, and including \$450 million to bolster resources for CBSA to allow it to build on the record number of illegal gun seizures.

Those were provisions the Conservatives either voted against or filibustered. If the Conservatives were serious about protecting our communities from gun violence, they would reverse their position and support these measures so we can go after the criminals who have been terrorizing our communities for far too long with guns.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this Liberal government awarded a contract to a company with ties to China to secure counterespionage technology. The problem is that the owner of that company has been charged in the United States with 21 espionage related crimes.

How can the government hire a company that has been criminally charged with espionage to protect our police forces from espionage?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the concerns surrounding the RCMP contract with Sinclair Technologies, and our government is reviewing them.

Public Services and Procurement Canada has a strong track record in managing the procurement of more than \$20 billion in goods and services every year according to the requirements set by the client department. We will be taking all the necessary steps to ensure the integrity of our infrastructure.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that answer was encrypted with bureaucratese. Maybe that would be a better way to protect our internal communications, but instead the government came up with a different plan. What it has done is given a contract to a company that is supposed to protect the RCMP from eavesdropping. That company is owned by another company that is charged with 21 espionage offences in the United States of America.

How on God's green earth did the government think it was a good idea to give a company accused of espionage control of our anti-espionage technology?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have put in place rigorous processes to screen for national security concerns when it comes to awarding contracts. I want to assure my colleague that we are looking very carefully at the way in which our independent public servants screened this particular contract. I share the member's concern. I think we can all agree that it is important to protect our national security. That is why we have cracked down on foreign funding and why we struck two independent, non-partisan panels to confirm the integrity of our democratic institutions, including our elections in 2019 and 2021. What is the distinction? We did these things. The Conservatives did not.

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*[Translation]***HEALTH**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, is there anyone who has not heard the story of the man listening to the radio in his car who hears on the news that a dangerous driver is driving against traffic? He yells at the radio, "there isn't just one, there are a hundred", because he does not realize that he is the dangerous driver. The Government of Canada is behaving in the exact same way, and it is not that funny.

Quebec, the provinces and, today, the Canadian Medical Association are asking the federal government to increase health care funding.

When will the government stop going the wrong way, start heading in the right direction and increase health transfers?

● (1430)

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely essential that we protect our health system. We will focus all our attention on doing so.

It is absolutely essential that we protect our system. That is why we will continue to invest in our health care system. We will continue to do so every day.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Medical Association asked for an increase in federal health care funding, but that has not happened. This is typical and has been going on for years.

Ottawa says it is co-operating, but that is not true. There is no co-operation. Everyone knows that the federal government is underfunding Quebec's health care system, but Ottawa is still withholding funding. Everyone knows that Ottawa knows nothing about delivering health care, but it still wants to impose standards.

Patients do not need lectures. Patients need health care.

Will the government increase health transfers, yes or no?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has a long history of working with the provinces and territories, not only to provide funding, but also to ensure a national vision for health care and systems that meet the needs of Canadians.

Since the start of the pandemic, our government has invested more than \$72 billion to protect Canadians' health.

We will increase Canada health transfers by 10% in March 2023, which is in addition to the extra 5% increase announced a few months ago.

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*[English]***THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Bank of Canada announced another interest rate increase today, and it is going to mean a lot of pain for Canadian families. With the increase in interest rates, we know that many families are going to see an increase in their mortgage payments of over \$1,000. That is not something most Canadian families can afford to pay in addition to the budgets they are dealing with right now.

So far, the approach to inflation has been to put more pressure on the backs of Canadians. When will the Prime Minister find a way to tackle inflation that does not create pain for workers but actually provides them the support and respect they need?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. leader of the New Democratic Party knows, the Bank of Canada is an independent institution that has been tasked, since December of last year, to get inflation back down to 2%.

The bank is doing its job. We are doing our job, which is making sure that we have the fiscal firepower to face what is to come, investing in Canadians and supporting the Canadians who need it the most. That is why we are helping Canadians to buy a new home, advancing the payments for workers' benefits and making sure that student loan interest gets removed forever.

This is the right thing to do. It is the responsible thing to do. It is why we hope that all parties vote with us on Bill C-32 today.



*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the job of the Bank of Canada should not be to create more pain for Canadians, and the government should find a way to reduce that pain and step up for them.

[*Translation*]

Consumer debt is up 8% over last year. These are tough times. Consumer debt is quite high because of interest rates and the rising cost of living. Workers are bearing the brunt of all this pressure.

When is this government going to deal with inflation in a way that no longer puts pressure on workers?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we greatly respect the efforts that working men and women are making to build a prosperous Canada. We know that Canadians are going through a difficult time during this global inflationary cycle. That is why, here in Canada, the Bank of Canada is independent. Its role is to reduce inflation to a 2% target rate. As the government, we take action to put money in the pockets of Canadians who need it, when they need it.

That is why it is essential that every member of the House vote in favour of supports for Canadians and help us by voting for Bill C-32.

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[*English*]

#### FINANCE

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the wasteful spending of the Liberal government knows no bounds. Yesterday we found out that the Liberals paid out billions of dollars in COVID payments to people who were ineligible. Rather than accepting their mistake, they implied that the Auditor General cannot be trusted. However, it is Liberal waste that is causing the cost of living crisis in this country.

When will the Prime Minister take responsibility and stop the inflationary spending so Canadians can put food on their tables and heat their homes?

• (1435)

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are very proud that the Auditor General confirmed that the emergency measures reached their goals of getting money into the hands of Canadians quickly, making sure that Canadians could stay home safely and avoiding a significant social and economic crisis.

The Auditor General also found that we got money to the people who needed it most: low-income workers and the most vulnerable populations. We will not apologize for that.

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, everybody in the House agrees that COVID supports were necessary. We are talking about wasteful spending. This is about the abject failure of the government to manage COVID supports and ensure that the people who needed them received them. Instead, the Liberals sent cheques to dead people and to people in prison.

The government has wasted and mismanaged billions of dollars. Now Canadians are footing the bill with inflation and are worried about how they are going to survive.

When will the Liberal government give Canadians a break?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, everyone in the House also agreed that we needed to get money to Canadians quickly, that we needed to do it through an attestation-based approach and that we needed to verify eligibility at the back end. That is exactly what we are doing.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Auditor General tabled a damning report, finding \$32 billion of waste. The Liberals borrowed and printed cash so they could give CERB cheques to prisoners, non-residents and paid civil servants. The minister tried to cover up her incompetence by then bludgeoning the Auditor General on her integrity.

The Conservatives believe in hope. With the huge increase today in interest rate hikes, when will the Prime Minister stop hurting Canadians and attacking those who tell the truth about the waste?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Auditor General and her entire team for her important work and for tabling her report in the House yesterday. I want to say that I have the utmost respect for the Auditor General, her role and her independence. As we have said before, we appreciate the fact that she has confirmed that our COVID-19 benefits were effective.

We will not be distracted. Canadians have given us a mandate and we will continue to be there to support them. I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and vote in favour of Bill C-32 this afternoon.

[*English*]

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we do not get to pick and choose out of the report. The Auditor General found waste in the billions, and the minister then said that she changed her numbers under pressure from the opposition. Yes, she called the Auditor General's integrity into question. It is shameful.

Meals on Wheels in my community had to close because of high food costs and rising gas prices. Volunteers cannot afford to deliver meals. The \$32 billion in government waste is an insult to those who have been stretching dimes into dollars.

Why should the Auditor General, seniors, workers and the vulnerable pay the price for Liberal waste?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the difference between us and the Conservatives is that we start from a place of trust with Canadians. We trust that when Canadians need support, they can access it. We trust that when Canadians are in a vulnerable position, they will have access to the benefits and supports they need.

Unlike the Conservatives, we start from a place of trust. That is how we are operating with the Canada dental benefit, the Canada housing benefit, child care and the doubling of the GST tax credit. When there is need, our government is responding, and we are going to keep doing that.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AUDITOR GENERAL**

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, here on this side of the House, we have confidence in the Auditor General, but the Minister of National Revenue, who was implicated in the Auditor General's report yesterday, is questioning her integrity.

What did the minister say? She said the Auditor General was pressured by the opposition and that it was not her fault that her numbers concerning wasteful government spending were exaggerated.

Yesterday, the Auditor General said, “the requirement to do the audit on the specific COVID benefits was included in an act.... That act...gave us a deadline to provide [the information] to the clerk”.

Who makes these laws? The government.

Why is the minister misleading the House? Will she apologize for the inappropriate remarks she made yesterday, yes or no?

● (1440)

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government made courageous choices. We chose to save lives and save the economy by helping Canadians put food on the table and a roof over their heads.

It was either that or the Conservatives' “chop, chop, chop”.

Let me just say that I meet with organizations on the ground, and they all tell me the same thing. They tell me how fortunate it was that the Liberal Party was in power during the crisis.

We will be there to keep working for all Canadians.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the only thing we are going to cut is Liberal taxes. That is what we are going to cut.

When the opposition asks the minister questions, she then goes and insults members in an interview with a local radio station in the Gaspé and refuses to apologize. When the Auditor General, an independent officer of Parliament, criticizes the minister's work, she questions the Auditor General's integrity. That is not even to mention her unacceptable reference to the Second World War yesterday.

Once again, I would ask the minister to do the only honourable thing left for her to do in the House, namely to rise and apologize.

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only thing this party is good for is regurgitating what their leader tells them and repeating the word “triple”.

Imagine what would happen if, instead of singing from the same hymn sheet, they took a look at real issues such as tackling global challenges, supporting Canadians, supporting families, supporting seniors and protecting the environment. Then again, in order to do that, they would have to take on some real problems, and they are not capable of doing that.

I urge them to vote for Bill C-32 this afternoon.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, barely a year ago, the government awarded Sinclair Technologies, a company held in part by China, a contract to secure RCMP communications and the confidentiality of the Prime Minister's communications.

This contract gives a Chinese government-owned company access to the RCMP's classified frequency. That would be like asking Dr. No to create gadgets for James Bond. It is as ridiculous as it is reckless. It is simply impossible to believe.

Will the government immediately cancel this contract?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have already put in place a very rigorous process to protect us from threats caused by foreign interference. We are proceeding with a review of the context of this particular contract.

However, we will continue to make investments. We will continue to provide all the tools the public safety and the security intelligence service need to protect all our institutions, including police services.

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in light of China's political interference in political party financing, the espionage at Hydro-Québec, the Winnipeg laboratory and the secret police stations, we would have thought that the RCMP would have started monitoring Chinese operations in Canada, but no, China has been monitoring RCMP operations.

The company has been charged with 21 espionage offences in the United States and the government did not even conduct a security check. The contract could have been awarded to a company in Boucherville, but no. It was given to China instead of Quebec.

Seriously, are they doing this on purpose?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government takes very seriously all threats caused by foreign interference. The RCMP has already acted on some threats caused by foreign interference. On this side of the House, we will continue to provide all the tools and intelligence the public safety community needs to protect all our democratic institutions.

[English]

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it has not even been two weeks since the government announced its about-face on China in its Indo-Pacific strategy, and we have learned that the Liberals awarded a contract for RCMP communications equipment to a company with ties to the government in Beijing.

Sinclair Technologies was awarded the contract for a system meant to protect the RCMP's land-based communications from eavesdropping. Here is the problem. Sinclair Technologies' parent company is owned, in part, by the Chinese government, and it is charged with 21 espionage offences. There is nothing to review. Will the government terminate this contract today, yes or no?

• (1445)

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course we are aware of the concerns surrounding the RCMP's contract with Sinclair Technologies. Our government is looking into them and is examining all potential options. We do take very seriously all measures to ensure the integrity of our infrastructure.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, here is an option: terminate it. The government admitted that it did not take security concerns or Sinclair's ownership into consideration during the bidding process. Worse yet, Sinclair's main competitor for the RCMP contract was a Quebec-based firm called Comprod. The government chose made-in-China instead of made-in-Canada, and the difference between Sinclair and Comprod was less than \$60,000.

The U.S. blacklisted Sinclair's parent company last year, and Canada just gave it a contract. Did the government really just sell national security for 60 grand?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we have said on a number of occasions, we are obviously looking extremely carefully at the details of how this contract was awarded, but I assure my colleague—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. minister from the top, please.

**Hon. Marco Mendicino:** Mr. Speaker, as I was explaining to colleagues in this chamber, of course we are extremely concerned with the revelations about this contract, which is why we are reviewing it very carefully. Obviously, we have put in place very rigorous protocols to guard against any threats to national security. Those are protocols that this government continues to reinforce with additional supports for law enforcement and national security, as well as additional supports to make sure we are protecting all of our democratic institutions, including the critical infrastructure that supports our police.

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

**The Speaker:** Before going on, I would like to remind the hon. members that, at times, when they shout out something, it is very clear to the Speaker that it is not parliamentary. I will not call anyone out now, but I would like to put it out there that, the next time I

### Oral Questions

hear something like that, I am going to have to call the person out, and nobody wants to be embarrassed in front of their peers or the constituents who put them here. Hopefully constituents will be proud of the members here because they are being civil to each other.

[Translation]

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

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, is there any country in the world where the prime minister allows the Chinese communist regime to have access to its secrets? I know of one: Canada.

Two years ago, the Prime Minister awarded a contract to Nuctech, a company with ties to the Chinese communist regime. It was hired to install systems in our embassies around the world. Luckily, this contract was cancelled.

Today, we learned that the Prime Minister gave a contract to a company that has been charged with 21 counts of espionage. It was hired to install equipment in the RCMP's telecommunications system, where the devices must be as secret as possible. Even the Prime Minister's security detail uses this system.

Why does the Prime Minister give contracts to the Chinese communist regime?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, since this is the same question, I will give the same answer.

We have instructed our independent officials to do a review of this particular contract involving the RCMP.

What is more important is that all members in the House understand that we have made investments to provide all the tools that the public safety community needs to protect our democratic institution.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has a major problem with its contracting. Two years ago, when the Nuctech issue came to light, there were specific recommendations to halt purchasing from companies with close ties to the Chinese communist regime.

How could the government have awarded a contract to a company tied to the Chinese communist regime for, of all things, security devices as important as the RCMP's communications systems?

Is there even anyone in charge in this government, or does everyone do as they please?

[English]

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course, as my colleagues have said, and I have said as well, we are taking these concerns extremely seriously. We are looking at all options. We are reviewing processes. Our concerns are with the member on this particular issue.

*Oral Questions*

● (1450)

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Children's Hospital is operating at over 120%. Children's hospital staff are being overwhelmed, and as emergency rooms fill up, families are forced to wait outside in trailers to get the care they need. Can members imagine that?

The government points fingers at everyone else and is letting Premier Smith do whatever she wants to our public health care system. Canadians are fed up being told that it is someone else's problem. When will the government do its job and uphold the Canada Health Act?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canada Health Act is one of the most important emblems of our country ensuring access to publicly funded quality health care. It is extraordinarily important that we all do our part to help pediatric institutions by doing what has been asked by public health, such as washing our hands, keeping a distance and wearing a mask when we are in crowded indoor spaces. It is also important for us to work with provinces and territories on the health human resources crisis and on adequate funding as we go forward.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, well, that answer was not enough from the minister. There is an influx of sick kids in Ontario and parents are panicked. Canada's health care system is in a state of crisis that the Prime Minister cannot ignore any longer. CHEO is calling in the Red Cross to help. Kingston Health Sciences Centre is taking kids from Hamilton and London as their children's hospitals are overrun and understaffed. Conservative premiers are gutting health care, and the government is allowing it to happen.

What will it take for the government to finally sit down with the provinces and provide the funding needed so sick kids can get the care they need?

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are worried, as are the parents of kids across this country, and our hearts are with them, but we all need to do everything we can do to keep people well and to observe the public health measures of the public health authorities.

Our government has a long track record of working with provinces and territories, not only to provide them funding, but also to ensure the national vision for a health care that delivers for Canadians. Our government has made significant investments to support health systems, including \$72 billion over the course of the pandemic. We will increase the Canada health transfer by 10% in March, as we increased it by 5% earlier—

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

\* \* \*

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know persons with disabilities are disproportionately under-represented in the labour force and face a range of physical, attitudinal and institutional barriers that prevent access to the workforce. That is why our

government is taking action to increase accessibility and inclusion in Canadian businesses and workplaces. Yesterday, the hon. Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion announced the creation of a Disability Inclusion Business Council.

Could the minister please share with the House more information about the council?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the creation of the Disability Inclusion Business Council marks a significant step toward prioritizing accessibility and disability inclusion in the workplace. The council is composed of business leaders from across Canada who are dedicated to promoting disability inclusion in their workplaces. Through this joint effort, we are working to ensure Canadians with disabilities can fully participate in the workforce and we can benefit from their innovation, creativity and hard work.

\* \* \*

**FIREARMS**

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives have been saying for weeks that the Liberal government is going after the tools used by hunters and farmers with Bill C-21, but the Liberals called it fearmongering and misinformation. They say that it is not a hunting rifle ban.

However, the Liberal MP for Yukon has publicly said that he will vote against Bill C-21. He agrees with Conservatives on this, and I know there are many more rural and northern Liberal MPs who agree with us as well. Therefore, who is spreading misinformation? Is it the Prime Minister or his rural MPs? Who is lying?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the answer is that the Conservatives are.

The reason is that we have been consistent all along in that we are not targeting law-abiding gun owners. We are not targeting guns that are commonly used for hunting. Rather, we are targeting guns that have been used in some of the worst mass shootings in this country's history, including at Polytechnique, where yesterday, the Prime Minister, a number of colleagues and I were able to grieve and stand in solidarity with those victims from Polytechnique.

I think we need to be united behind the cause of doing better in honour of the legacy of those victims, and that is precisely what Bill C-21 would do. It is high time for the Conservatives to reverse their position and support that bill.

• (1455)

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the amendments to Bill C-21 have caused great concern in Newfoundland and Labrador. Many in my province are avid hunters, either for sport or to put food on the table. This past year, 28,000 of the nearly 70,000 law-abiding gun owners hunted moose back home. I would like to know if the Liberal MPs from Newfoundland and Labrador will take the same stand as the Liberal MP for Yukon.

**Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague and many others that our government will fully support respectful, law-abiding hunters, including those who hunt traditionally, as they do in my province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and indigenous hunters, sports hunters and target shooters.

Sadly, yesterday, we all stood in the House and recognized the tragedy at École Polytechnique that happened 33 years ago. We all need to work together to make sure that assault-style weapons stay out of our country, and that is what we are going to do.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Liberal firearms expert Murray Smith at committee if hunting rifles would be banned as a result of Bill C-21, he answered, “Yes.” Since then, we have heard from thousands of law-abiding firearms owners and hunters across Canada. They are rightfully angry at the Prime Minister for giving them misinformation about his Liberal plan to ban hunting rifles and shotguns.

My question today is not to the Prime Minister. Instead, it is to all the rural Liberal MPs across the way. Will they stand up for their law-abiding firearms owners and hunters today or bow to this out-of-control Prime Minister?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am the proud member for the rural riding of Brome—Missisquoi, where there are many passionate hunters. I can say for sure that our government has no intention of preventing hunters or indigenous peoples from practising their sport and maintaining their traditions. We are willing to work with all members of the House to make sure our bill achieves its objective of eliminating assault weapons and handguns, the type of weapons used in acts of terror like those at the Polytechnique and the Quebec City mosque.

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I hope to get an answer to my question.

Once again, the government has shown that it does not have its priorities straight with its amendments to Bill C-21. Hunters and farmers in my riding are extremely concerned about their ability to put food on the table and, more importantly, to protect their livestock from predators and other threats.

When will the government stop targeting law-abiding gun owners and finally go after the real illegal gun traffickers?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that, in the Gaspé region, during

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the hunting season, there are more people in the woods than there are along our shorelines. I would remind my colleagues that hunters hunt moose and deer; they do not to wage war on moose and deer. Their aim is to protect the meat. My father, who was a butcher, had the same goal. I hope my colleagues will support our bill.

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### CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, 2023 will mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Jean Paul Riopelle, one of Quebec's most outstanding artists.

He played an unrivalled role in Quebec's art history, but the National Gallery of Canada will not pay tribute to him because, according to them, he is an old white man artist.

According to La Presse, the gallery's CEO did everything in her power to prevent an exhibit in his honour from happening.

Can the minister tell us when his government decided to exclude the fine arts from the National Gallery's mandate?

• (1500)

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague, of whom I am very fond, is kind of out in left field.

Obviously, Riopelle will be celebrated. He is a giant among giants, one of our greatest artists, not just here in Canada but also in France, Europe and around the world.

Obviously, the government was there recently to celebrate Riopelle's centennial, just as the government will be there in the future to continue to celebrate this great artist.

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that. I assume that a quick telephone call by the Minister of Canadian Heritage would correct the situation. If he were to do nothing about the National Gallery of Canada, it would either mean that he approves or that gallery management is following his orders.

What is happening at the gallery is that the Liberals are literally turning it into an ideological propaganda tool rather than a place to preserve and promote the fine arts. That is how low they have stooped and I find it mind-boggling.

That is happening not just at the gallery but also at the National Film Board of Canada and the Canada Council for the Arts. Even the CRTC tried its hand at censorship a little earlier this year.

When will the minister stop acting like the minister of propaganda and start acting like the Minister of Canadian Heritage?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, “minister of propaganda”, that hurts. Those are harsh words from my colleague.

*Oral Questions*

I want to assure him that we will be there to celebrate Jean Paul Riopelle, who, again, is a giant among our artists.

I had the opportunity to see several of his exhibits and I invite my colleagues to do the same.

We will be there to celebrate Jean Paul Riopelle.

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[*English*]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Christmas is coming, a time for holiday cheer and warmth, but the Liberal carbon tax is leaving Canadians out in the cold. Seniors and those on fixed incomes are struggling, having to choose between buying groceries and heating their homes. Moms have to choose between putting their kids in dance class or paying the home heating bill.

This is not fair. Will the Liberal government have some compassion for Canadians and stop with its failed carbon tax on Canadians?

**Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we recognize the challenges that seniors are facing, and that is precisely why we have been there delivering for them, whether it was the increase to the guaranteed income supplement, which has helped over 900,000 seniors and lifted 45,000 of them out of poverty, or the fact that we moved forward on increasing the old age security by 10% for those 75 and over, or the fact that we doubled the GST credit or provided dental and rental support.

On this side of the House, we are going to continue to deliver for seniors and all Canadians.

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that answer just proves that the Liberals are completely out of touch with reality. The reality is that the vast majority of Canadians will not see a cent from the programs they have announced. We are talking about the basic necessities of life.

Poor Liberal policy and reckless inflationary spending are going to cost Canadians an extra \$1,000 on their groceries next year. That is an over 10% increase on food prices. A family of four is going to be paying more than \$16,000 next year on groceries alone.

Will the government give Canadians a break and axe the carbon tax?

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all of us, on all sides of the House, are concerned about the affordability challenges of Canadian families, except on this side of the House we are doing something about it. The Conservatives can redeem themselves in just a few short minutes by voting for Bill C-32.

As the hon. member will know, as the price on pollution increases, so does the climate rebate. Unfortunately, the hon. Leader of the Opposition does not support that. He supports investing in cryptocurrency. Canadians are losing their shirts, and that is very unfortunate.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what the Liberals are doing. They are forcing Canadians to the food

bank. According to the Food Price Report, by 2030 a 5,000-acre farm will pay more than \$150,000 in carbon taxes. Let me be clear: That will destroy the economic viability of the family farm. Dr. Sylvain Charlebois already said we are losing family farms because of the carbon tax. This is putting our food security at risk.

Will the Prime Minister cancel the carbon tax on food production, or is the Liberal goal simply to bankrupt Canadian farmers and force Canadians to the food bank?

• (1505)

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. member that climate change is putting the family farm at risk. Since hurricane Fiona, I have visited farms in my community that have had silos turned down and their crops destroyed, and that are continuing to feel the financial pinch just as we head into the Christmas season.

I would further point out that the Conservatives talk a big game when it comes to affordability, but they voted against our measures to put more money in the pockets of seniors to help with the cost of housing. They opposed the Canada child benefit, and their leader hosted a press conference to call the programs we put in place during the pandemic big, fat government programs that Conservatives would not support.

We are going to continue to be there for families. I hope Conservatives will finally put their money where their mouth is and join us.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with the increase in the cost of living, students and recent graduates are having a hard time making ends meet. They are the future of this country, and we need to support them. They have expressed their concerns.

Can the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance tell the House what the government is doing to help students and recent graduates?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her question and her hard work.

With the increase in the cost of living, our government has been quick to act and provide support to Canadians who need it. We are continuing this support with our fall economic statement and Bill C-32 by including the elimination of interest on student loans. This will help students and new graduates. We will ensure that Canadians have money in their pockets.

The Conservatives can support us here within the hour by voting in favour of Bill C-32.

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[English]

### FINANCE

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are two billion dollars' worth of waste with respect to vaccines. The Liberal government would want us to believe that tracking these vaccines and their expiration dates is extremely difficult, because it has not been done before. In reality, quite obviously, thousands of businesses track their inventory every day. Once again, the government of inaction has failed Canadians. It is incapable of managing passports; it is incapable of managing border crossings, and it certainly cannot balance a budget.

Will the Liberal Prime Minister stand up and admit that his wasteful government is driving up prices for home heating, gas and groceries for all Canadians?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is one thing I would like to say. There is nothing more important than protecting the health and safety of Canadians, and that is what we did as a government. When we started in government, the fill-finish capacity at the beginning of COVID was around 30 million doses. Thanks to the investments we have attracted in this country, now we can produce and fill and finish more than 600 million doses, in case anything happens.

We did not choose the pandemic; we will not choose it if there is another one, but we choose to be better prepared on behalf of Canadians.

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have seen \$52 billion in new inflationary spending and \$500 billion in deficits in just two years. Yesterday the Auditor General reported that \$32 billion in overpayments and suspicious payments just went out the door. The Governor of the Bank of Canada said that if Liberal spending had been less, inflation would have been lower, and today interest rates went up by another half a per cent.

The Prime Minister's big spending is now hurting Canadians. Will he stop the spending, stop the waste and get inflation under control finally?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would direct my hon. colleague to a Scotiabank report that says very clearly how our investments in the pandemic had no effect on inflation.

In fact, let us look at the Auditor General's report, which said this:

We found that the COVID-19 programs achieved their objective to help Canada avoid a more severe contraction of the economy and the social consequences of...a significant increase in poverty. This financial support allowed the economy to rebound and return to its pre-pandemic level.

That is the job of a government. That is what we did. The Conservatives do not like it, but Canadians sure do.

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**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the job of the government is to make sure it is affordable for Canadians to pay for the essentials of life.

It is the job of the government to make sure the price of groceries does not rise by \$1,100 next year. It is the job of the government to make sure it is not forcing Canadians to make a choice between heating their home and eating. Yesterday we heard the Auditor General talking about \$4.6 billion going out to ineligible recipients.

Will the Liberal government stop its inflationary spending so that Canadians can afford to put gas in their tanks and food on their tables, and so they can heat their homes?

● (1510)

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. When Canadians needed us, and as they continue to need us, we have been there for Canadians. Nine million Canadians, at the height of the pandemic, accessed CERB. In fact, the Conservatives actually supported putting CERB out there, because we came together as a country.

Unfortunately, as we are going through the recovery, the Conservatives have voted against every single measure we have put forward to help Canadians.

Let me tell members something. Last Thursday we opened the Canada dental benefit for application, and over 35,000 Canadians have already applied for it. We are helping kids and helping Canadians.

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### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the news out of Winnipeg is horrific. We know that indigenous communities across this country are reeling.

Indigenous leaders have laid forth a path to save lives in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which calls for specific steps to be taken. Every day of inaction means more lives are needlessly lost.

When will the Prime Minister take this genocidal violence against indigenous women seriously and put in place real action to save lives?

**Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me be clear, it is a serious issue in Canada. Indigenous women are 12 times more likely to go missing and be murdered, and that is why the government has invested \$2.2 billion toward addressing this situation. In fact, in Winnipeg alone, for Manitoba indigenous women and 2SLGBTQ, just recently we made an announcement of \$8.4 million for those supports.

*Speaker's Ruling*

We are going to continue to move forward. We know there is more work to be done, and we are going to work with the member opposite to make sure we get that done.

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**INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Shafqat Ali (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has expertise and talent to become a leader in electric vehicle manufacturing.

Could the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry update the House on the work the government is doing to secure Canadian jobs and attract important investments in this sector?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have attracted a record number of investments. In fact, Bloomberg ranked Canada second in the world for its battery ecosystem. More recently, while I was in Germany, we signed a renewed MOU with Volkswagen at a time when it said it was considering Canada for its first battery cell manufacturing plant in North America.

This is good news for workers. This is good news for the economy. This is good news for Canada.

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**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, last week new charges were laid in the murders of four more indigenous women.

Indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to be murdered or go missing than other women and girls across the country. This is an ongoing genocide, and we need urgent action from all levels of government to keep indigenous women safe.

Will the minister commit to doing what the member for Winnipeg Centre and other indigenous leaders have called for, and provide immediate funds and resources to end this cycle of violence?

**Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is a serious question, and I want to get to it. I also want to acknowledge all the chiefs, proxy and first nations community members I have seen in the galleries, who are attending the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly.

We appreciate their advocacy. We know these are serious issues. They have a partner in our government. While the progress is slow, we are going to make sure that \$2.2 billion goes to support indigenous women across this country so they can feel safe, just as every other person does in this country.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AUDITOR GENERAL**

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That this House reaffirms its full and complete confidence in the Auditor General and the importance of her independent work, and emphasizes the quality of the information, advice and reports concerning the management of public funds in Parliament.

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

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

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

● (1515)

[English]

**PROTESTS IN CHINA**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the House leaders, and I hope you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

Whereas, protesters in China who are fighting for basic human rights and freedoms have been using an Airdrop feature on iPhones to avoid government censors, and

Whereas, Apple has announced its decision to disable that feature solely for phones in China, and

Whereas, such a move will make it more difficult for the protesters to avoid the authoritarian restrictions on communications, and

Whereas, other tech giants like Google have long collaborated with the Chinese regime in its policies to control online content and communication,

Therefore, this house condemn the decision by Apple and other tech giants for their complicity in the crackdown against peaceful protesters in China.

**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)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**POINTS OF ORDER****ALLEGED UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE—SPEAKER'S RULING**

**The Speaker:** The Chair would like to address an event that occurred yesterday morning concerning allegedly unparliamentary remarks heard from the sidelines during the questions and comments period held pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, and raised in a point of order by the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

The Chair has had an opportunity to review the debates and found that some remarks did indeed border on the limits of good taste.

[English]

The Chair is cognizant that the fall sittings are nearing their end and that five consecutive sitting weeks can take their toll. Nevertheless, I ask all members to be judicious in the choice of words they use, on or off the record.



[Translation]

As the Speaker, I have a duty to maintain order and decorum in the House, but it is up to all of you, duly elected members, to show respect for one another. We must work together to remain worthy of this great institution that we serve on behalf of all Canadians.

I thank the hon. members and all Canadians for their attention.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of 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, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:18 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-32.

[English]

Call in the members.

• (1530)

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 232)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aitchison	Albas
Allison	Arnold
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Benzen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferri
Findlay	Gallant
Généreux	Genius
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Maguire

Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzner	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shiple	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Williams	Williamson
Zimmer — 105	

#### Government Orders

#### NAYS

##### Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
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	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault

*Government Orders*

Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lemire
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
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	Pauzé
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Vuong	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi — 207	

**PAIRED****Members**

Abouttaif	Deltell
Dzerowicz	Hoback
Kitchen	Koutrakis
MacKenzie	McKay
Ng	O'Regan
Redekopp	Sajjan
Shields	Sidhu (Brampton South) — 14

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (for the Minister of Finance)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** 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.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded vote, and I believe the government whip also has something to add to that.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yes.

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives agree to apply the vote, with Conservatives voting no.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote and will be voting yes.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and will be voting yes.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 233*)

**YEAS****Members**

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
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	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi	El-Khoury

*Government Orders*

Erskine-Smith	Fergus		
Fillmore	Fisher		
Fonseca	Fortier		
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Aitchison	
Fraser	Freeland	Allison	Albas
Fry	Gaheer	Baldinelli	Arnold
Garneau	Garon	Barrett	Barlow
Garrison	Gaudreau	Berthold	Benzen
Gazan	Gerretsen	Block	Bezan
Gill	Gould	Brassard	Bradon
Green	Guilbeault	Calkins	Brock
Hajdu	Hanley	Carrie	Caputo
Hardie	Hepfner	Cooper	Chambers
Holland	Housefather	Dancho	Dalton
Hughes	Hussen	d'Entremont	Davidson
Hutchings	Iacono	Dowdall	Doherty
Idlout	Ien	Ellis	Dreeshen
Jaczek	Johns	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Epp
Joly	Jowhari	Fast	Falk (Provencher)
Julian	Kayabaga	Findlay	Ferreri
Kelloway	Khalid	Généreux	Gallant
Khera	Kusmierczyk	Gladu	Genuis
Kwan	Lalonde	Goodridge	Godin
Lambropoulos	Lametti	Gray	Gourde
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Jeneroux	Hallan
Larouche	Lattanzio	Kmiec	Kelly
Lauzon	LeBlanc	Kramp-Neuman	Kram
Lebouthillier	Lemire	Kusie	Kurek
Lightbound	Long	Lantsman	Lake
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	Lehoux	Lawrence
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lewis (Essex)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Lloyd	Liepert
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada	Martel	Maguire
Masse	Mathysen	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Mazier
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Melillo	McLean
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	Morantz	Moore
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod	Motz	Morrison
McPherson	Mendès	Nater	Muys
Mendicino	Miao	Patzer	O'Toole
Michaud	Miller	Perkins	Paul-Hus
Morrice	Morrissey	Rempel Garner	Reid
Murray	Naqvi	Roberts	Richards
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Ruff	Rood
Oliphant	Pauzé	Schmale	Scheer
Perron	Petitpas Taylor	Shiple	Seeback
Plamondon	Powlowski	Soroka	Small
Qualtrough	Robillard	Stewart	Steinley
Rodriguez	Rogers	Stubbs	Strahl
Romanado	Sahota	Tochor	Thomas
Saks	Samson	Uppal	Tolmie
Sarai	Scarpaleggia	Vecchio	Van Popta
Schiefke	Serré	Vien	Vidal
Sgro	Shanahan	Vis	Viersen
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Warkentin	Wagantall
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné	Williams	Waugh
Singh	Sorbara	Zimmer— 105	Williamson
Ste-Marie	St-Onge		
Sudds	Tassi		
Taylor Roy	Thériault		
Therrien	Thompson		
Trudeau	Trudel	Aboultaif	
Turnbull	Valdez	Dzerowicz	Deltell
Van Bynen	van Koeverden	Kitchen	Hoback
Vandal	Vandenbeld	MacKenzie	Koutrakis
Vignola	Villemure	Ng	McKay
Virani	Weiler	Redekopp	O'Regan
Wilkinson	Yip	Shields	Sajjan
Zahid	Zarrillo		Sidhu (Brampton South)— 14
Zuberi— 205			

**NAYS**

## Members

**PAIRED**

## Members

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## Routine Proceedings

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1535)

[Translation]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

## HEALTH

The House resumed from December 5 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Health concerning the extension of time to consider Bill C-224.

The hon. government whip.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting no.

[English]

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply the vote, with Conservatives voting yea.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 234)

## YEAS

## Members

Aitchison	Albas
Allison	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benzen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brook
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen

Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hughes
Idlout	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	MacGregor
Maguire	Martel
Masse	Mathysen
May (Saamich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
McPherson	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
O'Toole	Patzner
Paul-Hus	Paupé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shiple	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Williams
Williamson	Zarrillo
Zimmer— 161	

## NAYS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Brière
Carr	Casey

*Routine Proceedings*

Chagger  
 Champagne  
 Chen  
 Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
 Coteau  
 Damoff  
 Dhillon  
 Dong  
 Dubourg  
 Duguid  
 Ehsassi  
 Erskine-Smith  
 Fillmore  
 Fonseca  
 Fragiskatos  
 Freeland  
 Gaheer  
 Gerretsen  
 Guilbeault  
 Hanley  
 Hepfner  
 Housefather  
 Hutchings  
 Ien  
 Joly  
 Kayabaga  
 Khalid  
 Kusmierczyk  
 Lambropoulos  
 Lamoureux  
 Lattanzio  
 LeBlanc  
 Lightbound  
 Longfield  
 MacAulay (Cardigan)  
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
 Martinez Ferrada  
 McDonald (Avalon)  
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
 Mendès  
 Miao  
 Morrissey  
 Naqvi  
 O'Connell  
 Petitpas Taylor  
 Qualtrough  
 Rodriguez  
 Romanado  
 Saks  
 Sarai  
 Schiefke  
 Sgro  
 Sheehan  
 Sorbara  
 Suds  
 Taylor Roy  
 Trudeau  
 Valdez  
 van Koeverden  
 Vandenberg  
 Weiler  
 Yip  
 Zuberi— 149

Chahal  
 Chatel  
 Chiang  
 Cormier  
 Dabrusin  
 Dhaliwal  
 Diab  
 Drouin  
 Duclos  
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
 El-Khoury  
 Fergus  
 Fisher  
 Fortier  
 Fraser  
 Fry  
 Garneau  
 Gould  
 Hajdu  
 Hardie  
 Holland  
 Hussien  
 Iacono  
 Jaczek  
 Jowhari  
 Kelloway  
 Khara  
 Lalonde  
 Lametti  
 Lapointe  
 Lauzon  
 Lebouthillier  
 Long  
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
 MacDonald (Malpeque)  
 Maloney  
 May (Cambridge)  
 McGuinty  
 McLeod  
 Mendicino  
 Miller  
 Murray  
 Noormohamed  
 Oliphant  
 Powlowski  
 Robillard  
 Rogers  
 Sahota  
 Samson  
 Scarpaleggia  
 Serré  
 Shanahan  
 Sidhu (Brampton East)  
 St-Onge  
 Tassi  
 Thompson  
 Turnbull  
 Van Bynen  
 Vandal  
 Virani  
 Wilkinson  
 Zahid

**PAIRED**

## Members

Aboultaif  
 Dzerowicz  
 Kitchen  
 MacKenzie  
 Ng  
 Redekopp

Deltell  
 Hoback  
 Koutrakis  
 McKay  
 O'Regan  
 Sajjan

Shields

Sidhu (Brampton South)— 14

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The House resumed from December 5 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Health concerning the extension of time to consider Bill C-252.

[Translation]

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yes.

[English]

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply the vote with Conservatives voting yes.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour of the motion.

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, New Democrats agree to apply and will be voting in favour.

[Translation]

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, the Green Party also agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour of the motion.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 235)

**YEAS**

## Members

Aitchison	Albas
Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Benzen
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot

*Routine Proceedings*

Chagger	Chahal	McLean	McLeod
Chambers	Champagne	McPherson	Melillo
Champoux	Chatel	Mendès	Mendicino
Chen	Chiang	Miao	Michaud
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)	Miller	Moore
Cooper	Cormier	Morantz	Morrice
Coteau	Dabrusin	Morrison	Morrissey
Dalton	Damoff	Motz	Murray
Dancho	Davidson	Muys	Naqvi
Davies	DeBellefeuille	Nater	Noormohamed
d'Entremont	Desbiens	O'Connell	Oliphant
Desilets	Desjarlais	O'Toole	Patzer
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Diab	Doherty	Perkins	Perron
Dong	Dowdall	Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Dreeshen	Drouin	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Dubourg	Duclos	Reid	Rempel Garner
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Richards	Roberts
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Robillard	Rodriguez
Ellis	Epp	Rogers	Romanado
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Rood	Ruff
Falk (Provencher)	Fast	Sahota	Saks
Fergus	Ferreri	Samson	Sarai
Fillmore	Findlay	Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Fisher	Fonseca	Schiefke	Schmale
Fortier	Fortin	Seeback	Serré
Fragiskatos	Fraser	Sgro	Shanahan
Freeland	Fry	Sheehan	Shiple
Gaheer	Gallant	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Simard
Garneau	Garon	Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Garrison	Gaudreau	Small	Sorbara
Gazan	Généreux	Soroka	Steinley
Genuis	Gerretsen	Ste-Marie	Stewart
Gill	Gladu	St-Onge	Strahl
Godin	Goodridge	Stubbs	Sudds
Gould	Gourde	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Gray	Green	Thériault	Therrien
Guilbeault	Hajdu	Thomas	Thompson
Hallan	Hanley	Tochor	Tolmie
Hardie	Hepfner	Trudeau	Trudel
Holland	Housefather	Turnbull	Uppal
Hughes	Hussen	Valdez	Van Bynen
Hutchings	Iacono	van Koeverden	Van Popta
Idlout	Ien	Vandal	Vandenbeld
Jaczek	Jeneroux	Vecchio	Vidal
Johns	Joly	Vien	Viersen
Jowhari	Julian	Vignola	Villemure
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Virani	Vis
Kelly	Khalid	Wagantall	Warkentin
Khera	Kmiec	Waugh	Weiler
Kram	Kramp-Neuman	Wilkinson	Williams
Kurek	Kusie	Williamson	Yip
Kusmierczyk	Kwan	Zahid	Zarrillo
Lake	Lalonde	Zimmer	Zuberi— 310
Lambropoulos	Lametti		
Lamoureux	Lantsman		
Lapointe	Larouche		
Lattanzio	Lauzon		
Lawrence	LeBlanc		
Lebouthillier	Lehoux	Nil	
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)		
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert		
Lightbound	Lloyd		
Long	Longfield		
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)	Aboultaif	Deltell
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor	Dzerowicz	Hoback
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire	Kitchen	Koutrakis
Maloney	Martel	MacKenzie	McKay
Martinez Ferrada	Masse	Ng	O'Regan
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)	Redekopp	Sajjan
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier	Shields	Sidhu (Brampton South)— 14
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)		
McGuinty	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)		

NAYS

PAIRED

Members

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

### BUILDING A GREEN PRAIRIE ECONOMY ACT

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-235, An Act respecting the building of a green economy in the Prairies, be read the third time and passed.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-235 under Private Members' Business.

• (1550)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 236)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garneau
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Kusmierczyk

Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
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 (Saaneich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Singh	Sorbara
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Vuong
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 176

### Private Members' Business

#### NAYS

##### Members

Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Benzen
Berthold
Bezan
Block
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo
Chabot
Champoux
Dalton
Davidson
d'Entremont
Desilets
Dowdall
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Gallant
Gaudreau
Genuis
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Jeneroux

*Routine Proceedings*

Kelly	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lemieux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Maguire	Martel
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poillievre	Rayes
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shipley
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson
Zimmer — 137	

**PAIRED**

## Members

Aboultaif	Deltell
Dzerowicz	Hoback
Kitchen	Koutrakis
MacKenzie	McKay
Ng	O'Regan
Redekopp	Sajjan
Shields	Sidhu (Brampton South) — 14

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

**The Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 32 minutes.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

**FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION**

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 21(1) of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, a certified copy of the report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 20 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

**INVESTMENT CANADA ACT**

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-34, An Act to amend the Investment Canada Act.

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs entitled “Moving Towards Improving the Health of Indigenous Peoples in Canada: Accessibility and Administration of the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program”.

The Committee considered the matter and decided to report it to the House.

● (1555)

[*English*]

## JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, entitled “Improving Support for Victims of Crime”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report, in relation to Bill C-291, an act to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other acts (child sexual abuse material). The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.



*Routine Proceedings***QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, entitled “Supplementary Estimates (B), 2022-23: Votes 1b, 5b and 10b under Department of Fisheries and Oceans”.

\* \* \*

**MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That a take-note debate on murdered and missing indigenous women and girls be held later today, pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, and that, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House: (a) members rising to speak during the debate may indicate to the Chair that they will be dividing their time with another member; (b) the time provided for the debate be extended beyond four hours, as needed, to include a minimum of 12 periods of 20 minutes each; and (c) no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair.

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

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

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

**PETITIONS**

## PUBLIC NUDITY

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, this petition from a constituent speaks to an issue that many people do not want to speak about: public nudity. The petitioner points out that public nudity was not in itself any form of crime until 1954, and asks the House to repeal section 174 of the Criminal Code to specify that public nudity in and of itself is not indecent or obscene.

## SENIORS

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I am tabling a petition from seniors across Canada who have identified very clearly that single seniors have a much harder time financially and that we need to see significant changes by the government to support them. They note that senior couples can split their pension income, thereby allowing them to pay less tax and qualify for key things like old age security. That is not available for seniors who are single.

The petitioners note that the cost of living for a single person is two-thirds of the cost of living for a couple; that single-person households are continuing to grow and are the fastest-growing population in Canada, according to Statistics Canada; that of the six million seniors in Canada, over one-third are single, many of them women; and that this demographic will continue to grow.

This group is asking for justice on this issue and I hope they see it.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 900 and 902.

[Text]

Question No. 900—**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to the Community Services Recovery Fund: (a) how much of the \$400-million fund has been delivered to date; and (b) what are the details of all items financed so far through the fund, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) location, (iii) amount, (iv) project description, (v) date of funding?

**Ms. Ya’ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in budget 2021, the government provided \$400 million to ESDC to create the community services recovery fund, or CSRF. This fund is a one-time investment to help respond to the adaptation and modernization needs of charities and non-profits facing the immediate and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This investment will strengthen the charitable and non-profit sector as it supports recovery in communities across Canada.

On November 22, 2022, the government announced that three national funders, that is, the Canadian Red Cross, Community Foundations of Canada, and the United Way Centraide Canada, have been selected to distribute CSRF funding to help a broad and diverse range of charities and non-profits adapt and modernize. National funders will be responsible for establishing open application processes and assessing applications from charities and non-profits providing services in communities across Canada. The grant application process for organizations to apply for funding is expected to be launched in early January 2023. The national funders will be responsible for communicating when it is open for eligible organizations to apply.

The national funders have launched a CSRF website, [www.communityservicesrecoveryfund.ca](http://www.communityservicesrecoveryfund.ca), that will be kept updated as work progresses.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 902—Mr. Andrew Scheer:**

With regard to the government's plan to reduce emissions arising from fertilizer application by 30 percent and its impact on Farm Credit Canada (FCC): (a) will FCC be lowering the amount of credit available to farmers whose projected yields will decrease as a result of using less fertilizer; (b) which crop yields does FCC predict will drop the most as a result of the government's plan; (c) broken down by type of crop, what are FCC's projections related to how much loss of yield that farmers will incur as a result of the government's plan; (d) broken down by type of crop, what are FCC's projections regarding the loss of income as a result of the government's plan; (e) is FCC planning to advise farmers not to plant certain types of crops as a result of not being able to use as much fertilizer, and, if so, which crops; and (f) has FCC received any communication from the government on not publicly discussing the negative impacts of the government's plan on farmers, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) the individuals involved in the communication, (ii) the type of communication, (iii) the date, (iv) a summary?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a) of the question, the amount of credit available to FCC customers is not impacted by the government's plan to reduce emissions from fertilizer application.

With regard to parts (b), (c), (d) and (e) of the question, FCC has no analysis to inform a response.

In response to part (f), FCC has received no direction on communication from the government related to the fertilizer emissions reduction plan.

\* \* \*

• (1600)

[English]

**QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 901 and 903 to 911 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

**Question No. 901—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to the targets listed in the mandate letter of the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development: (a) have fees for regulated child care been reduced by 50 percent on average, everywhere outside Quebec, and, if not, (i) when will they be reduced, (ii) will they be reduced by the end of 2022, and, if not, why not; (b) how does the minister plan on reducing regulated child care fees to \$10 a day on average by the end of fiscal year 2025-26 everywhere outside Quebec, and what are the specifics or metrics to be attained each year between now and 2025-26 to measure whether the target will be met; (c) what are the specific plans or measures related to how the government will create 250,000 new child care spaces; (d) how many spaces will each plan or measure in (c) produce, and over what time period; and (e) what are the specific plans or measures related to how the government will hire 40,000 more early childhood educators by the end of fiscal year 2025-26, including specific details on where the government plans on finding the additional 40,000 educators?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 903—Mr. Adam Chambers:**

With regard to income tax and the Canada Revenue Agency, broken down by year since 2016: (a) what is the total number of people who filed income tax returns, broken down by income tax bracket; and (b) what was the total amount of

revenue collected, from personal income tax, broken down by tax bracket and tax return filed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 904—Mr. Adam Chambers:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): what is the total number of employees or full-time equivalents in each (i) division, (ii) enforcement area of the CRA, broken down by year since 2016?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 905—Mr. Gerald Soroka:**

With regard to government employees on leave, broken down by department, agency, or other government entity: (a) how many employees are on leave as of October 20, 2022, broken down by type of leave; and (b) how many employees were on "Other Leave With Pay" (code 699), broken down by month since January 1, 2022?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 906—Mrs. Laila Goodridge:**

With regard to government programs aimed at addressing drug and alcohol addiction: (a) what programs are currently being developed by the government or are already put in place; (b) for each program in (a), (i) what metrics are used to judge the success or failure of the program, (ii) what is the desired outcome of the program; and (c) what are the details of each poll the government has conducted since 2016 in relation to the programs or the issue of addictions in general, including, for each, (i) the date, (ii) who conducted the poll, (iii) the methodology, (iv) the questions asked, (v) the results and findings?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 907—Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to government advertising to promote COVID-19 vaccines and booster doses: (a) how much has the federal government spent to date on advertising and promoting COVID-19 vaccines; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by month since the first vaccines were approved; (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by (i) individual campaign, (ii) advertising medium (television, newspaper, online, etc.); (d) what is the breakdown of all traditional advertising spending promoting vaccines or booster doses by station or publication; (e) what is the breakdown of all social media advertising to promote vaccines or booster doses by social media network, outlet or website; (f) what is the breakdown of (d) and (e) by advertising campaign; and (g) what are the details of any appearance fees that were provided to public health officials, public figures, celebrities, or influencers to appear in such advertisements, including, for each, the (i) name of individual paid an appearance fee, (ii) amount paid, (iii) description of the advertisement, (iv) reason for choosing the individual to appear in the advertisement, (v) start and end dates of advertisements?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 908—Mr. Corey Tochor:**

With regard to the recovery of overpayments and fraudulently obtained payments to the various COVID-19 related financial relief programs put in place by the government: (a) how much did the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) (i) spend to date, (ii) expect to spend in the future, on recovering the payments; (b) how many CRA employees or full-time equivalents are assigned to files related to the recovery of such payments; and (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by relief program?

(Return tabled)

## Government Orders

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## Question No. 909—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to government procurement and contracts for the provision of research or speechwriting services to ministers, since March 1, 2022: (a) what are the details of all contracts, including the (i) start and end dates, (ii) contracting parties, (iii) file number, (iv) nature or description of the work, (v) value of the contract; and (b) with regard to contracts for speechwriting, what is the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) audience or event at which the speech was, or intended to be, delivered, (iv) number of speeches written, (v) cost charged per speech?

(Return tabled)

## Question No. 910—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to the consultations conducted by the government on items contained in any government legislation introduced so far in the 44th Parliament, broken down by each bill: (a) which bills contained measures for which the government consulted with stakeholders, including any other level of government, prior to the introduction of the bill; and (b) what are the details of all such consultations, including (i) the bill number, (ii) the measures that were consulted on, (iii) who was consulted, (iv) when were they consulted, (v) how were they consulted?

(Return tabled)

## Question No. 911—Ms. Leslyn Lewis:

With regard to the government's participation in the Agile Nations network: (a) what was Canada's role in the initiation and development of the Agile Nations concept and its charter, signed in November 2020; (b) what were the policy imperatives and rationale to sign the charter; (c) with which stakeholders did consultations on a proposed Agile Nations Charter take place; (d) how was each stakeholder in (c) consulted and what feedback did they provide; (e) what are the terms of Canada's participation in the Agile Nations network, including the participation length; (f) what are the specific results, outcomes, and measurable objectives expected to be achieved as a result of Canada's participation in the network; (g) what projects has the government participated in or funded as part of the Agile Nations, including, for each project, the (i) name, (ii) agency or department responsible, (iii) objectives, (iv) project summary, (v) reason the project received funding, (vi) location, (vii) partners; (h) what are the total expenditures related to Canada's participation in the Agile Nations since 2020, broken down by (i) department or agency, (ii) project (if applicable), (iii) type of expenditure; (i) what are the project details of the Digital Credentials and Digital Trust Services, including the (i) description, (ii) latest status of the project, (iii) anticipated completion date, (iv) implementation risks or issues identified, (v) projected outcomes; and (j) what are the project details of the National Digital Trust Service, including the (i) description, (ii) latest status of the project, (iii) anticipated completion date, (iv) implementation risks or issues identified, (v) projected outcomes?

(Return tabled)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[English]

## FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, November 15, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Bill C-32 at the third reading stage.

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (for the Minister of Finance)** moved 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 third time and passed.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent to share my time with the member for Scarborough Centre. Otherwise, I will be speaking for 20 minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I thought that might be added incentive.

It is really important we recognize something that came out of the Auditor General's report that I would like to start my comments off with this afternoon. When we look at it, whether with respect to the Prime Minister, the ministers or the members on this side of the House, we will find a consistent theme. We want to be there in a real and tangible way for all Canadians with an economy that works for all of us. That has been consistent virtually since we have been in government.

We have seen policy decisions from the get-go. Whether it was with respect to cutting the tax rates for the middle class, the complete overhaul of the Canada child benefit program or supporting seniors through the GIS going into the worldwide pandemic, there was virtually a smorgasbord of different programs provided. I know there has been a lot of reflection regarding the Auditor General lately, and I want to use her words with respect to the billions of dollars we have collectively approved to spend through the House.

I would like to quote the Auditor General, who said that she found, overall, that the programs were quite effective in meeting the government's objective of first getting support out to individuals and employers quickly, minimizing the increase in poverty or income inequalities, and then also helping the economy bounce back from the pandemic. That comes from the Auditor General.

*Government Orders*

I think there are members who, over the last couple of years in particular, saw the benefit of the government creating the CERB or wage subsidy programs and the supports for small businesses. Whether it was putting money into the pockets of Canadians or providing and protecting the jobs of Canadians, the Canadian government and the Prime Minister, working with an effective and active caucus, one that continuously sought feedback from communities from coast to coast to coast, understood their importance. We implemented budgetary and legislative measures so Canadians would be in a better position to bounce back after the pandemic. That is what this legislation, at least in good part, is about.

We, and the Conservatives, talk a lot about inflation. We are concerned about inflation. That is why we have this bill before us. When we talk about the inflation rate, yes, we are lower than the United States. We are lower than many of the European countries, England and others, but it is not good enough. The Conservatives are very critical of our inflation rate. I did a background check and in the last two years of Stephen Harper's government our inflation rate was higher than the U.S.A.'s. Today, our inflation rate is lower than the U.S.A.'s. At the end of the day—

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Because you're not growing our economy.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong. There are hundreds of thousands of jobs out there today. On virtually every point, this government has exceeded what Stephen Harper ever did. One of my constituents summed up quite well the comparison between the previous government and this government when he said that he hated to think what the pandemic would have been like if the Conservatives had been in government.

I believe Canadians are very much aware we have a national government and a Prime Minister who truly care about providing those important services. That is what allowed us, as the federal Auditor General has said, to bounce back to the degree we have.

● (1605)

However, that is not good enough. We believe we can do even more. If we talk about the social programs, things Canadians are very passionate about, I could cite health care and the additional billions of dollars from this government. In fact no government in the history of Canada has invested more money in health care than this government. We have achieved health care accords. We have recognized the priorities of Canadians by looking at long-term health care and mental health. In fact in this very bill we are debating today, we talk about expanding dental benefits for children under the age of 12. For the first time ever, there would be a national program to ensure there are dental benefits for children.

In the fall economic statement, we talk about supporting Canadians who are having a tough time with rent. We would provide rental subsidies to support, as best we can, those individuals. We can talk about the debt students have. Students are going through a very difficult time. We would eliminate the interest on federal student loans. It would not be a one-time thing, but permanent. We want to encourage our constituents and Canadians to look at alternatives, such as how to support the housing demands in Canada.

We have the intergenerational housing credit for people who want to construct suites for parents, seniors or people with disabili-

ties. The Government of Canada is there to support that sort of initiative. We have a government that recognizes that seniors 75 and older incur different types of costs and that there are limitations for those seniors. In fact we made a campaign platform commitment to give a 10% increase on OAS for seniors over 75, and we are doing just that.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

The hon. member for Montcalm on a point of order.

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to miss anything my eloquent colleague says, but I have had to adjust my earpiece to the maximum volume. There is no one in the interpretation booths, and the sound is bad.

When a different interpreter comes in, I can hear my colleague as if he were speaking directly into my ear. It is unacceptable that we are unable to fix our interpretation and sound problems.

This is not the first time I rise to mention this. I do not know why there is no one in the booths, but I know that the interpretation system right now is inadequate.

I will not be damaging my hearing and I want to be able to hear my colleague, who I like listening to, incidentally, even if I do not always agree with him. I would like—

● (1610)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the member for his comments. There are three other booths near the lobbies, and there is someone in one of them.

The hon. member for Montcalm wishes to add something.

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** Mr. Speaker, here is the problem. The sound is good when there are people in the booths here in the House. The booths in the House are properly equipped for sound.

Every time we have an interpreter working remotely outside the House, the sound is bad, and it can damage our hearing. I demand, as a member of House, that my hearing not be jeopardized.

Let us fix the problem once and for all.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I again thank the member. We will try to resolve this problem. We can do another sound check this evening to ensure that everything is working properly.

*Government Orders*

[English]

I am not going to allow the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader to back up and start again, but he could perhaps pick up from the last sentence.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, as members know, I would be more than happy to start fresh. However, I will continue on with something I know Canadians from coast to coast to coast are concerned with, and in particular so are my Bloc friends. My friends in the Bloc like the issue of health care, and maybe this is a good way for me to provide some thoughts in regard to it, because I am very passionate about health care.

I really believe it is, for me personally over the last 30 years as a parliamentarian, probably the number one concern, because I recognize the true value of having national health care. Whether someone lives in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax, any other municipality in between or up north, I would like to think there is a certain level of quality public health care no matter where.

Mobility within Canada is critically important. I say that because I made reference to the fact that the national government gives record amounts of money toward health care. I was a provincial politician for 20 years, and throughout those years, it seems, every year provinces asked for more money in health care. There is an expectation that the national government should do more than be an ATM.

In fact I can recall the days when there was a huge tax point transfer. Provinces took a tax point transfer instead of a cash transfer, and I was not a big fan of that. I do not think we should do that, or anything of that nature, into the future. I believe Canadians want a quality health care system. I am very proud of our government, whether it is the Prime Minister or the Minister of Health in particular, and their approach in dealing with health care here in Canada.

As a government we continue to support health care. We want to work with all the different stakeholders, and I look forward to that ongoing debate on health care, in terms of this legislation. This is good, sound and solid legislation that would be there to support Canadians. I wish all members would vote in favour of it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois asked that Bill C-32 include a commitment from the government to increase health transfers. Since the third wave of COVID-19, every expert has said that what Quebec and the provinces need is predictability to be able to improve their systems. Short-term and one-time investments are not going to solve the problem.

I would like to ask my colleague what the government is waiting for to meet the needs of Quebec and the provinces, patients and staff. If we want to rebuild our healthcare systems, we need respectable health transfers. We asked for 35%. The provinces spend \$200 billion a year on health, while the federal government kicks in \$42 billion. Increasing transfers by 10% will not solve the problem.

If health is important to my colleague, does he agree with the unanimous demand made by Quebec and the provinces?

• (1615)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would be surprised if there were a province that did not agree to ask for more money.

When I was the health care critic for the Province of Manitoba, I suggested that the greatest threat to health care at that time was not necessarily an issue of financing as much as how important it was to manage the changes necessary in order to be able to afford the type of health care expectations Canadians have. I believe there is a role, through the Canada Health Act, for Ottawa to say there is an expectation that, whether someone lives in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax or anywhere in between, if they need a hip replacement, it should be available for them in a reasonable time frame.

I do not believe for a moment that the federal government should just hand out a pile of cash. I believe the federal government has a role, through the Canada Health Act, to meet the expectations Canadians have that it ensure a quality health care service coast to coast. Some provinces will do better than others, but overall we need to ensure this social program is there for all of us.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I have been noticing that the Liberals and the Conservatives seem to be on the same side when it comes to not taxing the major big box stores.

I see that they have made a small incremental tax in the Canada recovery dividend, but it does not do enough.

I wonder if the member can respond to whether the Canada recovery dividend needs to be extended to big box stores that have been showing record profits.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, in the legislation that accompanied the very first budget, from what I understand, we increased the tax bracket for Canada's wealthiest 1%.

From the very beginning to the more recent federal budget where we put in a special tax, which is due to the recovery, on banks and insurance companies, the Government of Canada wants to ensure that everyone believes, knows or understands that we all have to pay our fair share.

Over the last number of years, we have put a great deal of emphasis on Canada's middle class. The healthier our middle class is, the healthier our economy will be, and we are there to support the middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the House that we are debating the fall economic statement. I always notice, and I mean this in the nicest way, that the Liberal speakers know very little about the economy when we are debating economic matters like the economic statement.

I listened to the member across the way, with intent, because he did bring up some historical context here about inflation. I wonder if he knows that the rate of inflation and how it is measured in Canada is historically lower than it is in the United States because of the way we measure owners' equivalent rent.

Most Canadians are asking, "How come it is always lower in Canada than it is in the United States?"

Since he referenced some history about one time when it was actually higher in Canada, according to his interpretation, I will ask him this. Did that measurement change during those years, or did that measurement change to manipulate the inflation rate that we are showing right now?

It is an open question. I actually do not know the answer.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the stats I got were from the U.S.A., which indicated 2014-15, the last two years of Stephen Harper. The actual inflation rate in the United States was lower than in Canada. The member is right. Often, the Canadian rate is lower, as it has been here for the last number of years and continues to be, even today when the Conservatives voice their concerns about the inflation rate.

It does not mean that we should not be sensitive to those grocery costs and other expenses at the local level. We need to do more. That is why we brought forward the legislation to support Canadians, even during this difficult time. I encourage all members to recognize that Canada is doing reasonably well on a worldwide basis.

• (1620)

**Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today during the third reading debate to support Bill C-32. I am one of the final speakers on this important legislation that would implement some of the key measures from our government's fall economic statement and bring needed help to Canadians who need it the most, including in my riding of Scarborough Centre.

I have spoken several times in the House about inflation and the impact it is having on families in my riding. It seems like everything is more expensive. For families in Scarborough, which is one of those communities where people are working hard to join the middle class, it is not like it was easy for many families to make ends meet already.

The lack of affordable and suitable housing is a long-standing issue. Rising interest rates are not helping. Add in the higher cost of groceries and seemingly everything else, and it leaves many families having to make very difficult choices every month. With housing, transportation, groceries, school outings and clothes for children, paycheques never seem to go far enough. For too many families, it is harder than ever to get ahead.

In the spring, we were all focused on the high price of gas. It is still not cheap, but it is down substantially from its peak of over

two dollars per litre. Groceries and other necessities remain more expensive than usual, and this trend is forecast to continue into the coming year.

While my friends across the way may say otherwise, inflation is not a made-in-Canada phenomenon. Groceries are not more expensive because our government stepped up during the pandemic to stop people from losing their homes and businesses from declaring bankruptcy.

In fact, our pandemic supports for Canadians, which I recall all members in the House working on together to deliver them to Canadians expeditiously, saw Canada emerge stronger from the pandemic. We were there for Canadians and we always will be.

Inflation is a global phenomenon driven by the zero-COVID policy in China, ongoing supply chain disruptions, climate change impacting the harvest of vital crops and the war in Ukraine. Canada is not immune to these global pressures.

We have done better than many of our peers. According to a report last month from CTV, Canada had the third-lowest inflation rate in the G7 at 6.9%, which is higher than only France and Japan, and faring much better than the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and even the United States.

That said, the challenges being faced by many Canadians are very real, and Canadians expect their government to be there to help those who need it the most. You and I do not need help, Mr. Speaker. We can tighten our belts and weather the storm until it passes.

However, those families already on the edge, the seniors on a fixed income and the single mother trying to support her kids on a minimum-wage job are the people who need targeted assistance. It is those Canadians we are seeking to help with Bill C-32.

I would like to focus on a few of the ways we are already helping constituents in my riding who need help the most.

By doubling the GST tax credit for six months, we are directly helping lower-income seniors and families. Everyone below a certain income threshold is eligible for the GST tax credit, and this increased rebate is already putting money back into the pockets of Canadians who need help the most.

A single person with no dependent children can receive up to \$234, and a couple with no children can receive up to \$306. This goes all the way up to \$628 for a couple with four children.

We are also topping up the Canada housing benefit with a \$500, one-time payment. Everyone, from young people living on their own for the first time to families and seniors on a fixed income, is eligible based on their income and how much of their income they pay toward rent.

*Government Orders*

In short, whether it is a family with a net income under \$35,000 or it is a single person earning under \$20,000 and paying 30% or more of their income on rent, then they can qualify for this payment, but they need to apply for it. Applications open December 12, and if someone is eligible, I strongly encourage them to go online to apply.

We have also launched the Canada dental benefit for low-income families with children under the age of 12. It can provide up to \$1,300 over two years to help with dental costs for eligible families. We expect this program to expand to lower-income seniors next year. I know it will make a difference for many seniors on a fixed income.

If people take care of their teeth, their teeth will take care of them. This program means that lower-income families without employer coverage do not need to neglect their oral health needs. We are also working toward a national dental care plan for all Canadians.

These are all targeted programs that are putting more money back into the pockets of lower-income families and seniors. We are building on these initiatives with Bill C-32.

● (1625)

To address housing affordability, we are taking a number of steps, including an anti-flipping rule to discourage people from rapidly flipping homes for profit in a short time, which is driving up housing prices. Houses should be a home, not a business. We would make it easier to save for a down payment with the new tax-free first home savings account.

We would change the rules around the tax on the value of non-resident, non-Canadian owned residential real estate that is considered to be vacant or underused. Also, we would double the first-time homebuyer's tax credit amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

I also have a lot of multi-generational households in my riding, and the multi-generational home renovation tax credit would help families make their homes more suitable to their needs.

I am particularly excited about the elimination of interest on federal Canada student loans and Canada apprentice loans, combined with no requirement for repayment at all until a graduate is making at least \$40,000 per year. This would be a significant benefit for our young Canadians.

I meet with student groups every year and with individual students all the time in my community. They have long told me about the burden of graduating with major student debt that weighs them down for years. In real dollars, tuition and other expenses are so much more than when we were in school. Even working full time, it can be hard to keep up.

The elimination of federal student loan interest has been welcomed by many stakeholders. For example, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, which I met with last week, said:

Big news for students across Canada!

Starting on April 1, 2023, the Government of Canada will remove the interest on Canada Student Loans. This investment is welcomed by past, current, and future student loan borrowers.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada said:

We're pleased to see help to Canada's most vulnerable in today's economic update, including eliminating student loan interest payments for thousands of our members and increased funding for the services our members deliver to Canadians every day.

By eliminating interest and delaying repayments, we would make it easier for young graduates just entering the workforce to begin a family, to begin saving and to enter the housing market. Without the burden of crushing debt payments and compounding interest, they could more easily realize their career goals and contribute to society, which would enrich us all. This measure would save the average graduate more than \$400 every year, and that would be a real benefit for young families saving for their first homes.

I could go on, but the sooner we pass this legislation, the sooner more help will begin to flow to Canadians who need help the most. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting Canadians, and let us pass this bill.

● (1630)

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer identified \$14.2 billion in unannounced spending in the fall economic statement.

In a complete lack of transparency, the finance minister has refused to say how that money would be spent. Perhaps the member for Scarborough Centre could enlighten us on how \$14.2 billion of taxpayers' dollars is going to be spent?

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, through Bill C-32 and our fall economic statement, we are trying to provide targeted support to Canadians who need it the most, by doubling the GST tax credit, by eliminating the student debt loan and by providing a one-time \$500 top-up allowance for renters who cannot afford it.

I talk to constituents in my riding every day, and they bring up these issues. Affordability is becoming a concern for many. These are measures, like the measures the members on the opposite side voted against, such as providing dental support for families with kids under the age of 12. We are lucky to have insurance, but there are many families in my community who have no insurance to take their kids to the dentist.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my riding likely has one of the fastest-aging populations in the country.

*Government Orders*

We just learned that groceries are going to cost even more next year and that the Bank of Canada increased its key interest rate for the seventh time. Given these circumstances, it seems to me that the economic update would have been the right time for the government to finally announce that it is increasing the old age security pension for all seniors.

Regardless of whether a person is 65 or 77, I think that it would have been good news for them to find out that seniors would be getting an increase in their OAS starting at age 65. One in four people in the Lower St. Lawrence region is 65 or older.

My question is simple. Why did the government not use the economic update as an opportunity to stop creating two classes of seniors and provide financial support to all of them, regardless of age?

[*English*]

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her concern for seniors.

As I mentioned in my remarks, it is important that we support seniors on fixed incomes through the inflationary period. Lower-income seniors are benefiting from the doubling of the GST tax credit and from the Canada housing benefit one-time special payment.

We lowered the retirement age from 67 to 65. The Conservatives had changed it, and we brought it back down. As well, we introduced the age well at home initiative to help our seniors continue to live safely and independently in their homes. We also increased the old age security for seniors above the age of 75. We will continue to make sure we are there for our seniors.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things the member pointed out is that the Liberals have created a special and extra benefit for seniors over 75. While I would not at all dispute that seniors over 75 face extra costs in terms of their lives, somehow it seems to imply that those between 65 and 75 are okay, when we all know they are suffering from those same effects of inflation and those same inability to make ends meet when it comes to housing and associated medical costs.

I wonder if the hon. member would support the idea that the increase that went to those over 75 should have gone to all seniors.

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, definitely seniors need more help, and I will continue advocating to make sure we are there for seniors.

We have been there for our seniors. The increase we brought to the guaranteed income supplement was to help seniors keep up with inflation. They will benefit from the doubling of the GST tax credit. Low-income seniors will also benefit from the \$500 one-time top-up allowance for housing.

We will continue raising our voices to do more for our seniors.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, prior to commencing my speech, I would ask for unanimous consent to split my time with the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame.

• (1635)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. Before I begin, I want to give a brief shout-out to a business that is a Kamloops beacon and a beautiful, thriving small business in Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. It is Riversong Guitars, which recently won a prestigious award. I want to read from a story from the CBC. Here is a quote:

Riversong's P2P River Pacific was announced on Sunday as the acoustic category winner in the prestigious Musical Merchandise Review...Dealers' Choice Awards. In the 30-year history of the international awards, Riversong owner and P2P guitar inventor Mike Miltimore said this is the first time a Canadian company has won acoustic guitar of the year.

That is quite an accomplishment for a relatively small company, and especially a Canadian company. I am equally proud that the people come from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. I want to thank Mr. Miltimore and his staff for all they have done for the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo and for the industry.

We do not get to share enough of these stories in the House of Commons. While that is somewhat positive, sometimes we have to dwell on, or not dwell on but point out the negative. Here we are, speaking to Bill C-32, the fall economic statement.

This is a confidence matter. We are talking about over \$1 billion of spending. When I asked myself about supporting a confidence measure, as a parliamentarian and as a Canadian, I asked myself, "Do I have trust in the government?"

With all due respect, the conclusion I have come to, based especially on what I have seen in the last couple of months, is a resounding no. I ask myself what it means to have confidence in the government, such that a parliamentarian can support a piece of confidence legislation like the fall economic statement.

Confidence is predicated on trust. Why do I not trust what the government is doing and what the government is putting forward? Why do my constituents generally not trust what the government is doing and what the government is putting forward, based on their communications to me? Last, why do a number of Canadians not trust what the government is doing, communicating and saying?

First, and likely most notably, is when it comes to finances. Here we are, debating a bill based on finances. Let us turn back the clock a bit and remember that this was the Prime Minister who promised modest deficits of \$10 billion. He also promised that the budget would be balanced by 2019. What we saw were much larger deficits than the promised \$10 billion. We also saw no intention to balance that same budget.



*Government Orders*

The Prime Minister said the budget would balance itself. It has not. The Prime Minister has doubled all debt and has added more debt to Canada's financial rolls than all other prime ministers combined. I have young children, which is obviously no secret, and I wonder about the care for future generations. Who will pay for this?

I recently read a statistic, and I am going to paraphrase it here. My understanding is that we are paying so much just in interest on the debt that we could nearly fund our whole health care system. The Liberals will extol how much money they put into health care. We Conservatives will say that the money is not being spent appropriately or efficiently and is not getting things done. It is one thing to spend money, generally, but Conservatives believe in spending money prudently. There is a very key distinction.

• (1640)

Who will fundamentally pay for this? I am wondering. The government pays the debt off; there is no doubt about it, but we, the people, must pay the government, and that has to happen in one of two ways. It happens through taxation, or it happens through borrowing.

I will often hear in question period when Conservatives, seemingly the only opposition party in the House at times, or so it feels, will point out the spending or the difficulties, and the Liberals will say in response that they have done this and they have lowered that, or, as I just heard, they have doubled the GST credit.

I am going to give a personal anecdote. Not long ago, I looked at the after-tax pay on a T4 slip of somebody I know well. When I was working in federal corrections, I made a good salary, and this person makes tens of thousands of dollars more than I did, yet the individual's take-home pay is just \$200, \$300, \$400 a month more than what I took home 20 years ago, working for the federal government. That is not because of deductions that those employees are choosing. These are incremental things at the source. There are—

**Mr. Chris Bittle:** It's pensions.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Okay, let us talk about pensions.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask for unanimous consent for my friend across the floor to take 30 seconds to talk about it.

**Mr. Chris Bittle:** Sure. Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a request for unanimous consent to allow the member for St. Catharines to speak, but I hear a number of members saying no.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, that is too bad. I would love to have heard him talk about pensions. It is really too bad. I feel really let down about his not talking about pensions, but members need not worry, because I will take it up.

At the end of the day, I am looking directly at the member, and if he wants to tell me how roughly \$700, \$800, \$900 or \$1,000 a month goes just to pensions, I am all ears, because I know for a fact he cannot substantiate how \$1,000 a month of after-tax income goes to pensions.

**Mr. Chris Bittle:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We seem to be having a lot of back and forth, so I want to intervene.

I know this government has voted to lower the tax on the middle class, with the members of the Conservative Party voting against it, so I am really looking forward to hearing the explanation about this—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is debate. I know that maybe some members have not been here for a while, but we have a 10-minute speech and then questions and answers afterward, so there is an opportunity for members to exchange thoughts and comments then.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, I heard the member speak recently, after the whole Michael Geist thing, so it is really good to have him here, intervening on a really dubious point of order.

In any event, we have a government that is prepared to forsake a number of Canadian jobs. Those Canadian jobs, when it comes to LNG, could have gone to Canada. Instead, they went to Qatar.

When we talk about trust, we talk about transparency. I hope I get a question from the Liberals, because I would love for them, in the preamble to their question, to answer who the 11 people are. Let us talk about transparency by default. Who are the 11? They said transparency by default and sunny ways were what we were going to get. No, we have not gotten sunny ways. We have not gotten transparency by default. Who stayed in the \$6,000-a-night hotel room? Again, it is transparency by default and sunny ways.

The Auditor General's report says we are talking about \$27 billion, and the government says it completed its stated aims. That is like saying our stated aim was to start a campfire. We started a forest fire, but that campfire got lit, so we did what we set out to do. That is absolutely ridiculous logic. This is why I do not have any trust in the government.

Let us imagine what we could do about illegal guns with \$27 billion. We have Bill C-21, in the mess that it is. We have information that, in my view, is not accurate in Bill C-21 about law-abiding hunters. Again, where is the trust?

• (1645)

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am actually shocked to hear the Conservatives worry that I am not speaking enough in this place. I speak as frequently as I can, but I am happy to rise here today.

The hon. member talks about his constituents, and at the same time, he speaks about too much money being spent and not enough. I was wondering if he tells his constituents about the Conservative record of voting against tax cuts for the middle class, against tax increases for the wealthiest 1%, against increases to the guaranteed income supplement, against increases to OAS and against the supports in this bill that would help Canadians.

*Government Orders*

The Conservatives talk a great game about helping Canadians, but when the time comes to vote, they are nowhere to be seen. I am wondering if the hon. member explains that to his constituents, or is it just Conservative platitudes and talking points?

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we did not preside over the doubling of house prices in Canada. We did not preside over the doubling of the national debt after saying we would not do that. We are the party that lowered the GST. Millennials, and other people, could actually afford a house under Conservatives. They cannot afford a house now under the Liberal government, which is propped up by the NDP.

When it comes to their saying, “We have your backs”, seniors are writing to me and saying they cannot afford any food. They are saying they cannot afford—

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Table the letter.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to, if he would like. I would be happy to table the letter. If the hon. parliamentary secretary wants to doubt that seniors are writing to me saying they cannot afford things, shame on him.

**The Deputy Speaker:** If we are going to table something, we should have it with us, and of course we need to have consent to do that.

I am hearing lots of chatter in the chamber, so I ask that we try to keep it down and have our debate as we normally do.

Continuing with questions and comments, the hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia has the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I often hear my colleagues talk about pediatric hospitals and say how the emergency departments are overloaded and that something has to be done. I agree with them completely. There are no pediatric hospitals in my riding. However, obstetric services are often unavailable. We have trouble recruiting, and often this has to do with the underfunding of health care.

Does my colleague agree with me that last fall’s economic statement would have been the perfect opportunity to finally announce an increase in health transfers from the federal to the provincial governments?

[*English*]

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, this is a situation I am hearing of more and more about as well. When it comes to pediatric services, clearly what we are doing is not working. Health care is a provincial initiative, but there is substantial federal funding that goes through.

Had something like this been present, specifically in reference to my hon. colleague’s question, I would have been happy to consider it, because we can see our health care system is broken. In Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, we often see ERs closing down. I have a friend who is a pediatric resident, and I was trying to talk him into moving to the area because we have such a need, just as I am sure my colleague is seeing in her area.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is a lot in this fall economic statement worthy of support, and I think a lot to critique. My hon. colleague pointed that out as well. However, I take some issue with his recitation of history. I was in this House from 2008 to 2015, when the Conservative government ran deficits in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. After the 2008 economic shock, it ran six successive deficits and only magically balanced it in an election year.

My hon. colleague talked about taking credit for reducing the GST. The Conservative Party invented the GST. It brought the GST to Canadians. How can he expect Canadians to take him seriously when his party has been so instrumental in creating deficits in this country and brought the GST to this country? Does he still think the GST is a good tax?

● (1650)

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, well, how much Liberal spending preceded that GST? If we want to go back to 1988 or 1993, that is absolutely fine.

With all due respect, obviously, I was not here in that period of time but I am happy to answer the question. The reality is this: I am very proud that we lowered the GST—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo has the floor.

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Mr. Speaker, I would love the answer the hon. member’s question if he would just stop shouting over me. I really would.

I believe in prudent financial spending. If I had my way, we would not be spending such astronomical figures that we actually need the GST. The reality is that the government must have the GST because it is spending so much, and that is being spent on the backs on our children, our grandchildren and future generations.

I fear that their tax payments and their funding of the interest payment for taxes will cripple us in the future.

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise here today to speak to the government’s economic update. On weekends, I spend time in my riding to talk to the folks who I represent. The topic front of mind for all is the state of the economy.

As the Deputy Prime Minister gave her update in the House, I, like many others, listened intently. I heard her warn Canadians that things are going to be tough this winter, and that inflation is high and likely to get higher. Boy, how her tone has changed from the message of sunny days and sunny ways.

*Government Orders*

A few months ago, we heard that very same minister stand in the House and tell us that we are not so bad off and that we should be happy because the rest of the world is worse. In March, she accused us Conservatives of talking down the Canadian economy. Perhaps the minister could now admit that it was not talking down the economy, but rather it was, and continues to be, a warning to this Liberal-NDP coalition of the harmful consequences on real Canadians that their failed economic policies are producing.

The minister acknowledges that tough times are here, sunny days are behind us, and it is time to pay for Liberal overspending. The Liberals have run up the government's credit card to the limit, and it is now up to the taxpayers to pay the bill. The truth of the matter is, the ones who feel their mismanagement the most are the ones they claim to be standing up for.

We all know that socialists raise their fists in the air exclaiming, "Power for the people", but what is the result? It is power over the people.

I have heard the minister say numerous times in the House that the government's plan is a compassionate plan. I beg to differ. Is it compassionate to triple the carbon tax on home heating? Is it compassionate to triple the tax on gas? Is it compassionate to triple the carbon tax on food production and delivery? I can answer that with a resounding "no".

The people of Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame are not feeling any compassion from this government. They are contemplating how to stay warm and keep food on the table this winter. It is looking more like doing both may not be an option. People in my riding are facing a home heating bill that has nearly doubled since this time last year. Is that compassion?

Charlie from Gander, for example, is a hard-working family man who considers himself to be part of the middle class. He told me that he is scared that he will not be able to afford oil to heat his home this winter.

Food banks across the country are experiencing record high usage, yet what did this minister say to that? Well, she did not say, "Let them eat cake", but she might as well have. She tried to relate to hard-working Canadians by telling of the hardship that her family is experiencing in making the huge sacrifice of cutting their Disney+ subscription. It would be funny if it were not so serious. This government is so out of touch with Canadians that it is completely tone deaf to their plight.

Last week, my colleague told the minister of a senior who is living in her car in Halifax, Nova Scotia, because, even though she has employment and CPP benefits, she is unable to afford housing. The minister's response was to advise the woman against spending her savings on cryptocurrency. Really? How tone deaf can she be to believe that a woman who is forced to live in her car because she cannot afford a house has \$10,000 to invest in anything for that matter?

Maybe the minister is just as tone deaf in reading the situation as the Prime Minister is. He thought it would be a good idea to hold a concert in the lobby of a hotel where he had the taxpayers spend \$6,000 a night for five nights for his room, which is almost double the average Canadians' earnings in a month. To justify his

extravagant spending when questioned in the House, the Prime Minister thought he could distract taxpayers by reminding them of the extremely generous one-time \$500 payment to low-income renters. Do the members of this government not see how disingenuous their words are?

The Conservative Party asked the government for a little relief on home heating this winter by removing the carbon tax from heating fuel. In Atlantic Canada, this would be a big relief and offer some peace of mind. What was this government's response? Well, the Liberal government decided to ignore their pleas, and the request of the Liberal premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, by forcing the carbon tax on three Atlantic provinces.

• (1655)

The MPs from our own province should be sympathetic, but no. The senior minister from Newfoundland and Labrador is sick and tired of people complaining about the cold winter. The Liberal-NDP coalition government is tone deaf and out of touch. The government's excuses for the rising inflation rate are anything and everyone other than its mismanagement and reckless overspending. It would like us all to believe that it is because of COVID, but as my colleagues have pointed out on several occasions and I feel is worth repeating, the Prime Minister added \$100 billion of debt prior to the first case of COVID in Canada. That bears repeating so we can absorb the figure: \$100 billion that is not COVID-related.

This week, the Auditor General confirmed that the members on this side of the House have been warning since 2020 that wasteful spending was resulting due to a lack of controls. With respect to Employment and Social Development Canada, the Auditor General identified at least \$32 billion in overpayments and suspicious payments that require further investigation. In the Prime Minister's eyes, that is insignificant and he would like us to believe the rest of the spending was to support Canadians through the pandemic. That too is not completely correct. The Parliamentary Budget Officer discovered that 40% of all new spending measures had nothing to do with COVID. That is \$200 billion in spending that is unrelated to COVID. That boggles my mind.

The spending that was done in the name of COVID was poorly managed, to say the least. We saw CERB cheques going to prisoners and there was a \$44-million arrive scam app which did nothing and could have been developed for approximately \$24,000 in someone's basement over a weekend. The list goes on and on. I am sure members are tired of me saying all this stuff.

*Government Orders*

What the Liberals do not seem to understand is that this money that they keep spending and giving away to their friends is not their money to give away. Hard-working, taxpaying Canadians deserve respect and real compassion. The Conservative Party is here to do just that. We will fight for those who leave their homes every day to work in the energy industry to provide heat for our homes and gas for our vehicles, for those who fish our waters and farm our land to provide food security for Canadians, and for those who look after our children in day care and who tend to our sick and our elderly. Conservatives have a plan that would work and not just pay lip service.

A Conservative government would impose conditions so that if cities want more federal infrastructure money, they would have to remove the gatekeepers. We would connect their infrastructure dollars to the number of homes that actually get built so that young people could find a place to live. We would also sell off 15% of the 37,000 federal buildings we have so they could be converted into housing and our young people could have affordable homes. We would bring in a pay-as-you-go law so that every time we spent a new dollar, we would have a new dollar of savings to pay for it. Conservatives would fund our programs with real money rather than printed cash, because we know there are no freebies in this world and we know that ultimately, taxpayers and consumers pay for everything.

We would reinstate the Bank of Canada's core mandate to make sure inflation stays at 2% as brought about by the Mulroney government, the last great government, or the second-last great government, after Prime Minister Harper's. We would audit the Bank of Canada through the Auditor General to show her that never again is there such a horrendous abuse of our money as we have seen over the last couple of years.

I cannot support this bill because it has \$14 billion of spending that is ready to go, but we do not know what it is for. Is it tucked away to be wasted on another gun buyback? Will that \$14 billion be wasted to confiscate the hunting tools that are used to harvest the 20,000 moose per year that are taken to put protein on the tables in my province? Will it be wasted to buy back the Plinkster rifles that young girls use to shoot targets with their daddies, as they learn the safety aspects of handling firearms?

Bill C-32 leaves me with more questions than answers. Therefore, my vote will be nay.

• (1700)

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is no question the member works hard, but where he seems to go down the wrong path is the Conservatives do not understand the difference between spending and investing in Canadians.

The member talked a lot about the economy. I would like the member to tell me and all Canadians why he voted against the top-up for housing and the dental plan and why he voted against the child care program. The Conservatives are voting against major initiatives that would help every Canadian right across this great country.

If the member is going to cut, would he please share with the House which programs he would cut? Could he just let us know?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, what a pile of baloney that just spewed out of the member's mouth.

The people in my province, my constituents, understand that is all washed out bait. If anyone has ever been fishing, they would know they need to change their bait once in a while because it gets washed out and that old worm is no good.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador understand that what is being thrown out there is washed out election bait. The Liberals should come up with something else. I will tell the House what else. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador are not too fond of the government using money they are pumping into the transfer program and now having to bail out the Bank of Canada for the first time in history because of the government's failed policies.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech, which I listened to carefully.

He mentioned certain government expenditures, of course. During the pandemic, the government spent a lot of money, but one expenditure had the support of all the parties except the Bloc Québécois. That was the wage subsidy for businesses.

The Conservative Party, which raised millions in contributions from its members, the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party all benefited from the wage subsidy. The Conservative Party received \$1 million, the Liberal Party \$1 million, and the New Democrats \$260,000. They got this money directly from a program aimed at supporting businesses so they could avoid going bankrupt and having to shut their doors.

The former leader of the Conservative Party, the member for Durham, said during his election campaign that he would pay back the money taken from the wage subsidy program. I have just one question for my colleague. Has his party begun to reimburse the million dollars it took directly out the pockets of honest taxpayers?

• (1705)

[*English*]

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot really speak to that, but I will tell members what I can speak to.

I can speak to my Bloc colleagues standing up and criticizing our offshore oil and gas industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, and we pay into the transfer program. The billions and billions that are going to come out of Bay du Nord are going to go to subsidize the wonderful people of la belle province.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening intently to the last part of my Conservative friend's speech, and I think he said something like the Mulroney government was the second-last best government in Canada, and it confused me. I am wondering if he could clarify that. I think what he was trying to imply was that either the Mulroney government was worse than the Harper government or vice versa. Could he clarify which order they come in as the worst government?

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot really say for sure who the best recent prime minister was. It was Harper or Mulroney. It is hard to interchange them.

However, I will tell members that this coalition government is definitely the worst the country has ever seen. I cannot believe that my hon. colleague has the gall to come in and sit in this House and be part of that team.

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question. Obviously, with the doubling of the national debt under the current Liberal government to over a trillion dollars, the servicing of the national debt is going from \$25 billion this year, the same as we put into our Canadian Armed Forces, our military, to, next year, close to \$50 billion, the same as we do for health care transfers.

I would like my hon. colleague to expand on what we could actually do with that \$50 billion.

**Mr. Clifford Small:** Mr. Speaker, when we get over on that side, we will make sure that money is spent where it is deserved and needed, like to support our military and support our health care system.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I often talk about the housing crisis and about how serious the problem is. There are currently several ongoing crises in Canada: the climate crisis, the language crisis in Quebec, which is very serious, and the housing crisis, which is also very serious.

I am getting to the point where I am tired of repeating the same things and not getting an answer from the government. I decided that, since Christmas is coming, instead of talking about statistics and citing figures—perhaps this will come up during questions and comments—I would tell a few stories. They are not necessarily fun stories, but they are stories.

We could call one “December 23, Merry Christmas, Mr. Côté”, or “The dirty little story about the never-ending housing crisis”. I will warn my colleagues right now: These may be stories, but every story I tell is true.

Let me tell the House about someone we will call Mr. M. Mr. M. has been on the street for almost three years now. He had drug problems 45 years ago that made him homeless. He has been clean for the past year. Things are going well for him in that regard. He is working hard to reintegrate into society. He has serious health problems that prevent him from working, so he gets money from Quebec's social solidarity program. He has enough money to pay for housing, so he is already one step ahead on that. However, even though he is on a priority waiting list for low-cost housing, he cannot find housing because he is stigmatized. Basically, he is being

discriminated against because he is homeless. He has done everything he possibly can. Unfortunately, the outreach people who work with him cannot produce housing out of thin air. Even the government, sitting there across the aisle, cannot provide housing. Imagine how the people who work with him feel. This means Mr. M. is going to spend Christmas on the street. I wish Mr. M. a merry Christmas on his park bench.

Now I want to talk about Ms. L. Ms. L. is 60 years old and is currently living in her car. She has to ask community organizations for gas cards to be able to stay warm at night. She showers in an emergency shelter and spends her days in a street café that gives out food and hot coffee.

Mr. Speaker, I forgot to mention that I would like to share my time with the hon. member for Terrebonne.

• (1710)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to split his time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** To get back to Ms. L., Mr. Speaker, she is looking for an apartment but her monthly income is \$765. She cannot afford anything other than a room right now. All the rooming houses in her area are full at this time.

I wish Ms. L. a merry Christmas in her car.

Let us now talk about Mr. D., a 55-year-old man living with mental illness. He lives in a trailer in the parking lot of a business. Everything he owns is in his trailer, but he needs to get it repaired, and it is expensive, not to mention the parts that are really expensive.

The business that lets him set up his trailer is losing patience, so Mr. D. will have to move. He is under constant stress from the fear of his home, not his car, being towed.

I wish Mr. D. a merry Christmas in his trailer.

Let us talk about Mr. R. and Ms. E., a couple in their thirties. Since they have no apartment, they are currently sleeping on a balcony, behind an abandoned business. They have to take their belongings everywhere with them because they are liable to get stolen if left unattended. They borrowed a grocery cart that they take with them to the street café. They spend the day there and try to rest a bit, napping in the corner, on the floor.

Unfortunately, Ms. E. owes money to the ministry of social solidarity, so she has no income. She works as a prostitute to obtain essential hygiene products. Mr. R. and Ms. E. both take turns panhandling to try to make a bit of money.

I wish Mr. R. and Ms. E. a merry Christmas on their balcony.

*Government Orders*

Let us now talk about Mr. J., a 30-year-old indigenous man. He is currently living in an abandoned house that will unfortunately be demolished soon. He stockpiles batteries to power the small lanterns he relies on at night. He has begun following the example of a homeless man, a veteran, who has been there for many years and who gives him tips to make money legally, so he does what are known as can runs. He goes to restaurant garbage bins and retrieves discarded cans. Working legally is not easy and it does not pay very well.

He is approached to sell drugs. Although he does not want to go down that road, he wants to be able to meet his needs. He does not know how long he will be able to take shelter from the elements where he currently sleeps.

I wish Mr. J. a merry Christmas in his abandoned house.

Let us now talk about Ms. S., a 60-year-old woman suffering from mental illness. Whenever she manages to find a home, she thinks people are going to break in. She lives in constant fear, so she leaves every one of her homes, one after the other. She is currently sleeping on the couch of a man she met by chance and who abuses her. She spends her days at a street café so she does not face that violence all day. She has no choice, however, but to return in the evening, otherwise she has to sleep outside.

Again, I wish Ms. S. a merry Christmas on her couch, waiting for the next blow.

Let us now talk about Mr. S., a 37-year-old living in a halfway house after spending two years in prison. The youngest in a family of two children, he never really knew his biological father, other than a visit in prison at one point. His mother was a substance user and her partner, who he calls his father, was an alcoholic. He rarely stayed with his parents. He spent his entire life under the responsibility of the youth protection service, caught in a cycle of running away, offending, using drugs and returning to youth centres. That cycle continued in his adult life with periods in prison.

A few years ago, he found his mother. She had died of an overdose. After that, he turned to substance use until he was again arrested for drug possession.

During his sentence, he took control of his life and stopped using. He now has custody of his son on weekends. He goes to see him at his sister's apartment. He does activities with him. It is getting better for Mr. S. Now, he wants to take care of himself and be there as a father. For that, he needs to find a place to receive his son. Right now, he is sleeping on the sidewalk.

I wish Mr. S. a merry Christmas on his sidewalk, with his son.

Let us talk about Mr. C., a 51-year-old man who suffered physical and sexual abuse in his family. He talks very little about those assaults. He fell into the cycle of addiction and mischief in his teens. It is more than likely that his father abused him. He became impulsive and aggressive. He served several short sentences for theft, possession and drug trafficking.

• (1715)

He was assaulted around 2005 with a baseball bat. Since then, he has been living with a head injury. He has a grade six education. He

enrolled in a literacy service and is very involved with the organization. He is still clean at this time and has regained a wonderful smile.

He is looking for an apartment. Last time, he was in a place where a dog would defecate on his doorstep and he would not even venture to cook because the kitchen was so unsanitary. He applied for low-income housing, but has been waiting for a response for several years. The scarcity of affordable apartments could lead him to use again and, as a result, put him on the street.

I also wish Mr. C. a very merry Christmas.

Finally, last week, a homeless resident of Longueuil struggling with several mental health problems cut his own throat in front of a shelter in Longueuil. He had just learned that the place he was waiting for at a mental health support facility that would help him with his problems no longer had room for him. That was a shame. He saw no way out and, feeling desperate, he tried to take his own life. Fortunately, he survived.

This gives an idea of how desperate the most unfortunate in our society really are and of the disasters, misfortunes and other tragedies that await us if the housing crisis continues in 2023, which is very likely to happen.

Let us not worry; we, the 338 members of Parliament, will all spend the holidays toasty warm. This is a fairy tale, so it has to have a happy ending.

I wish everyone a merry Christmas, and I am ready for my colleagues' questions.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, sadly, there are not enough letters in the alphabet to adequately express what the many individuals who find themselves homeless face. I could cite the many people in Winnipeg North who use bus shelters as a home or just fall asleep in alleys and on streets in our communities. That is unfortunately what is taking place.

To resolve the housing urgency by trying to put the blame on the national government is not appropriate. The national government needs to work with municipalities and provinces to meet the housing needs that are there. In fact, the programs we have provided are encouraging municipalities and other stakeholders to come forward with their ideas.

The federal government has invested more dollars in housing in recent years than any other government in the last 50-plus years. I am wondering if my friend could provide his thoughts on the importance of ensuring municipalities and provinces do likewise, invest like the federal government is investing and support our communities so that we have a better chance at resolving the housing crisis.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Mr. Speaker, whether this is done by the municipalities, the provinces or the federal government, housing must be built now. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the CMHC, announced last week that 3.5 million units need to be built before 2030. That is quite a challenge.

Do my colleagues know how many units have been built in Canada since the start of the national housing strategy? The answer is 35,000. About 60,000 have been repaired. That is 100,000 units, if we are being generous. That is what has been built so far. The shortfalls are absolutely insane.

According to a study by a CMHC economist, in Quebec alone, if nothing is done in the next 10 years, 500,000 units will be built. However, to address the two key issues at this time, affordability and accessibility, 1.1 million need to be built. There is a shortfall of 600,000. Somewhere in the process, the government here or the provinces themselves need to get involved. There is money here. The government must get involved to ensure that those 600,000 units are built. They will not fall from the sky.

That is the challenge we have before us.

• (1720)

[English]

**Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are here talking about money today, and I have heard colleagues from the Bloc Québécois chastise the coalition many times for approving Bay du Nord. Newfoundland and Labrador currently pays into the transfer program, so I am wondering whether the Bloc Québécois will work toward returning the portion of the transfer money that goes to Quebec, which is from the oil industry, to Newfoundland and Labrador and all the oil-producing provinces. Will they send the money back?

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Mr. Speaker, the planet is on fire, yet he is talking about money. That is insane. Canada is the worst country in the world when it comes to fighting climate change, yet my colleague is talking about investments, health transfers and equalization. The planet is already burning. We are the worst country in the G7.

Since the Liberals came to power in 2015, greenhouse gas emissions have increased steadily. We are a disgrace. The Liberals continue to invest year after year. We have learned that we rank second in the G20 in terms of average public investments in fossil fuels. That alone is a disgrace.

Companies like Suncor are making obscene profits. The CEO's pocket change alone could pay for the Bay du Nord development project. I seriously do not understand what my colleague is on about right now.

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I have people in my territory who are homeless, like Bernie Napassikallak from Taloyoak, who lives in a tent in harsh winter conditions at the moment. I appreciate that the member focused his intervention on the need to increase housing.

### Government Orders

I wonder if the member agrees that the Canada recovery dividend needs to be extended to collect revenue from big box stores and oil and gas companies so that the revenue collected can go toward increasing the amount of housing in Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Mr. Speaker, more money is needed for housing.

I spoke about housing, but there is also the problem of homelessness itself, as we know. The anecdotes that I told are stories, but these things do happen. These are people I met with on Monday. I went to meet with them at one of the centres in my riding. These are stories I was told.

If we do not invest money now in addressing homelessness, people will be sleeping on the street. The outreach workers live alongside these people, so they know what they are going through. It is already getting cold out, so imagine what it will be like in January. People will be turned away, and they will have to find somewhere to sleep, like the entrance to a subway station.

It is appalling that a G7 country is letting people sleep on the street at -20°C, period.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased to speak after my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, who masterfully demonstrated how inadequate the government's measures are.

I am going to give three examples. We have talked a lot about the economic statement. It has been examined from every possible angle, so I have chosen three measures that I see as either insufficient or counterproductive. I chose these three examples because they demonstrate that the Government of Canada has lost its bearings. It can no longer steer the ship, which is slowly taking on water.

The first measure I want to talk about is the FHSA, the tax-free first home savings account. It would allow first-time home buyers to save \$40,000 on a tax-free basis. This savings account is a hybrid between two existing vehicles. Like the tax-free savings account, or TFSA, it allows money to be saved without the gains being taxed. It shares some characteristics with the registered retirement savings plan, or RRSP. Like contributions to an RRSP, contributions to the FHSA reduce a taxpayer's taxable income, meaning they pay less taxes at the end of the year.

Few people know that the FHSA is nothing new. Few people remember, and I was not born when this measure was introduced, but the RHOSP, a plan similar to the FHSA, already existed in Canada. The RHOSP was announced in the 1974 federal budget and abolished in the 1985 federal budget. As with the FHSA, contributions were deductible, returns could accumulate tax-free, and withdrawals were also tax-free when used for the purchase of a house or even, initially, for the purchase of appliances and furniture. The RHOSP was introduced in an economic context similar to the one in which the FHSA was introduced, with high inflation and interest rates.

### *Government Orders*

This has all been attempted before. The conclusion will probably be the same: There are better tools for improving access to home ownership. We have known this since the 1970s. Accounts like this are not effective measures for helping people access housing. The FHSA is an ineffective and, above all, unfair tool for helping people access home ownership.

I would like to cite an excerpt from a study by Larin and Tremblay on the issue in 1978. It is “individuals reporting the highest incomes that benefit most from the plan, with 6.1% of taxpayers earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000 [in the 1970s] and 6.4% of those over \$100,000 using the plan, compared to less than 2% of those with incomes under \$7,000 in 1974.”

The biggest shortcoming of this type of measure is that it is not adjusted based on taxpayers' incomes. It necessarily puts people with higher incomes at an advantage, so it is counterproductive. It is fine to be able to shelter \$8,000 from taxes, but that money has to be available. Although the government's intentions are supposedly good, the measure allows people who already have money for a down payment to shelter it from taxes. That is fine, but it does not help people who are having difficulty accessing home ownership. It does not help the people whose stories were just told by my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert. It does not help the people who really need it.

The government ought to rely on the scientific literature. A fairer way of offering this type of tax benefit would have been to draw on the example of registered education savings plans. The government could have offered to “pay a grant proportional to the amount contributed regardless of income or even a grant that decreases as income increases”. The FHSA is the first of many examples of the government's outdated and inadequate policies. A savings account is one thing, but the real problem is the industrial and macroeconomic policies that I will discuss in a moment.

That brings me to my second measure. The government is aware of its shortcomings in terms of industrial policy, but it fails to propose any solutions in Bill C-32. Here is what the economic statement says: “Canadian workers need a robust industrial policy that will deliver good-paying jobs by seizing the opportunities of the netzero economy, by attracting new private investment, and by providing key resources to the world”.

Basically, what the government did was create an expert panel in 2020 called the Industry Strategy Council. The council made four main recommendations, but none of them seem to have made their way into current federal government policies.

The government may not want to admit it, but the pandemic significantly changed the global economy. The rules of the globalization game altered drastically with the pandemic. Supply chain resilience is now a key economic issue. Supply problems are one of the main causes of the inflation we are seeing today.

● (1725)

Before the pandemic, supply chains were designed to minimize the cost of each input, so the final product would be as cheap as possible. Value chains were based on minimal transportation costs, so something like a cellphone might be made from parts manufactured around the world.

However, those supply chains are fragile. A delay in the production of one part can hold up the production of several goods. For example, we are still feeling the consequences of the closure of plants manufacturing semi-conductors, which are an essential input for many electronic items. That is why some vehicles are in short supply.

Advanced economies around the world are now investing heavily in acquiring and developing new industries. One sign of that global change is the widespread creation of backup inventories. Many countries and businesses now maintain inventories purely as a safeguard against possible disruptions in their supply chains. Efficiency at all costs is now giving way to a resilience model. The economy is changing. Resilience is the goal now, not efficiency.

Fully 81% of supply chain leaders surveyed by McKinsey are now sourcing materials from two suppliers, rather than depending on one. This is another example of change in the global economy, where globalization as we knew it no longer exists.

The smart way to invest in industrial policy would be to invest in key or strategic industries. Key industries, such as semiconductors, are vital to supply chains. Without semiconductors, there can be no finished product. There is no way to finish them. Strategic industries involve essential goods that we are better off producing ourselves because we need to make sure they are always in stock. In some cases, major shortages could cost people their lives. Medical equipment is one example.

Instead of adopting a clear industrial policy like the U.S., Canada copied another measure, share repurchasing. Companies do this to give money back to their shareholders. Dividend payouts are another such measure. A company can buy back its shares on the market. It can also make a public buyback offer to its shareholders.

In August, the Biden administration implemented a 1% tax on stock buybacks under its Inflation Reduction Act. The Biden administration's measure seeks to encourage companies to invest their capital to grow their business, rather than return it to their shareholders. The tax does not seem large enough to act as a real deterrent to stock buybacks. The connection between stock buybacks and the underinvestment of companies is not all that clear. A company's optimal level of investment is not just determined by its cash flow. It is not advantageous for all companies to grow, even if they have a healthy level of capital.

The Fed studied the phenomenon in 2017 and did not find a causal link between stock buybacks and underinvestment. The measure is a surtax because capital gains on stock are taxable.



Furthermore, this measure was implemented in the U.S. in August, while Canada only talked about potentially implementing such a measure in 2023 or 2024 in the budget statement. Once again, this is very vague. The government is saying that it is going to quickly copy a measure, but ultimately it is not even capable of implementing it.

What the United States is doing, but we are not, is proposing an ambitious industrial policy. Canada is quickly being overtaken. The public purse is a powerful tool. When properly used, it can attract foreign investments to develop a local manufacturing sector. For example, as part of its semi-conductor plan, the United States will be bringing in just over \$39 billion in tax incentives to encourage the construction of new semi-conductor plants on American soil.

According to the concept of the fiscal multiplier, one dollar well invested can generate a much larger return. Semi-conductors are the foundation of a digital economy. All the great economic powers are developing semi-conductor procurement and control policies. What policy is Canada proposing for semi-conductors? None at all, unfortunately.

The economic statement contains 34 references to the supply chain problems contributing to inflation, but it does not propose anything to counter them.

In conclusion, the government is clearly short on inspiration. The economic statement contains nothing in the way of impactful, innovative measures. At best, it rehashes things we have seen before, such as the FHSA. Worse still, the Government of Quebec has to make up for Canada's lack of vision, because this economic statement is just like the government that issued it: weak and ill adapted to the changing economic reality.

• (1730)

If Canada does nothing—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. The hon. member's time is up, but I am sure she will have a chance to say more during questions and comments.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate a number of the comments that the member made.

One of the issues I would like to raise is in regard to the support programs that are inside the legislation. One of the things is the intergenerational housing credit that will provide incentive for people to build a suite for seniors, possibly a parent or an individual with a disability. It is a substantial credit to encourage that to take place. The previous speaker talked about the issue of homelessness and how important it was for him.

I am wondering if she could provide her thoughts on that specific credit.

### Government Orders

[Translation]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, once again, I think it is one of the measures that is probably good, but clearly inadequate.

As I said, the Government of Canada is missing the boat. Actually, the boat is sinking. I refuse to see my country, Quebec, go down with it.

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on her excellent speech. She really is a public accounts expert.

I noticed that she was cut off before she finished her speech, so I am wondering if she wants to finish her speech.

• (1735)

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for his comment, which gives me a chance to finish my speech.

The economic statement contains nothing in the way of impactful, innovative measures. At best, it rehashes things we have seen before, such as the FHSA. Worse still, the Government of Quebec has to make up for Canada's lack of vision. This economic statement is just like the government that issued it: weak and ill adapted to the changing economic reality. If Canada does nothing, there is no doubt it will miss the boat.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one of the things I liked about my colleague's speech was her reference to the lack of an industrial strategy in the government's plan.

Does my colleague know that the government wants to spend more and more money, money that apparently grows on trees? That is what we see when we look at the government's spending. Is that a good strategy for Canada's future?

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

If I understood correctly, he is asking me what I think about the current government's industrial policy. In fact, it is almost non-existent. As I said, the key or strategic industries are totally ignored, unfortunately. There are plans and promises, but sadly, there is nothing concrete.

I think that, when it comes to investments, we have to do our best with fewer resources. The important thing is to make government spending more efficient.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

*Government Orders*

I think she knows that my riding is home to many seasonal workers. The Gaspé and the Lower St. Lawrence are very popular tourist areas. During the pandemic, temporary measures were put in place for people who had to stop working for mainly pandemic-related reasons. I have to say that those temporary measures were fairly decent. They could have opened the door to employment insurance reform, but in the end, the government did away with those programs, went back to the old program and thus abandoned all of the workers that did not accumulate a sufficient number of insurable hours.

Does she think that the fall economic update or economic statement would have been the right time to announce something for seasonal workers in the regions of Quebec?

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her wonderful question, which gives me an opportunity to talk about a third measure that was conspicuously absent from the economic statement, and that is a major EI reform.

The government is saying that we are entering a recession, so why has it not already reformed the EI system to make seasonal workers eligible? Why has it not helped those who are receiving EI sickness benefits? We need EI reform. It was promised a long time ago, but the government still has not done anything about it. That was conspicuously absent from the economic statement, the budget and the federal government's policy measures.

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise to speak to the fall economic statement, legislation that has been introduced in this House. New Democrats are supporting it because there are some important measures in the legislation that we think will help Canadians, and I will canvass a few of them.

This legislation would introduce a Canada recovery dividend, under which banks and life insurance groups would pay a temporary, one-time, 15% tax on taxable income above \$1 billion over five years.

I should pause and seek the unanimous consent of the House to split my time with the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to split his time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Madam Speaker, this legislation would increase the corporate income tax rates of banks and life insurance groups by 1.5% on taxable income above \$100 million. It would eliminate interest on the federal portion of student loans and apprentice loans. Finally, it would enact the framework agreement on the First Nations Land Management Act. All of those are positive steps that are worthy of support in this legislation.

While New Democrats are pleased to see advancement on these measures, we believe there is much more that the fall economic statement should have offered Canadians struggling with the rising cost of living. We know many Canadians are struggling to pay their bills. We also know many corporations are making record profits at the same time. We know inflation is crippling. The price of food, in

particular, has skyrocketed across this country. The costs of utilities, insurance and fuels are all up, making it really tough for many Canadians in every corner of this country to make ends meet.

That is why New Democrats would have welcomed a windfall tax, like the one this legislation already applies to banks and life insurers, being expanded to other corporations that are making even higher profits than those sectors are, like food companies, including Loblaws, and like the oil and gas sector. The revenue the government could recoup from applying this tax to big box stores and oil and gas companies alone would total over \$4 billion. That is money New Democrats believe would and should be used to help Canadians mitigate the rising costs they are facing, including the cost of heating their homes. New Democrats have long called for the elimination of the GST on home heating in times of struggle like this, particularly as we enter the winter season.

Eliminating the interest on the federal portion of student loans would offer loan holders an average of \$4,000 of savings over the lifetime of their loan, and this is important. For years New Democrats have called for the elimination of interest on student debt. We should not be making money off the debt that students are incurring to get an education. Frankly, I have long believed that post-secondary education should be free, at least the first four years, whether it is an apprenticeship, community college or university, whatever it is, so that we encourage and facilitate our younger generation to become more educated. I believe higher-educated societies are more prosperous societies, and it is an investment. Just like public school is free until grade 12, there is no reason we should not extend that to 16 years of public education.

What is not in this legislation is what will have the largest impact on people. It has been estimated that the cost of home heating could go up by as much as 30% in some places in Canada, so eliminating the GST on that would be a simple way to offer Canadians respite in an immediate way.

Food bank usage has drastically increased as the grocery chains that supply Canadian consumers with the food they need to survive are recording profits of \$1 million extra a day.

Health care systems across this country are in chaos. There is no new money and no progress after the recent meeting of health ministers for improving health care and ensuring that the federal government increases its share of spending to better approach the fair deal that historically is the underpinning of the Canadian health care system.

The economic policy being used in this legislation is a good start, but it is not broad enough. If we expanded some of these good concepts in a much more broad, targeted and intelligent manner, we could generate billions of dollars that could be used for these very valuable social and economic development programs.

Once again, when we educate our young people, it is not merely good for them. These are people who will generate the ideas, economic activities and professional skills that will generate income into the future, so it is an important economic basis as well.

• (1740)

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Certainly, the member for St. Catharines had a lot to say earlier, and we would like to request a quorum call.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will ask the clerk to count the members present.

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** We have a quorum.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, just for clarification, in order to have quorum, does it require only one Conservative or more than one Conservative?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** On a point of clarification for the hon. parliamentary secretary, as long as there are 20 members in the House, there is quorum, no matter how many from each party.

Again, I want to remind members that we want to get on with the business of the day.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Waterloo.

• (1745)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciated the member's comments, not only with respect to the different programs and how we can support Canadians, but also on students and student loans.

In the riding of Waterloo, we have three post-secondary institutions, the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College. All students have been asking for the removal of interest from the federal portion.

I would like to ask the member to perhaps elaborate on the difference between paying back the principal versus charging students a ridiculous amount of interest, which is really stopping them from pursuing their future and having that financial opportunity. I would love to hear some more comments from the member on that issue.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for that great question and her concern for students and making sure we facilitate the education of Canadian students.

When I went to university in the 1980s, I and many of my friends came from working-class homes. We could go to university and work part-time jobs. Tuition was low, and we could get an education without going horrendously into debt. That is no longer the case.

I do not see why getting a university, apprenticeship or community college education should cause people to go into debt, when we do not expect that for grades 11 or 12. I think this is a really good start by the government, and I congratulate my colleagues in the Liberal Party for recognizing that we can start by eliminating interest, because we should not be profiting from the debt of stu-

### *Private Members' Business*

dents. Then I think we need to take that next step and make sure students do not go into debt at all to get an education.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The question is on the motion.

[*English*]

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. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I would request a recorded vote.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Thursday, December 8, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I suspect if you seek it you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6:01 p.m., so we can start Private Members' Business.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

### CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from December 5 consideration of the motion that Bill S-223, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (trafficking in human organs), be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to Bill S-223, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (trafficking in human organs).

The bill proposes much-needed reforms that would seek to end the illicit trade in organs, a trade that preys upon human suffering and desperation. Organ trafficking is a transnational and global challenge that frequently involves the exploitation of the poor and vulnerable living in under-resourced countries. Generally, wealthier individuals, often from more affluent countries, drive the demand for organs, while the supply of organs usually comes from developing regions.

*Private Members' Business*

While there are no known organ trafficking cases where the transplant occurred in Canada, there have been reports of Canadians participating in transplant tourism. This practice involves individuals going abroad to buy organs that are needed for medical reasons but not available in their own countries.

Those from whom the organs are extracted may be coerced, or they may be influenced to agree to organ removal through exploitation of their vulnerabilities. For example, they may be promised a significant monetary reward that would ease financial desperation. These individuals must co-operate in the organ trafficking enterprise, for example, by submitting to compatibility and other types of testing, and preparing for and undergoing surgery. Once the surgery is performed, they are often not provided the promised reward or the care necessary to heal from that ordeal, resulting in long-term complications and even death.

Organ traffickers, those who perform these surgeries, and intermediaries who locate organs for transplant capitalize on the desperation of both the sick and the impoverished. Those from whom organs are extracted are often left uncompensated and in poor health. The Canadian health care system struggles to provide care to those who return home after such surgeries, as health care providers do not have the information necessary to address complications.

Bill S-223 proposes new offences that directly target organ trafficking conduct. Some will note that we already have Criminal Code offences that criminalize organ traffickers. For example, Canada's human trafficking offences apply where traffickers recruit, transport or harbour victims to extract their organs through coercive practices. These offences apply extraterritorially, which means Canada can prosecute Canadians and permanent residents of Canada who engage in trafficking conduct abroad.

The problem is that no offences apply where organs are purchased and coercive practices cannot be proven. In so many of these cases, victims are pressured or influenced to agree to sell their organs, and even where overt forms of coercion are present, the relevant evidence is difficult to obtain, including because it may be located in another country.

In this regard, the proposed offences in Bill S-223 fill a critical gap in the law. Not only does the bill propose new offences that would criminalize facilitating and participating in extracting organs coercively, or obtaining organs in this context, but it also criminalizes facilitating and participating in extracting organs that are purchased or obtained for consideration, as well as obtaining purchased organs.

The bill also extends extraterritorial jurisdiction, which means Canadian citizens and permanent residents can be prosecuted in Canada for engaging in conduct abroad that is prohibited by the bill. This includes those who engage in transplant tourism. The bill also proposes to make foreign nationals and permanent residents who engage in conduct prohibited by the bill's offences inadmissible to Canada for having violated human or international rights, such as war crimes or crimes against humanity under section 35 of the IRPA.

The bill's objectives are consistent with international standards. For example, the World Health Organization has stated that pay-

ment for organs is likely to take unfair advantage of the poorest and most vulnerable groups. It undermines altruistic donation and leads to profiteering and human trafficking. Such payment conveys the idea that some persons lack dignity, that they are mere objects to be used by others.

Various World Health Organization documents also directly address organ trafficking, for example, the 2010 guiding principles on human cell, tissue and organ transplantation, and the 2008 declaration of Istanbul on organ trafficking and transplant tourism and commercialization, whose focus is on preventing organ trafficking and transplant tourism. The declaration recommends prohibition of transplant commercialization, a term that is used internationally to refer to treating organs as commodities to be bought and sold.

• (1750)

Bill S-223's reforms would place Canada at the forefront of the international community on the issue of organ trafficking. Very few countries have sought to combat organ trafficking by targeting the demand that fuels this harmful trade. I am very proud of what this bill's legislative history shows: that combatting organ trafficking is an issue all partisans in Canada can support.

Health Canada continues to lead an initiative called the organ donation and transplantation collaborative in order to help increase access to legal and safe organ transplantation. The collaborative's goal is to achieve organ donation improvements that result in better patient outcomes and an increase in the number and quality of successful transplantations.

There are many impressive actions taken by the collaborative to achieve change in this space, including creating a pan-Canadian data system that will support decisions, avoid missed opportunities and improve patient care; identifying decision-making and accountability mechanisms to ensure Canadians have access to an organ donation and transplantation system that responds to their needs and those of their families; maximizing donor identification in hospitals and referrals to transplantation services across Canada; identifying underserved populations and improving patients' access to post-transplantation care in remote communities; increasing living donation as a preferred treatment option for kidneys and the liver, for example; and supporting health care professionals through professional education.

These efforts, together with Bill S-223, will make Canada a world leader in responding to organ trafficking. While many like-minded countries regulate the transplantation of human organs and prohibit organ trafficking in the same way Canada currently does, such as the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia, few countries have criminalized purchasing organs, including transplant tourism.

The government supports the Criminal Code reforms proposed by this bill and will continue to work toward bringing them into force. We are committed to ensuring the bill's reforms support their objective of ending organ trafficking in all its forms, including the commercialization of human body parts, and the harm it causes to those impacted and to all of society.

• (1755)

[Translation]

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as members of Parliament, we have the opportunity to speak in this House about issues that are important to us. Every day, our colleagues rise to commend or denounce a situation that sometimes brings us together and other times drives us apart.

Everyone knows that I am very happy when I can jump into the political arena and debate with my colleagues from other parties. It is not news to my colleagues that I like standing up to my Liberal, Conservative or NDP friends once in a while—with all due respect, of course. That is what our job is all about: defending our ideas. Having said that, there are some issues where debate is not really appropriate, not because I want to impose my ideas, but because, very often, unanimity triumphs over difference of opinion. Most of the time, this happens when the issues relate to the protection of human rights or the well-being of individuals.

As the Bloc Québécois immigration and human rights critic, today I want to talk about the protection and well-being of individuals. I want to talk primarily about Bill S-223, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, trafficking in human organs, which was debated and passed in the Senate. This shows that there is consensus among Canadians and Quebecers with respect to the cruel and barbaric practice of organ trafficking. There is already a consensus on this. Therefore, no one will be surprised to hear me say that, just like my Bloc Québécois colleagues, I support the principle of this bill.

Before continuing, I would like us to examine some notions together. Organ transplants were first performed in the 1950s and have saved countless lives. However, the demand for organs now far exceeds supply. It is estimated that legal transplants meet the needs of 10% of all patients on waiting lists worldwide. Consequently, thousands of people die each year waiting for a transplant. There is a reason why organ trafficking is on the rise. Just look at the numbers. The desperate need for organ transplants has led to a thriving criminal, transnational and lucrative market. Organ trafficking is a global phenomenon.

This phenomenon is everywhere, even though the practice is prohibited in nearly every country. It is a practice that is widely considered unethical and, sadly, it disproportionately affects the poor and disadvantaged. The numbers speak for themselves. The typical recipient is a 48-year-old man with an average annual income of \$53,000. In contrast, the typical donor is a 28-year-old man with an average annual income of \$480. The problem is that these transplants performed abroad are dangerous, not only for the donors, but also for the recipients. There is no regulatory framework to ensure the safety of the procedure or the viability of the organs in either the donor or recipient countries. Although the issue of organ trafficking is internationally recognized, attempts to prevent and pro-

### *Private Members' Business*

hibit it have had limited success. As a result, this crime remains widespread in many parts of the world.

So far, legislative measures in Canada to strengthen federal laws on trafficking in human organs have yielded poor results. “Canada is back”, the Prime Minister told us in 2015 and during the last Parliament. To that I say that Canada is far from back. What is more, on international human rights files, Canada has been dragging its feet for some time now. There is currently no Canadian law prohibiting Canadians from going abroad to buy organs, get a transplant and return to Canada. In these conditions, we certainly cannot say that the measures taken by the Government of Canada have scared off many giants. In any case, certainly not China.

I can say that the situation in China is especially concerning. It is the only country in the world that organizes trafficking in organs on an industrial scale by removing organs from executed prisoners of conscience. This is forced organ removal. My Uighur friends know this all too well. I will rise in the House and denounce loud and clear the atrocities committed by the Chinese government against their community any chance I get. Today, I am doing so once again because we cannot say it enough.

• (1800)

As I stand here before members of the House, nearly two million Uighur and Turkic Muslims are in concentration camps, where many acts of torture are committed. Human beings are killed in cold blood and their organs are sold on the red market. At the risk of repeating myself, but above all out of necessity, I will again state the following in the House. At this very moment, in China, the most awful crime that a government can perpetrate against its own citizens is being committed, the crime of genocide.

China currently has the two largest transplant programs in the world. They grew quickly in the early 2000s without a corresponding increase in voluntary organ donors. This has rightfully raised questions about the origin of the organs. The trade in organs harvested from Uighurs interned in Chinese camps has been repeatedly investigated. Unsurprisingly, the investigations are always suspended.

We have to ask ourselves why we were elected, but also why we ran in the first place. I realize there can be a political price associated with going after a giant like China. There can be economic repercussions. Every single one of our ridings has economic interests in China. That is to be expected because China is an economic giant. At the same time, as we speak, Uighur women are being forcibly sterilized and Uighur children are being taken away from their families and placed with Han families.

*Private Members' Business*

As we speak, Uighurs' organs are being stolen. The stolen organs are then transplanted in a capitalist market where they can be bought and sold. Canadian citizens take advantage of this market. It is important to remember why we are in politics. Yes, we have to stand up to these people no matter the political cost. I am ready to put my seat on the line by standing up to China.

When I say "China", I am talking about the Chinese communist regime in power, which is committing atrocities against its own people. Bill S-223 is therefore very important. We are going to stand up to China for once. This will be one of the little things that we are doing, one of the small steps that we are taking, to stand against the giant that is China.

I will close with the following point. I do not know what is going to happen with Bill S-223, but at least no one can plead ignorance, which is the greatest ally of totalitarian regimes, after blindness. Let us be neither ignorant nor blind. It is with this in mind that I will be supporting the bill to combat organ trafficking, but it is mainly for reasons of safety, social justice and principle.

As members can imagine, I will never compromise on this. My principles and my conscience come first, and that is how we best represent our constituents who have decided to put their trust in us.

• (1805)

[*English*]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I thank my constituents in Nunavut for putting their trust in me. I will continue to work hard to ensure their needs are being met and to ensure their voices are being heard.

Bill S-223, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act related to the trafficking in human organs, is important to many Canadians and people abroad. This bill, if passed, could do one of three things.

The bill's proposed amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act could help to ensure that receiving organs or benefiting economically from this illicit trade is inadmissible in Canada. This is particularly important for developing countries where impoverished people are experiencing forced removal of organs, like kidneys and livers. This could be a strong message to countries like India and Pakistan that have corrupt agents to people in developed countries, including Canada.

The bill, if passed, could send a clear message that the government should do what it can to protect the vulnerable people who are exploited by these heinous crimes. Most importantly, the issue of organ trafficking is not a partisan one and we need to work together to get this bill passed.

We know that organs, like kidneys and livers, are being forcibly removed from many people worldwide. It is a very real problem on which the government has been needing to pass legislation for a while. It is something that, through several Parliaments, we have been waiting for substantive action on. This is the opportunity to pass this important legislation.

The World Health Organization has noted that one out of 10 organ transplants involves a trafficked human organ. This totals about 10,000 a year. We know this is a crime that disproportionately af-

fects people who live in developing countries that do not have access to the same rights, privileges and equality under the law.

The Canadian government, by taking a firm stance on this issue, is sending a message that the trafficking of human organs is a criminal action and should be punished as such. In addition to supporting this initiative, more should be done to encourage ethical, safe organ donation domestically to alleviate the need for trafficked organs.

A total of 2,782 organ transplants were performed in Canada in 2021, according to the Canadian Institute for Health Information. There are more than 3,300 Canadians on waiting lists for a kidney transplant, which is almost double the number from 20 years ago, and close to a third of them are from Ontario, according to the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Organ donation is greatly needed within this country. With such a large need within this country, it is important to have a conversation on how the Canadian health care system needs to talk about these needs. With so many Canadians needing organ donations, the illegal trade of organs in Canada continues to grow.

The people who are exploited in this trade have given testimony speaking to their experiences. There are stories of people who have woken up in a drugged haze to someone wearing a surgical mask and gloves telling them that their kidney has just been removed and that they need to take care of themselves. Often, these victims can suffer very serious, lifelong health consequences from that and because of the nature of the operation, some people have ultimately died from it.

In expressing what matters to indigenous peoples, this is an opportunity to remind all Canadians and parliamentarians of the consequences of federal government neglect in investing in first nations, Métis and Inuit health. Indigenous peoples continue to suffer elevated health indicators worse than those of mainstream Canadians.

• (1810)

Generally, the health care needs of indigenous peoples are not being met. Nunavut continues to rely too much on a medical travel system that does not invest well enough in the potential to invest in human resources in Nunavut and indigenous peoples across Canada. An article regarding challenges experienced by indigenous transplant patients in Canada confirmed:

Northern, remote and rural Indigenous populations are further challenged as small population sizes mean that there are significantly fewer local diagnostic and health-care services, and the distances to travel to receive these services is often challenging for patients and families, particularly when regular treatments are required.

By addressing the seriousness of this issue, and through years of discussion, this bill should be passed.

*Private Members' Business*

I am pleased to see that this Parliament has tried to address that by making it easier for people to sign up and become an organ donor. However, the illegal organ trade continues to grow and people continue to be exploited. The demand for organs is high and as our population ages, we certainly need to have smart and effective policy to address this issue. It is important that education on organ donation be made more accessible to Canadians.

Canada has a shortage of organs, with 4,129 patients in 2020 waiting for transplants at the end of the year and 276 Canadians who were waiting on a transplant list dying. That was up from 250 to 223 in previous years.

Indigenous children, including first nations, Inuit and Métis, experience persistent health and social inequities and face higher rates of end-stage organ failure requiring solid organ transplantation. The reasons for these inequities are multi-faceted and linked to Canada's history of colonialism and racism. Organizations and labs across Canada continue to conduct research to present their findings of inadequate health care system experiences that indigenous peoples face. With a better discussion, there is hope for the future.

New Democrats have long opposed all forms of trafficking, be it human trafficking for sexual exploitation, labour trafficking or the trafficking of human organs. We continue to fight for human rights.

We all must do what we can to protect vulnerable people. By passing this bill, Canada can send a strong message to other countries. Let us stand together in sending this message out.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is indeed an honour to rise today to speak to Bill S-223, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to stop the trafficking in human organs. I want to thank Senator Salma Ataullahjan, who brought this bill forward in the Senate, where it passed all three readings. It is now being considered here in the House of Commons, sponsored by my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

This bill would amend the Criminal Code to create some indictable offences for those who are engaged in illegal organ harvesting. It would also allow the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship to intercede. If it is believed that someone is in Canada as a permanent resident or here as a foreign national, they can be deemed inadmissible to Canada if they have participated, in one way or another, in the harvesting of human organs.

I have been advocating for this for quite some time. We brought forward the Sergei Magnitsky law, which passed this place unanimously in 2018. The government has failed to use it since that time, other than for the first tranche of people who were sanctioned. It was to make sure that those individuals who are committing gross human rights violations around the world were held to account and that they were not allowed to use Canada as a safe haven.

We know there has been a systematic organ harvesting program going on in China, led by the Communist regime in Beijing. They have used it on political dissidents and ethnic and religious minorities, like the Falun Gong practitioners, like the Uighurs, like Christians and others. They have gone out after them, arrested them and then forcibly removed their organs to profit from them.

We talk about gross human rights violations. It is disgusting that someone would actually take people who are being persecuted because they are a minority group or someone who does not agree with the regime in Beijing, or other countries for that matter, and arrest them, detain them and then literally rip them apart and market their organs around the world.

Bill S-223 would make sure that those individuals, if they ever came to Canada, would face our criminal justice system. They would not just be facing sanctions and be banned from Canada or have their assets frozen here in Canada, but they would face criminal prosecution here in Canada.

Let us consider someone who needed an organ transplant and knowingly used an organ that was harvested in this manner from a political dissident, from a Falun Gong practitioner or Uighurs. Right now, the Uighurs are being persecuted to the highest level. Essentially a genocide is being carried out by the Communist regime in Beijing against the Uighurs. If somebody wanted to buy one of these organs, they could be facing criminal prosecution here in Canada.

We know that this market exists. Estimates suggest that illegal organ trafficking generates \$1 billion to \$2 billion Canadian every year. That is sourced from 12,000 illegal transplants, predominantly coming from mainland China. That is 12,000 transplants a year. We have to put an end to this.

I had the privilege of working with the Falun Dafa Association here in Canada. It represents Falun Gong practitioners. Many of them have fled mainland China to make sure they had the ability here in Canada to have the things that we take for granted, such as freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of conscience. All of that is denied by the Communist regime in China.

They put together some great research over the years. A former colleague has put together a rather large report with the assistance of David Matas. When I say a former colleague, I mean David Kilgour, who was a long-time MP here, who always championed human rights.

*Government Orders*

● (1815)

They had a list of over 150 individuals who were profiting from the sale of illegally obtained organs that were harvested from Falun Gong practitioners. Last spring, I presented a petition that called on the government to look at this. It said that in the last 21 years, Communist Party officials had orchestrated the torture and killing of a large number of people who practised Falun Gong and that it was being done on a mass scale so their vital organs could fuel the communist regime's organ transplant trade. There were 14 names to sanction under the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, the Sergei Magnitsky Law, and the government responded but never sanctioned any of the individuals named.

In October 2021, I sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs congratulating her on her new appointment and asking her to take action on behalf of Falun Gong practitioners. I asked her to look at the entire list of individuals, which said who they were, what position they held in mainland China and what operations they were involved in with regard to persecuting and arresting Falun Gong practitioners, harvesting their organs and ultimately trading those organs around the world. I first sent the 150 names to her predecessor at the time and then to her. Again, we got a response but no action was taken.

I know the bill is getting support from all sides of the House and from every corner of the chamber, but we need to make sure we step up and sanction those individuals to ensure they are not coming to Canada. We can sanction them using the Sergei Magnitsky Law. They are hiding their wealth, taking advantage of our strong banking system, taking advantage of our fairly robust real estate market and capitalizing on the illicit gains they have been able to achieve because of this illegal trade in organs.

There are Canadians who need organ transplants. We have to encourage more and more people to donate organs in Canada so that we can extend the life of those who need transplants. That way, we can also deter this illicit trade in illegally harvested human organs and make sure it does not spread to other jurisdictions. We always like to concentrate on the communist regime in China, but we know this is happening in other places in the world. There are stories of African nations, and it is not just governments doing this, but gangs and the people out there in human trafficking who are resorting to this as a way to generate illicit revenues.

We need to continue to stand on the side of the individuals who cannot stand up for themselves. We have to make sure Canada continues to be a leader on the issue of human rights.

We need to make sure that those committing these crimes can be held to account. I know Bill S-223 would go a long way in ensuring that they would not be allowed to work in Canada and would be arrested if they did, and would not be allowed to travel to Canada or they would be arrested and face charges. We also need to make sure that those who know they are purchasing organs through this gross human rights violation of illegal organ harvesting face the full cost and full force of law here in Canada.

I again want to congratulate Senator Ataullahjan for bringing this bill forward. It is something she has been working on for a number of years. It has died on the Order Paper in the past, and this is our opportunity to make sure it comes into force as quickly as possible.

● (1820)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Resuming debate.

[*Translation*]

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The question is on the motion.

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.

[*English*]

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I request a recorded vote, please.

● (1825)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, December 14, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to order made earlier today, the House shall now resolve itself into committee of the whole to consider Motion No. 23 under government business.

I do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of the whole.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

(House in committee of the whole on Government Business No. 23, Mrs. Carol Hughes in the chair)

**The Deputy Chair:** Before we begin this evening's debate, I would like to remind hon. members of how the proceedings will unfold.

Each member speaking will be allotted 10 minutes for debate, followed by 10 minutes for questions and comments. Pursuant to order made earlier today, the time provided for the debate may be extended beyond four hours, as needed, to include a minimum of 12 periods of 20 minutes each.



Members may divide their time with another member, and the Chair will receive no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent.

[*Translation*]

We will now begin tonight's take-note debate.

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (for the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons)** moved:

That this committee take note of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, today I am going to share the words of Cambria Harris, daughter of Morgan Harris. We talk so much here and now it is time to listen to what families and survivors want.

“My name is Cambria Harris. My spirit name is West Flying Sparrow Woman. I'm a member of Long Plain First Nation but I live in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am 21 years old and I'm the eldest daughter of my deceased mother, Morgan Harris.

“We all know why I'm here today, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak, but I'm sad for the reasons I have to come here. It pains me to say that this week has been one of the hardest for indigenous peoples. This horrific situation has shaken us as a nation and angered indigenous people and strangers worldwide.

“What has happened is despicable, and I'm utterly shocked and saddened to hear that far more beautiful innocent indigenous lives were taken at the expense of a monster, including my mother Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois and still one lost sister who has now been named Buffalo Woman. Remember these names. Shout them from the roof of your lungs and bring justice for these deceased women.

“Time and time again, the system has failed vulnerable women and people, specifically indigenous. I want you to understand that every single one of these women are beautiful human beings. They are loved. They are mothers. They are sisters. They are someone. Our women—those who bring life to this world—are considered sacred and we need to start treating them like so. We need to end this violence against our women. Each and every one of these women lived a full life of stories and love. They deserve to be remembered for who they are rather than the way they passed on.”

Sorry, Madam Chair, but I am sharing the words of the victim's child, and Conservative members are choosing this time to chat. I find that disrespectful.

Could you stop my time? Let us respect these families.

**The Deputy Chair:** I want to remind members that there is a take-note debate at the moment and the issue, just like every other issue, is very important. I would ask members to please respect other members in the House. If they wish to have discussions, they should take them outside to the lobby. That would be appropriate.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier on a point of order.

### *Government Orders*

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Madam Chair, I just heard my colleague accuse Conservative members of having discussions. However, I am looking and I do not see anyone around me talking. Perhaps my colleague made a mistake.

**The Deputy Chair:** I think there were members talking and some of them were Conservatives. However, regardless of whether one is a member of the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the Bloc Québécois or another party, it is important to respect the workings of the House when there is a debate in progress. The person who has the floor should have the respect of the entire House during debate.

● (1830)

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Madam Chair, I rise on a point of order. I agree. You are absolutely right. No party should be named—

**The Deputy Chair:** I just want to add that there were definitely members talking. I will not say whether they were Conservatives or not. You are at this end of the House. Obviously, at the other end, there are other members from two other parties. I do not know who was talking. The hon. member asked for respect based on what she could see from her side.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Chair, the letter continues:

“They deserve to be remembered for who they are rather than the way they passed on. It breaks me to see our women fall through the cracks of society over and over again. Throughout my teens, I've watched and I've heard the horror stories of indigenous women going missing and many never found, and when they're found, they're found deceased in the most horrible, gruesome ways, and all you can do is cry and hope your loved ones aren't next.

“I was there back when Tina Fontaine went missing and I protested when she was found, because it hurt me personally as a young indigenous girl. Tina was around my age at that time, and there was protesting and rallying for her at the police station, demanding change, as a sniper looked over us.

“I was at the Take Back the Night marches shouting for our women and how we shouldn't have to be afraid to go out on the streets at night. That is why I'm here today. We are not meant to be forgotten, and we won't be. We are here forever, as we should be. These women have been a voice, and they deserve to be heard and paid the respect and love they need and needed before.

*Government Orders*

“Over the last decade, I've watched the news stories of families mourning their missing loved ones. I've watched stories unfold from when they go missing and when they're found in the worst ways. What happened last week and what has been happening for a very long time is a hate crime and indigenous genocide. This needs to seriously change. These monsters lurking within our society, how do we begin to pick them out and stop them before they seriously harm somebody, when all the hints were there that they were going to hurt someone?”

“What is frightening is how these disgusting creatures present themselves as friends. They hide in the corners and shadows, only brought to face when they've murdered our women. You guys have the power to make change and do our part in this by providing all the missing and murdered indigenous people the justice and respect they need.

“The system put in place, the system that was meant to protect these women and keep them from harm, failed them miserably and horribly. I'm angered by this, and I am heartbroken for the families and victims affected by this, my indigenous brothers and sisters. I've watched a nation come together in the most beautiful of ways for the most heartbreaking and gut-wrenching situation. This needs to end.

“I've watched this happen too many times. It has become a story, a story that is familiar not only for myself but also for other indigenous people. My mother, Morgan Harris, was a bright and loving soul. She gave birth to me when she was only 18 years old, and this breaks my heart because I am blessed to be a mother of a two-and-a-half-year-old and I gave birth at 19. My mother will never, ever get to meet her granddaughter, and she will never have a chance at having that sort of bond with her. That was ripped away from my mother and my daughter, and my mother was ripped away from me at the expense of a monster, a vile creature.

“With that being said, I am able to understand the struggles my mother went through having a child so young and then going on to give birth to four more while struggling with addiction. She had been struggling with addiction since I was a small girl, but she still shielded me from the horrors of the world. I remember when I was younger, I had gone for a sleepover at my aunt Crystal's, and by the time we got back to our childhood home on Simcoe, my house was surrounded by police and garbage bags. I didn't get to see her up close, but she yelled at me from the house while I was in the car, saying to me that I was going for a sleepover to my aunt's and that she loved me and how she'd get me back. I believed her.

“That sleepover occurred in 2006, and it ended up lasting until I was 17. I didn't understand what she was going through then because she did such a good job protecting me from it, but I understand now it was never her fault. That was the start of it all, and through the years of growing up in CFS and between having visits with her as a young child, I watched my mom slowly lose herself to addiction in the most heartbreaking way. Mental illness took over. The help for her became less and less, and I watched my mother cry for help, as well as my family.

● (1835)

“But she did the best with what she had. She was a smart woman, an absolutely bright, loving soul. She had a smile you'll never

forget. It breaks my soul to know that the system put in place that was supposed to protect her failed her and watched as she fell and cried.

“She was in and out of treatment centres and homelessness, constantly living on the streets for as long as I can remember, but that didn't stop her, that didn't stop her from seeing me and still being able to be a great, amazing mother for me. She was a great mother, and I might have been in CFS, but I did get visits with her, and then I did see her. My mother always made a point of being with me separately, making sure she spent quality time with me, because she herself knew she couldn't be there in the way she so badly wanted to because these systems had failed her.

“She didn't get to leave this earth with a home. She didn't get to pass away next to her loved ones, and she was loved by friends, families and strangers all around. Throughout the short years of her life, she had to live in fear, hiding from sirens and people, and constantly living in fear of the dangers that lurked around at night while we were all blessed to sleep in our beds.

“She lived in fear and she left the earth in a disastrous way. But you know what? For someone so small, with a five-foot stature, she was a feisty woman. She had a passion and an often burning goodness in her heart. Anyone who looked at this tiny woman the wrong way would be sorry. She fought for what she cared about, and everyone loved it and her confidence.

“She was extremely cared for by many, and since this heartbreaking news broke out, I have received substantial amounts of support, and I've heard stories of people who knew her, of how she was living on the streets, and how she always made a point and an impact on someone. Everyone always remembered her name.

“She was the funniest person I knew, and she was always making me laugh, along with others, and I want you to remember my mother, Morgan, as a strong, resilient woman. She had to do what she needed to do to survive, and it's unfortunate how she left.

“Let's pay her the respect and love she deserves by giving her a home finally, and that would be finding her, Mercedes and Buffalo Woman from the landfill, or wherever else they may be. Your government started this genocide and now you must help us fix it.”

● (1840)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for sharing a reality that sends a very powerful message, not only here to Ottawa, but also outside the Ottawa bubble, where things really need to not just be heard, but where we need to see action.

*Government Orders*

There are far too many girls who are in the position of making very difficult life decisions. I wonder if the member could provide her insight on how our urban centres are becoming unsafe. Could she provide that type of insight? It seems that it has been very challenging for governments at all levels to get to the core to try to stop the murders that are taking place.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Chair, I do not think it is difficult. There are 231 calls for justice that clearly lay out a plan forward.

The asks are very simple right now. I have been calling for the police to call for an independent investigation and provide the support and information necessary with respect to the feasibility of a search. If that is not possible, all this letter is asking for is to stop dumping garbage on her loved one. This is not difficult. What would do we want to live in where we have to beg? This is a crime scene, and we do not want to have garbage dumped on our loved ones.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Chair, I was deeply moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre's remarks, and I thank her for her bravery and her courage, which have continued for many years, on this file. She is likely one of the best experts in the House on this issue, so I greatly appreciate her bringing these experiences to this discussion today, and I thank her for her leadership in bringing this take-note debate to the House of Commons. It is very important. I too am a member from Winnipeg.

I would like to provide the member more time to share with us the concrete steps. She mentioned two specifically. Are there other things that could be immediately done to support the families and other women and girls impacted by this right now? We talked of mental health supports. What are other things that the federal government and other levels of government could be doing right now to help these women who are impacted and their families?

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Chair, in light of what is going on, at the very least there needs to be an immediate moratorium on the utilization of Prairie Green Landfill until this can be resolved. In honour of what the children are going through, and the families who are looking for loved ones, we need to give them that justice. We need to give them that peace.

We also need to have prevention. I have been calling for a red dress alert. Every time an indigenous woman goes missing, we need a red dress alert. Just like there are alerts that go out when children go missing, or when there are storms happening, we need a red dress alert.

We need, of course, immediate investment in housing. I just found out this morning that, unfortunately, another woman perished from freezing to death in a bus shelter last night. We have a housing crisis. These are human rights issues. We need to invest in safe spaces, but we need real investment in housing.

We also need a guaranteed livable basic income. Leslie Spillett, a well-known advocate in the community, was very clear. She said that if these women had a guaranteed livable income, they would be alive. This is a poverty crisis and not just a mental health crisis. This is a poverty crisis, and people need the support they need to live in dignity.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I would like to thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for amplifying the voices of an indigenous woman, the daughter who lost what sounds like a beautiful mother.

In this year's budget, there was reconciliation money for the RCMP to have reconciliation with indigenous peoples so they can help with the finding of gravesites. I thought that was a terrible injustice. I wonder if the member could share her thoughts on what more the RCMP should do to make sure that they too are sharing in the reconciliation, stop with the systemic racism and do better to protect indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people.

● (1845)

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Chair, I agree with my hon. colleague. We need those monies to be given to families in our communities to use the way they need for justice. We have put out 231 calls to action. In the 2022 budget, there were zero budgetary allocations for MMIWG2S. That is wrong. We need immediate resources. We need substantial resources for the searching of our loved ones and just to keep us alive.

I got up this morning after I had been with the beautiful family of Morgan Harris. I know some of the family. I love them. They walk with Bear Clan Patrol. They are a beautiful family. They are brilliant young people. They deserve justice. We need to listen to them, which is why I read the speech of Cambria Harris, one of Morgan Harris's daughters. We need to listen to families and survivors of violence. They have the way forward.

We have 231 calls to action. We need monies invested now to make sure we can heed those calls to action.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Chair, I would like to thank my colleague, the member for Winnipeg Centre, for her passion, her belief, her strength and her heart in speaking out for the families and for justice for indigenous peoples from coast to coast to coast.

I come from Vancouver East, and in my riding, we too have devastating situations of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. We also experienced a situation where there was a serial killer. Of the 33 women who went missing, he was only prosecuted for six of those cases.

Many families do not have closure. To this date, despite the inquiries and calls for justice, the government has not taken action and the police have not actually made the necessary changes to address the systemic racism and discrimination within the system.

To that end, I would ask the member what we need to have the police do to ensure justice is served.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Chair, I think that, in this case, it is very clear. There has been, as a result, and for very good reason, a relationship of distrust that has developed over time.

*Government Orders*

In this particular case, out of respect for the families, I believe it is in the best interest of the Winnipeg city police to call for an independent investigation with support and access to the information required to assess whether it is feasible to complete a search successfully. If not, there is nothing that screams systemic racism more than to have an active crime scene and to continue to throw garbage on our loved ones. There needs to be an immediate moratorium so loved ones can rest in peace.

Kera Harris, Morgan Harris's other daughter, said something to me the other day that was really telling. She said, "I need a place to give an offering for my mother, and I can't do that at a garbage dump."

I want her to have that closure. They have a right to have closure. Our families have a right to have closure. We deserve that respect, and I am asking for everybody in the House today to give us that closure. We need that closure, and we need help and support now.

• (1850)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Chair, I will say first off that I appreciate the very passionate remarks of the member for Winnipeg Centre. It is very difficult to follow her, but I will do my best.

I am not an expert in this area, although in the last 20 years I have had an opportunity to learn a bit more about what has happened to indigenous women and girls in Canada over the last several centuries and, in particular, in the last number of years.

Just this past week, a man was charged with four first-degree murder charges for murdering four indigenous women. Three have been identified and a fourth has not. The indigenous community has called her Buffalo Woman, so I would like to put her name on the record as well. I hope we can find out who she is and where her remains are.

It is very upsetting to talk about this, so I will try to keep my composure. I feel it at such a core level. It almost seems like every other week we are learning about another indigenous woman who has been brutally murdered, who has been raped or whose remains have not been found. It seems just so commonplace that people seem to think, "Oh, there is another one", like it does not matter. It does matter. This is in Winnipeg and nothing has changed. In the almost 10 years I have been in politics, we are having the same debate in the same House over and over again, and nothing really seems to happen.

There were years during which 231 calls to action were established. I have not heard a robust debate in the House about those. In fact I believe the Liberal government, unfortunately, took three years to make a plan of implementation. That was about a year ago. I am not aware of any full movement forward. We had a debate six months ago in the House on this very issue. It was about different women but the same issue. I have not heard of any meaningful action in that time. I fully understand and recognize the rage, upset and tremendous disappointment and internal pain caused by repeatedly asking for help and change, and nothing seems to be happening.

I am from a small rural town. I did not have any experience in this area, but my first introduction to how indigenous women and

girls in Canada were treated was by a very intelligent and progressive teacher in high school, who told us about Helen Betty Osborne. She was a young woman in the 1970s who was walking home in the dark, in The Pas, Manitoba. She was kidnapped, raped repeatedly, beaten and stabbed 50 times with a screwdriver. Her naked body was just thrown in the woods and was found by a 14-year-old boy. There was a lot of coverage about how the investigation was not taken seriously and how it was bungled. In fact the provincial government issued a formal apology many years later, in the year 2000, for how that case was handled. It took far too long for that apology, but it was given, and rightfully so.

That was my first introduction, not knowing anything about what indigenous women and indigenous peoples face on a regular basis. That was in high school. About 10 years later, I started in politics at the provincial level in Manitoba. In my very first week, the body of Tina Fontaine, a tiny 14-year-old girl who had been murdered, rolled up in a mattress and chucked in the Red River, had been found. She was 14 years old, a child. That was my introduction to working in politics. That was in 2014, eight years ago, almost to the month, last month, and I have not seen any meaningful change. That is shared by all parties and all levels of government. I want to acknowledge that.

The member made a very impassioned statement that people are tired of waiting. We need supports from everyone and we need to put politics aside. We may not always agree on the solutions, but surely where there is a will, there is a way. We could be providing better support to families, women and children who are being abused, raped, murdered and thrown in ditches and landfills like it is nothing.

I completely understand the outrage from the families. If it were my mother who had been murdered, thrown in a bin and dumped in some landfill, or if it were my sister or best friend, I would be outraged. These women were mothers, sisters, aunties and best friends. They have a whole community around them who will miss them forever. If I were related to one of these women, I would feel the same. I would want to get a shovel and go find these women. I would wonder what is taking so long.

I understand it is very complicated. I understand that it has been a number of months and that this is a commercial dump site. There is a lot of clay, asbestos and things from various slaughterhouses, hog plants and things like that. I understand a forensic investigation would be complicated. I also understand the police have found enough evidence to charge this vile serial killer with four first-degree murder charges. Although we cannot intervene, I do hope that, if he is found guilty, he rots in prison for the rest of his life. I think everybody would agree with that.

*Government Orders*

• (1855)

I understand it is complicated and like finding a needle in a haystack, but I do believe there should be far more discussion about making this happen, at least trying to find these women. If it were my mom, I would want her to be found. Why should these women be treated any differently? I completely understand, and I hear the people who are speaking up about this.

I believe the City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg police are doing their best. I understand it is extremely complicated. However, why not call on the federal government for some money? Why not call for the military to come and help out? I do recognize that the manpower and womanpower it would take from the Winnipeg police to conduct this investigate may pull many police officers off the street. We do not want that either. However, surely there are enough people in Canada that we can conduct some sort of recovery mission for these women, to at least give some hope and say that we tried. That is the position I am taking on this.

The landfill these women are in is in my riding, West St. Paul. My understanding that the Prairie Green Landfill is privately owned. It is not run by the city. It is provincially licensed, so the provincial government has a responsibility to take leadership here as well. I call on my friends in the provincial government to do so. I call on the mayor of Winnipeg and the chief of the Winnipeg police to do the same. I know they have been trying.

I would ask again that we do everything we can to provide some dignity to the women who have been murdered. The member mentioned that, if they are not found, perhaps this site should be closed and turned into a burial site or something, where garbage is no longer dumped on women who were loved and who were brutally murdered and tossed in dumpsters. That is not a lot to ask.

I understand this is a commercial enterprise, but surely that is reasonable. If it were my mom or my sisters, I do not know if I could live with myself if I did not do everything I could to stop garbage from being dumped on the bodies of my loved ones, or of the women who have been killed by this man.

I completely understand. I just want to put it on the record that I recognize where they are coming from. I do not know what it is like, but I can understand how they feel.

I was doing some research in the lead-up to my remarks today. Indigenous women and girls are six times more likely to be murdered than any other demographic of women in Canada. Certainly this has been the case in the past. I know there are examples from folks who have experienced these types of investigations that indicate it also may be continuing. It is happening so frequently that the police sort of brush it off or perhaps do not give it as much time as they could. I know police officers care about justice and care about having these vile killers held accountable, but I wonder if this would be a bit different if it were not indigenous women. Would it be treated differently? We will never know that.

I believe we should be putting every effort we can into finding them or at least honouring where they lie. If that is where they are going to be for all eternity, should we not honour that space? I will be reaching out to the West St. Paul city council to gather more information on how we could proceed with honouring this area. I will

take that responsibility on, and I am happy to work with the member for Winnipeg Centre on those communications.

I will also commit to ensuring I am much more familiar with the 231 calls to justice. I have not familiarized myself enough to be able to recite them. I should be able to do that as a lawmaker. I should at least be able to know what they are, top to bottom, and have an opinion on how we could implement them. We do not always agree on solutions in the House, but I hold myself responsible for doing that work. This has certainly been a reminder of how important it is, as a lawmaker, an elected member of Parliament, to know more about this issue. That is my responsibility and I make that commitment today.

In conclusion, I feel very out of place and do not feel I can do this enough justice. I do not have these experiences but I have great respect for my colleague from Winnipeg Centre. We have had many good discussions about this and I hope we have many more. I think there are things all parties could agree on about this.

My ask would be that the federal government work with the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba to pursue every avenue to see if there is anything we could do to find these women and give dignity to them. This should be done whether this is their final resting spot or whether we find them and allow them to be buried with their appropriate cultural practices within the indigenous community, giving some peace and justice to the families. That is my ask.

• (1900)

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Chair, in my hon. colleague's speech on this very important topic, she mentioned the responsibility we have as lawmakers and as parliamentarians.

Could she speak to the other responsibility that we have as women in this House? What more could we be doing collectively and in a non-partisan approach to address this issue and make sure these voices are honoured?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Chair, the member's question is an excellent one.

I have had the privilege to work with members across party lines, whether it has been on a committee or elsewhere. I will give women some props. I think innately we are better at collaborating, compromising and coming together to find peaceful resolutions to things. That is what my experience has been throughout my political career and certainly now.

*Government Orders*

I agree with her 100% that perhaps women have a special place in this House to come together and put partisanship aside when it comes to the lives of missing and murdered indigenous women and other issues like this to find solutions. Again, we do not always agree on what those solutions are, but I think there is, in fact, a lot that we can agree on if we come to the table.

I commit to working with her if she would like to do that and with members from the NDP, the Green Party, and the Liberals and Conservatives. Perhaps that is something beautiful we could do to find some solutions for this. I am very open to that.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, I wanted to acknowledge that in Ottawa today we have the chief of Long Plain First Nation, Kyra Wilson, and the family of Morgan Harris.

I am glad to hear my hon. colleague speak about how we are going to work together across party lines to get justice for the families on their terms and in response to what they are saying they need for justice.

Will my colleague work with me to get the justice the families are looking for?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Chair, yes, I will fully commit to working with the member for Winnipeg Centre. I mentioned I do feel her expertise is unmatched in this House. I know there are other colleagues in the NDP and other members in the House who are indigenous. I do not want to take anything away from their experience and expertise. However, I know she has dedicated her life to learning, advocating and fighting for indigenous women and girls, and for indigenous communities across Canada in general.

I would be honoured to work with her and work together to find solutions we can all agree on, implement and see change hopefully within the next few years. I would love not to have this same debate over and over. Next time, we could be talking about the great progress we are making. That would be wonderful. If we can do that, I am game for that.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I am glad to hear that the member is looking to work with other people on solutions that might work. Families are also calling on the federal, provincial and municipal governments, and the Winnipeg Police Service, to order an independent review, with support and access to information, to make a determination on the likelihood of the success of the investigation.

Does the member support and agree with this call?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Chair, it would seem that we need some sort of inquiry or some sort of committee to come together formally to get everybody at the table to decide on a path forward. Indigenous elders and leadership need to be at that table as well. That would make sense. Yes, I would support something like that.

I spoke with a number of folks from Manitoba at various levels of government today, as well as police. It seems that everybody wants to do something. Whether I would be included in this, I do not know, but I think bringing everybody to the table would make sense. Then we can agree on something that honours these women and honours the cultural needs for the indigenous communities that are traditional. We need to do that to ensure that these women are

honoured and dignified. That needs to be front and centre at the table.

In short, yes, I think we should all be open to everyone coming together and making a path forward that works and dignifies these victims.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, I am heartened to hear the non-partisan approach of tonight's take-note debate. I want to thank the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre for being a champion and voice for this. I had the privilege of standing alongside her, the families and the many community leaders who came to this place to advocate, including the incredibly inspiring and strong children.

There is a lot of talk about complexity on this issue. We heard in the previous answer that we need to perhaps revisit this. The truth is this is something that has been studied. This is something that has been captured in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

In fact, families, advocates and indigenous leaders, including Chief Kyra Wilson of the Long Plain First Nation, have highlighted the need for immediate federal funding to build and operate more low-barrier shelters for women fleeing violence. I know the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre championed 24-hour safe spaces in Winnipeg.

Does the member agree we need to expedite federal funding for the building of new safe spaces, including through the government's \$724.1-million violence prevention strategy, which today, to our disgrace in this House, sits mostly unspent?

• (1905)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Chair, if the federal government could come to the table with some dollars, I think that would move mountains in finding these women or, at the very least, dignifying where they rest.

Certainly, I would support money from the federal government. Given that this has been a respectful conversation thus far, I am not looking to wade into serious partisanship, but it is true that this is a Liberal government that has spent more than any other government in history. If it is not going to prioritize this, I think that speaks volumes to the value it is placing on doing this. It has the money. It is spending it. Why not provide some money for this issue that we are specifically talking about today, but also for what the member said, safe spaces for women?

The London Abused Women's Centre specifically supports women who have been sex trafficked and human trafficked generally. I believe it was last year or the year before that the Liberal government did not renew its funding and yet the centre helps thousands of women in the area, which is a highly trafficked area. I do believe that this funding should have been restored.

*Government Orders*

Within the same moral lens, I think that what the member has asked for is perfectly reasonable, especially in light of the fact that yet again, we are having this conversation.

We need to have a conversation. Certainly, the Liberal government should be coming to the table with some funding to support the efforts to find these women and ensure that their resting places are dignified.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Chair, the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry cites housing, the need for safe, secure and affordable housing, over 200 times, yet, despite promises, we have not seen a for indigenous, by indigenous urban, rural, northern housing strategy. The community has been calling for this. There is desperation for this. People die when they do not have access to safe, secure and affordable housing. Women die. As we heard from the member for Winnipeg Centre, the issue is also around poverty.

Would the member support, and would the Conservatives support, the call for the government to ensure that in budget 2023, there is at least \$6 billion over two years dedicated to a for indigenous, by indigenous urban, rural, northern housing strategy, as recommended by the government's own national housing council?

Would she also support the government taking immediate action to realize and implement the 231 calls for justice?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Madam Chair, first of all, on indigenous housing, I certainly agree that there needs to be solutions led by the indigenous community. We see first-hand in Winnipeg very clearly that every effort made, whether it is by the federal government, which has spent billions of dollars on affordable housing, or otherwise, has failed. It has failed. The problem has only gotten worse.

I drive in downtown Winnipeg every day. I live just outside of Winnipeg. I lived in Winnipeg for almost 10 years. The problem has never been worse. Bus shelters have become de facto residences for people. It is everywhere. There are tent cities. I have never seen it so bad and I have been around the area for 32 years.

I also volunteer at the soup kitchen, so to speak, downtown. There are several of them. A lot of them provide temporary housing. I can see the need first-hand. I think it is important that we all take the time to volunteer at non-profits and charitable organizations that feed and house people, at least temporarily, so that we understand the failures of public policy and the impact they have.

I would agree there needs to be an indigenous-led housing strategy, because the money that has been spent thus far on affordable housing has clearly not met the need. We are seeing the need increase.

Right now in Winnipeg it is almost -30°C, so, clearly, we need to find more solutions for affordable housing for our indigenous community and for all those facing housing vulnerability.

• (1910)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Chair, it is with great humility that I rise this evening to speak to this very delicate, very sensitive issue. My opening thought for this emergency debate on the serial killings in Winnipeg is as follows: Attacking

women and girls is the most effective way to destabilize a population, because it compromises its survival.

Jeremy Skibicki, a 35-year-old man, was charged with the premeditated murder of three indigenous women last week. Skibicki had already been arrested in May for the murder of another indigenous woman in the Winnipeg area. At the time, the Winnipeg police believed that there might have been other victims. Now their fears have been realized.

The accused describes himself as an official member of the far-right movement Holy Europe, which is openly pro-life, pro-gun and anarchist. Earlier this year, when he was first arrested, CBC examined Skibicki's Facebook account and discovered that his posts were rife with violent sentiments and anti-Semitic and misogynistic material.

In a press release, the Native Women's Association of Canada issued a statement on the new murder charges laid against the accused. The association pointed out that the most recent crime statistics released in 2020 tell us that the homicide rate for indigenous people is still seven times higher than for non-indigenous people. The fact that it remains so high is a Canadian human rights failure.

The government must not see the completion of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls as the end point, but as the starting point. These murders are proof that everything remains to be done.

The police still refuse to say that this violence was specifically directed towards indigenous women. We do not want to interfere in a criminal investigation, but four murders, four indigenous women, is significant.

In Quebec, the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is one that the government has always tried to ignore and gloss over by choosing to treat each disappearance and death as an isolated case. However, in 2014, the issue finally broke into the headlines as a potential systemic problem after the RCMP unveiled its figures on the number of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. The numbers speak for themselves, and they are chilling. A total of 1,017 indigenous women and girls went missing or were murdered between 1980 and 2012. There are still 105 women unaccounted for, who disappeared under unexplained or suspicious circumstances.

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Between 2004 and 2014, as the murder rate fell across Canada, six times more indigenous women and girls were murdered than non-indigenous. Taking advantage of the momentum generated by the TRC's work, many groups held demonstrations on October 4, 2014, demanding a national inquiry into the causes of the disappearance and murder of indigenous women and a national action plan.

During one of those demonstrations, Béatrice Vaugrante, executive director of Amnesty International for francophone Canada at the time, emphasized that many UN, U.S. and U.K. bodies had asked Canada to put an end to violence against indigenous women. She considered this Canada's worst human rights issue and said the government's failure to recognize the magnitude of the problem and take action was unacceptable.

In October 2004, in response to the tragically high number of indigenous women being victimized, Amnesty International released a report calling for meaningful action and concrete measures. Pressure was mounting on the federal government, which until that point had ignored all calls for action. Less than a year later, in 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada called for a national inquiry into the disproportionate victimization of indigenous women and girls. The national inquiry's final report was released on June 3, 2019.

Then, in 2016, following the disappearance of Sindy Rupert-house, an Algonquin woman from Pikogan in Abitibi, near Val-d'Or, the Quebec government launched the Viens commission. There were reports of a number of indigenous women in Abitibi accusing the police of physical and sexual abuse. Released in 2019, the report's conclusion highlights years of systemic discrimination against indigenous groups. The inquiry also calls for a public apology from the government for the harm done over time.

- (1915)

In October 2019, François Legault rose in the National Assembly and apologized on behalf of the Quebec government. The Government of Quebec is still reviewing the document's 142 recommendations for addressing the situation.

Five years after its initial report, Amnesty International published a second report entitled "No More Stolen Sisters: The Need for a Comprehensive Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women in Canada" and highlighted the five factors that contributed to the phenomenon of violence against indigenous women.

These factors are the role of racism and misogyny in perpetuating violence against indigenous women; the sharp disparities between indigenous and non-indigenous women when it comes to the fulfilment of their economic, social, political and cultural rights; the disruption of indigenous societies caused by the historic and ongoing mass removal of children from indigenous families and communities; the disproportionately high number of indigenous women in Canadian prisons, many of whom were themselves victims of violence; and the inadequate police response to violence against indigenous women, as illustrated by the handling of missing persons cases.

The calls for justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, presented as legal imperatives rather than optional recommendations, set out transformative measures in the areas of health, safety, justice and culture, including the following: establishing a national indigenous and human rights ombudsperson and a national indigenous and human rights tribunal; developing and implementing a national action plan to ensure equitable access to employment, housing, education, safety and health care; providing long-term funding for education programs and awareness campaigns related to violence prevention and combatting lateral violence; and prohibiting the apprehension of children on the basis of poverty and cultural bias.

While there is still an ongoing debate about whether it is appropriate to use the word "genocide", I believe there is a general consensus on the term "cultural genocide". In fact, we can now say that the federal government of the day and the clergy responsible for the residential schools deliberately attempted to assimilate or erase a culture. The government of the day was clearly intent on committing cultural genocide. It was an official policy, even. Under the guise of equal educational opportunity, the primary goal of this policy was to assimilate the children and eradicate indigenous cultures.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is of the opinion that this policy of assimilation has had a negative impact on all indigenous peoples and has undermined their ability to thrive in Canadian society. In their descriptions of encounters, families and survivors who spoke at the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls consistently linked their experiences to colonialism, both historic and modern forms, in one or more general ways: historical, multi-generational and inter-generational trauma; social and economic marginalization; maintaining the status quo; and institutional lack of will. The Canadian government and the clergy planned this collective trauma with the ultimate goal of driving all indigenous communities to extinction. Those communities have since been left to deal with the consequences alone.

According to Viviane Michel, president of Quebec Native Women, it is essential that communities and families have an opportunity to be heard as part of any inquiry. She also said that understanding the deep roots of the systemic discrimination faced by indigenous women is crucial to ensuring their dignity and safety.



As we listen to the testimony of indigenous women, four types of violence emerge. The first is structural violence. There is also social, legal, cultural, institutional and even family violence. That last term is frequently used in an indigenous context to make it clear that violence affects not only couples, but also the children and potentially other people connected to the family. There is also personal violence. This type of violence covers actions such as physical violence, psychological manipulation and financial control and involves individuals. There may be some overlap that emerges from the facts of the Skibicki investigation. There is a recognizable pattern, an all-too-familiar pattern that Quebecers can unfortunately relate to because of their own numerous femicides and the tragic death of Marylène Levesque in early 2020.

In conclusion, it is essential to recognize and understand the sources of violence and support indigenous peoples' efforts to rebuild. It is also essential to promote gender equality, support women's empowerment and establish a nation-to-nation partnership with indigenous peoples. The Bloc Québécois has been advocating for all these measures for years.

• (1920)

We did so during the election campaign, and we will continue to do so, because one of the major obstacles we are facing is the failure of the comprehensive land claims policy. That is exactly why the Bloc Québécois wants it to be completely overhauled.

I could go on at length about this, but I believe my time is up.

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for her speech.

One thing that is often missing from the discussion is the ongoing problem of anti-indigenous racism. Can the member tell us what we can do to address this problem?

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Chair, I thank my colleague. I know how important the feminist cause is to her.

I am not sure I properly understood the question, she asked it so quickly. Is it possible for her to repeat the question? I had a hard time understanding it.

[English]

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin:** Madam Chair, something that is often missing from the discussion is the specific and ongoing issue of anti-indigenous racism. I am wondering if the member could comment on what more we could be doing in society, perhaps in education, to confront this disease.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Chair, so much can be said about that particular problem. I was actually just talking about that a few moments ago, because I was just at a gala organized by the organization Equal Voice, and there was a lot of discussion about making more room for women in politics. That said, I see this as a much broader issue, that of representation in government.

I identified the problem. I would especially like to see more indigenous women in politics. I was talking to a representative from the umbrella organization for indigenous friendship centres in Quebec, which are absolutely exceptional centres. My colleague could actually talk more about them. Some of my colleagues have indige-

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nous friendship centres in their ridings in Quebec, and they could talk about the importance of these centres in terms of education, culture and the promotion of indigenous culture. Quebec's indigenous friendship centres are an absolutely incredible model. I hope to be able to visit one soon to see all the educational work they do in society.

As the critic for the status of women, I am very concerned about this issue. In fact, I am in the process of arranging a meeting with the representative of the indigenous friendship centres. I will go back to the Equal Voice dinner to continue the dialogue and arrange visits to discuss the issue of education.

[English]

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Chair, families have been calling for a moratorium on the continued use of the Prairie Green Landfill. This seems like the bare minimum of dignity and respect for the women who were killed and also for their families and their loved ones. Does the member support this?

Could she also clarify her comments? She mentioned there is a debate around whether this is genocide. The member for Winnipeg Centre passed a motion in the House acknowledging that what is happening to indigenous people is genocide, not just cultural genocide but genocide, full stop. I would like the member to respond if she agrees with that statement.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Madam Chair, it is strange, because when I was on my way to the House, I was listening to the news and heard about the landfill.

No matter who we are, it is an undignified way to honour people who have died and the end of a person's life. It is outrageous. I do not even understand how we are asking this question. I do not want to get into the details because this makes no sense to me. A life should not end in a landfill. That is absolutely absurd. This was actually being discussed on the news when I was on my way here.

As for cultural genocide, there is no doubt about that. They tried to kill the Indian in the child. In Quebec, they took indigenous children and tried to turn them into good white Catholics. That is what they tried to do to them, and that is absolutely preposterous. They were responsible for heartbreaking stories and collective trauma. Families were separated. As a new mother, I cannot even imagine having my daughter taken away from me. I will repeat that that is what was done to indigenous people because they wanted to kill the Indian in the child. That is absolutely unacceptable.

*Government Orders*

• (1925)

[English]

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Madam Chair, my question is on the conversation we have been having regarding a number of unlevel playing fields when it comes to indigenous communities. Specifically, what I would like to talk about now is policing.

From testimony and studies in committees, there are indigenous police services operating in their communities, but they do not have the same power as the regular police services we have out there. In some circumstances, there is a crime that takes place that indigenous police services should or could have the ability to handle, but under law they are not able to. Therefore, another jurisdiction is called in, like the RCMP, to make that arrest.

Would it not be better to have a level playing field with indigenous police services whose members often live in those communities? They live on the nation and know the situation probably better than an outside service. They are able to adapt better to the situation and understand the real problems going on with a particular individual in a particular situation.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on the Status of Women is examining the impact of resource development and violence against indigenous women and girls. We are looking at how disproportionate the impacts still are in 2022 and the extent to which indigenous women are also the victims of a form of modern slavery, of human trafficking. In this study, there will likely be a recommendation made about the issue of police powers in such cases. We are going to look at that. We have to see what police forces can intervene under what circumstances. We need to look into that because, according to what we heard in committee, it is a major problem. I completely agree with my colleague.

I looked at what is happening with the RCMP because I stood in for my colleague on the Standing Committee on Public Safety, which was examining the impact on indigenous women, how they are treated differently by the RCMP and how they are overrepresented in prisons. That is unacceptable. I was discussing that issue with the friendship centre representative that I was speaking with a few minutes ago. All of that has an impact. Beyond police services, how can we intervene to help these women? There are also a lot of indigenous women who end up on the streets and potentially at the mercy of pimps. They are victims of sexual exploitation.

It is 2022. What happens to them? Once again, police forces will have to work together. To come back to my colleague's question, I will see what the report says, but this issue will certainly need to be studied so we can take the appropriate action to ensure the safety of indigenous women.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am always amazed by how passionate my colleague is when it comes to defending the status of women.

I want to come back to something we commemorated this week, the Polytechnique. I remember very clearly that, immediately after the tragedy, there was some denial. Some people denied that women were targeted. In the case of the serial killer in Manitoba, we

heard a similar denial from the police, who said that indigenous women were not targeted, that there was something else going on.

Is there any explanation for why people would deny that women and indigenous women are being targeted?

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, I wish I could understand.

If I get emotional, it is because I have a 10-month-old daughter. It changes one's perspective. This year, as I was reflecting on the Polytechnique tragedy, I realized that I see feminism and advocacy differently now. Clearly, we will have to be feminist as long as we need feminists, and it is obvious that we still need to be feminist in 2022.

Consider the Polytechnique tragedy. It took place in 1989, 33 years ago. Women were killed because they were women. In 2022, there is still denial of violence against women. Indigenous women were victims of a serial killer, and there was an attempt to deny it. This is unacceptable. It makes me wonder. Yes, we are making gains, but there is so much more to be done.

It is 2022, but, unfortunately, in every single study that I have been a part of at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, indigenous women are always overrepresented in conversations about violence and poverty. Some communities do not, even now, have access to clean drinking water. There are still so many addiction and mental health problems. No matter what issue the Standing Committee on the Status of Women is studying, we always have to deal with the fact that indigenous women are overrepresented. When we talk about feminist issues, I hope to be able to advocate for indigenous women soon.

I hope we can keep working together across party lines. There has to be political will. We have studies, we have reports on missing and murdered indigenous women, we have calls to action. Recently, I asked some witnesses what it would take. It is going to take political will. There are suggestions and recommendations galore. Enough. It is time to put words into action.

• (1930)

[English]

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by acknowledging that the Parliament of Canada is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people.

I cannot begin to imagine the pain and anguish that the family and friends of the four women who were found are going through today. I am so sorry for their pain and for their loss.

Winnipeg is where I grew up, and Winnipeg will always be my home. It is where I raised our four children. It is where my three granddaughters are currently living. It is a community very close to my heart. It is my community, and I know that many people in my community in Winnipeg, my city, and for that matter all across Canada, are suffering tonight. My heart goes out to absolutely everyone who is impacted by this horrible, senseless tragedy.

This has to stop. It simply must stop, this hatred and senseless violence. The racism is absolutely brutal. It has no place in Canada.

[*Translation*]

We all—the federal government, provincial, territorial and municipal governments and, of course, indigenous governments—have a role to play.

I would like to thank the members of the House for their participation in this evening's debate, which is taking place the day after the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

[*English*]

Each and every Canadian has a responsibility to speak out against anti-indigenous racism and misogyny when we witness it. It is going to take every single one of us to stop this senseless violence.

The calls for justice clearly tell us what we need to do. The final report on the national inquiry speaks to the factors that lead to the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. We have a responsibility to address those contributing factors if we hope to make any progress at all.

We need safer neighbourhoods, where indigenous women and girls, gender-diverse people and everyone can live and thrive. Supporting indigenous-led, 24-7 safe spaces, emergency shelters and transition homes is a very important part of the Government of Canada's federal pathway to address violence against indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

This October I joined the Minister of Indigenous Services and the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth in support of Velma's House and funding for indigenous women's organizations across Manitoba.

Velma's House is a 24-7 safe space in Manitoba to support victims of sexual exploitation. It was created through the collaboration of community-based organizations serving indigenous women, gender-diverse people and other women at risk of violence and exploitation. It provides extremely important services, including access to traditional medicines and cultural ways of healing, hot meals, hygiene and harm-reduction supplies, as well as extensive support in helping to navigate systems of employment and better housing. It does such incredible work, and I thank its staff for their incredible and tireless efforts.

● (1935)

[*Translation*]

However, there is still a lot of work to be done. That is why we are making investments to address the factors that contribute to the disappearance and murder of indigenous women, namely in housing, education and fundamental changes that must be made to police interventions in first nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

[*English*]

Precarious housing conditions put indigenous women and girls, as well as 2SLGBTQIA people, at higher risk of violence. The work we are doing with partners to co-develop the 10-year national

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first nations housing and related infrastructure strategy is absolutely key to all of this. The Assembly of First Nations chiefs endorses this strategy, and we continue to work with the Assembly of First Nations to advance this.

We are also working directly with Inuit and Métis partners to implement co-developed housing strategies based on their needs and priorities. As we have stated in the House before, federal budgets have invested in indigenous housing every single year that this government has been in power. We work very closely with other federal departments to ensure alignment of our various initiatives and efforts.

We fully recognize that an important contributing factor to addressing this issue is education. The calls for justice call upon all governments to ensure that equitable access to basic rights such as education is recognized as a fundamental means of protecting indigenous and human rights.

Education that is equitably funded and rooted in first nations, Métis and Inuit culture provides indigenous people more choices and more power. Nine regional education agreements have been concluded and signed across this country. The regional education agreements are designed jointly with first nations communities. They reflect the visions and priorities of first nations education systems to provide high-quality, culturally appropriate education for first nations living on reserves.

Another area we are focusing on is indigenous leadership's continuous call for fundamental changes to how police services are delivered in their communities. This includes calls for legislation that recognizes first nations policing as an essential service that must be funded accordingly. We are also investing in support of culturally responsive policing in indigenous communities through the first nations and Inuit policing programs. The money will also be used to expand this program.

To address the overrepresentation of indigenous women in Canada's prisons, Justice Canada is introducing an indigenous justice strategy to address systemic discrimination and the overrepresentation of indigenous people in the justice system.

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[Translation]

Another priority is ending racism towards Canada's indigenous people. We must provide real support to indigenous people and communities who have expertise in fighting various forms of racism and discrimination. The strategy recognizes the different experiences of first nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, which lets these peoples express their viewpoints and make decisions about the initiatives that best meet their needs.

• (1940)

[English]

These are just a few concrete actions that the government is taking to address the root causes of violence against indigenous women and to correct long-standing systemic inequities. Communities across Canada are also taking action locally.

I recognize that this provides absolutely no relief from the ongoing pain that Canadians are experiencing or the suffering and trauma that the news of these horrible murders brings. There are no quick solutions to resolve the deep-rooted, systemic inequalities and racism that lead to the intimidation, violence and murders of indigenous women and girls. Creating systemwide changes to address this national tragedy is something I know this entire House recognizes must happen for today and for future generations, for my kids and for my grandkids.

I offer my sincere condolences to the families and communities that have lost their loved ones. I am so deeply sorry for their loss.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we can tell the words from the minister were straight from the heart, and I respect the work he and his department do on a daily basis.

It is definitely a very tragic situation we are dealing with. I know it is not specifically the minister's department, but he referenced in his speech the 231 calls for justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. I am looking at a few headlines and, unfortunately, there are advocacy groups that are calling the government's progress on those 231 calls for justice a national shame. Specifically, the Native Women's Association of Canada stated, "Today, we are seeing the sad results of the government's weak response to the crimes being committed against Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people." That was the organization's CEO. She went on to say, "The National Action Plan, as it was drafted, was actually a recipe for inaction, and the people represented by our organization are paying the price."

I would like the minister to comment on those very disturbing remarks based on the continued situation we are dealing with.

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to stand in a debate such as the one we are having this evening and say that we have done enough. Our government has not done enough. Our first budget was in 2016, and I can tell members that we have invested hundreds of billions of dollars of new money in education, health care, child and welfare reform, infrastructure, community safety initiatives and safe spaces, but we still have not done enough.

The pain is ongoing. The tragedy continues. Women and girls are being murdered every week. It has to stop. We need to do better.

We need to work in partnership with Métis, first nation and Inuit communities to find solutions. We need to work in partnership with other levels of government to find solutions. Everybody needs to do better.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have worked a lot with my hon. colleague in Winnipeg. Velma's House was a needed investment. I just found out this morning that a woman froze to death in a bus shack, under blankets. We are in a critical emergency. I appreciated what the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations shared the other day, that this is no time to boast about investments, because we are not doing enough.

I am wondering if my colleague would work with me to ensure a couple of things as a fellow Winnipegger: that there be immediate investments to support families in housing, shelter support and other services, as well as a red dress alert; and specifically that he join me in encouraging the police to call for an independent investigation, with costs and access to information support, to see if it is feasible to search the Prairie Green Landfill and, if not, that he joins me in the meantime in the call to have a moratorium placed on the continued use of this landfill site, as it is a crime scene and we need to respect the remains of loved ones.

• (1945)

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Mr. Speaker, I believe I stated in my previous response that our government has not done enough. We need to do more. We need to continue the partnerships with community groups. We need to continue the partnerships with other levels of government, including the City of Winnipeg.

Yes, I will work with the member for Winnipeg Centre. We had a great working relationship when, together with other ministers, we delivered Velma's House, a 24-7 safe space for indigenous women and girls in downtown Winnipeg. I would be pleased to work with the member on finding other solutions to ongoing problems that, unfortunately, have been around too long.

We need to work in partnership to find those solutions, and I would be happy to sit down with the member to work toward solutions.

[Translation]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to the speech by my colleague from Saint-Boniface—Saint-Vital. Obviously, what I got out of his speech is that he wants to eliminate all forms of racism against Canada's first nations.

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There is something I would like my colleague to tell me. Is he prepared to abolish the Indian Act? The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations said over a year ago that it is unacceptable that this legislation still has not been abolished. It has been several months. It has been over a year and there is still nothing. This legislation proves that there is racism towards the first nations. We have to replace it with a mutual agreement. There needs to be some reflection with the first nations, in a spirit of respect, obviously.

I would like my colleague to answer the following question. Should we not abolish the Indian Act and use new legislation to considerably reduce racism against the first nations?

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that good question.

I would like to abolish racism, not just against the first nations, but also against the Inuit and the Métis. I am certainly prepared to sit down with the member to try to find ways to achieve that goal.

As for his question on the Indian Act, I am prepared to sit down with the member, but also with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations to try to find a way that makes sense in order to work first with the first nations on replacing the Indian Act with something better.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister can provide his perspective. He said that there is more we can do here in Ottawa. Would that same principle apply, generally, to provincial and municipal governments, to indigenous leaders and to Canadians as a whole? We all have more that we need to do collectively. Could he provide his perspective on that issue?

• (1950)

**Hon. Dan Vandal:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, the systemic violence and racism that we are seeing manifest itself today in the murders of four women has its roots in the colonial values that Canada had at its beginning. Our first Indian Act policy was the civilization of first nations, then the Christianization and ultimately the assimilation, thereby erasing the Indian out of the Indian person, which was clearly a racist policy. However, that was 150 years ago.

Today, there is more that everybody can do, including the federal, provincial, municipal and indigenous governments and the community. We all have a spectre of influence in our lives and in the communities where we live. I think that is what reconciliation is about.

There is more that everybody can do, including institutions, governments and individuals. We must come together to look for solutions. We must call out racism when we see it and hear it. We need to work with indigenous nations, person to person and government to government.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

In our country, there is a genocide against indigenous women that has happened and continues to happen. We have a government that continues to fail to do anything about it. That is the reality.

I just spoke with an indigenous woman who works with the National Association of Friendship Centres. She said that as an indigenous woman she is afraid to walk the streets. She is a young woman. She is a president. She carries a strong role in her community and a strong role with that association. She just wants to walk in her community without fear. That is what we want.

The fact that indigenous women do not have the ability to walk freely without fear in our communities is a shame on this country. The fact that, knowing how serious this is, the government continues to fail to act is a greater shame.

Indigenous leaders have laid out a clear path. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and two-spirit people, laid out a clear path with calls for justice that would save lives. Every single day that these calls for justice are not put in place, are not acted on and are not implemented means more lives are lost.

Indigenous people should not have to beg or plead to be able to live with dignity and respect. They should not have to beg or plead with elected officials or with police to do their work. However, that is what is happening. Indigenous people have to beg the police to do what they are supposed to, which is to do their jobs. They have to beg elected officials to take their lives seriously. That is the reality of what we are up against.

I want to acknowledge the recent horrific events coming out of Winnipeg. I want us to realize that when we talk about these horrific incidents, we sometimes dehumanize the lives. We lose track that these are real people. These are daughters. These are sisters. These are loved ones who have been stripped of their lives.

Let us remember their names: Morgan Harris, 39 years old; Mercedes Myran, 26 years old; Rebecca Contois, 24 years old; and Buffalo Woman.

These are lives that were ended. These are lives that were lost. Government inaction continues to put lives at risk.

I want to acknowledge the incredible courage and strength of our colleague, friend and champion for people, the member for Winnipeg Centre. She has, in the face of a very difficult time, shown incredible courage, and I want to acknowledge that. She wants it not to be about her but to be about the families who are here today, the families across the country who are reeling from the violence against their loved ones and the families who are living in fear.

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I want to acknowledge that the member for Winnipeg Centre called for an emergency debate, because this is an emergency. This should be deemed a national emergency. The fact that lives are being stolen from us this way is a national emergency. The purpose of having an emergency debate is to shape our response to it, to put some urgency into the fact that we need to see action and that the federal government has a responsibility to act.

One specific point that the member for Winnipeg Centre continues to raise is that hundreds of millions of dollars remain unspent. That is money that should be going toward protecting and providing safe spaces for indigenous women and girls. The member for Winnipeg Centre has raised the fact, multiple times now, that the Liberal government has not spent money on building new shelters. No additional funding was announced in this last budget, and this is wrong.

We need concrete action. We need to acknowledge the pain. We need to move beyond that acknowledgement to actually doing something about it. We have the power to do something today.

● (1955)

[*Translation*]

It is undeniable that there is a genocide of indigenous women in our country and we must take action. Every day that the federal government does not act, the lives of more indigenous women are in jeopardy.

We must implement measures to protect the community. We must address this genocide. It is our duty and our responsibility.

[*English*]

New Democrats are using our power and using our voices to stand in solidarity with indigenous communities, doing whatever we can to stand with them in the fight against violence against women.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to ask the leader of the New Democratic Party the same question, in essence, that I asked the government minister. One of the things we need to recognize is that we have all fallen short. The best way we are going to be able to deal with this issue is to get all the different stakeholders to be more engaged, recognizing the fact we all need to do more.

I wonder if he could provide his thoughts on that aspect.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, when confronted with a serious crisis, we have to do two things. We have to acknowledge the serious crisis and then take action.

When we talk about taking action, we have to acknowledge who has the power to take action. The government in power has the ability, the resources and the tools to take action. Therefore, I disagree with the member. In fact the government in power, the Prime Minister, who has the power to make decisions, is the one responsible for taking those decisions now, immediately.

It is not about everyone who is at fault. It is the government that has the power to act and refuses to act.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will ask the leader of the NDP a question similar to the one I asked the minister a few moments ago. It is with regard to the 231 calls for justice that the inquiry has recommended and laid out.

Specifically, I am referring to a quote made a few months ago by the CEO of the Native Women's Association of Canada, who stated:

Today, we are seeing the sad results of the government's weak response to the crimes being committed against Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people.... The National Action Plan, as it was drafted, was actually a recipe for inaction, and the people represented by our organization are paying the price.

The quote goes on to explain how slow the government has been to respond to a number of these calls to action.

Now that we are having yet another emergency debate on this very tragic issue, I would like to know what specific calls to action, or as the leader of the NDP put it, what action, he would like to see done immediately.

● (2000)

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, I think the member rightly highlighted what is a very legitimate and fair criticism. The fact is that it has been more than three and a half years since the calls for justice were laid out very clearly. I remember at that time the effort, work and pain that went into that work to lay out the path. At that time, the elders in the community did not expect the calls for justice would just be tabled and never implemented, just referred to without anything happening.

What the indigenous communities have been saying is that they want to see all 231 calls for justice implemented and they want that done now.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as a white woman who has raised indigenous children and has indigenous grandchildren, I always think about the day one has to tell their children and grandchildren how to be safe in a world that really wants to destroy them. I think that is a hard part of the reality of indigenous communities. They have to make those decisions.

When their granddaughters go to bigger cities, they have to make sure that all the aunts and uncles are watching them to keep them safe because they are that afraid. Then we get that call and we know what that means, not only for our own family but for our whole community in a country that continues to perpetrate genocide upon these beautiful precious bodies that we need home with us.

I think of my cousin Jeannine and her good friend Carla, who bring indigenous women together, and they bead. They bead earrings and monuments for indigenous women. They are called the Lil' Red Dress group. Do the members know what they do? They sell all of those so that they can put up signs when indigenous women and girls go missing. They fundraise to save the lives and to call for help because no one else will do it.

*Government Orders*

I am wondering if the leader could talk to us about how wrong it is to have indigenous people fundraising to save their families when the government does nothing.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the powerful words.

I think it is abhorrent. It is horrific. It is such a failure of leadership that indigenous communities, indigenous women, need to fundraise to save their own lives and protect their own communities. That is an example, an indictment, of the government's failure to do what is necessary and what is right to protect indigenous people, to follow through on the calls for justice and to act immediately to tackle and to end the genocide against indigenous women.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Rebecca Contois, Morgan Beatrice Harris, Mercedes Myran and Buffalo Woman, as earlier referenced, each and every one of those incredible, wonderful and beautiful women's lives were cut short because of racial and many other complicated issues that led to the termination of their lives.

I do not believe there is a member of Parliament in this chamber who is not upset with the reality of what has taken place in Winnipeg. I know all of us extend our most sincerest condolences to the grieving families, friends and communities. I want to extend my personal condolences to each and every one.

I do not come to this debate lightly. Tina Fontaine was a wonderful young lady. Back in 2014, she went missing. It was on August 8, 2014. Her body was found in Winnipeg North along the Red River nine days later, on August 17, 2014. The community came together in a very real and tangible way.

I remember going to the Manitoba legislature, and there were indigenous women and others who showed up and stayed overnight in tents for days. They wanted to see a public inquiry. Whether it was called by the province or the federal government, they wanted to see something take place.

Tina was a wonderful young lady put into an environment that was very challenging. I recall back in 2014 raising the issue here of needing to have a public inquiry. A short while after that, there was a change in government and the current Prime Minister indicated we would have that public inquiry. Out of that public inquiry came 231 calls for justice.

If people want to do a Google search on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, they will find many of the things within those calls for justice are in fact being acted on. As the minister who spoke before me said, there is still so much more to be done. I do not believe for a moment that we should let anyone off the hook. There is a responsibility for all stakeholders, provinces, municipalities, indigenous leaders and community members.

There are some wonderful groups out there, such as the North Point Douglas Women's Centre, the Mama Bear Clan, the Bear Clan Patrol on Selkirk Avenue and Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata. There are many different organizations that care, that want to see ideas brought forward and want to see results. The minister made refer-

ence to some of those results, but again, there still needs to be more.

The Tina Fontaine safe place for young people on Selkirk Avenue was established a few years back and runs 24-7. There is also Velma's House.

Yes, the Government of Canada plays a critical role in this. It is bringing people together and making sure we collectively deal with this issue. For anyone to believe the federal government on its own can resolve the problem, it is somewhat misguided, whether it is intentional or not. The federal government does need to step up, and I believe every member in this House recognizes that. Our Prime Minister not only recognizes it but is stepping up, and at the same time recognizing we still need to do a lot more.

● (2005)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I find it horrendous to hear the member say how much work the Liberals have done in this regard. The member must have missed the response from indigenous leaders on the failure of the action plan to implement the 231 calls for justice. The member must have missed the fact that again and again the government missed its timeline. Consequently, we see in our communities the lives that are lost. Members are coming into the House baring their souls yet again to demand action and families show up with so much hurt, and the member for Winnipeg North has the audacity to say how much work the government has done.

If the member is so proud of the government's work, will he agree to an independent oversight body of the government's action on the implementation of the 231 calls for justice for the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would encourage and welcome this issue being depoliticized.

If the member would like to come out to Winnipeg North, I would assist. Let us have the province, municipalities, indigenous leaders and others sit at the table. All of us need to be held to account for our actions, including the federal government. Whether it is me, the minister or others on the government benches, we have all said that we need to do more.

I do not know if the member does a service when she tries to give the impression that the Government of Canada has done nothing. I would disagree with that, and if she is saying that it is wrong for me to say that, I would disagree.

I think that we are here to inspire hope and inspire the fact that not only when we recognize what needs to be done, we are committed to doing more.

● (2010)

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think that answer was really insensitive in light of the subject matter at hand.

*Government Orders*

Quite frankly, the Government of Canada has a major role that it can and should play. It has no problem using its power of spending for a variety of pieces. In fact, just yesterday, the Auditor General came out with a report that showed \$30 billion of wasted spending, and yet we still do not see action on the calls for justice. It has taken years just to get to the final report.

All of us in this chamber can agree that this is important, but for the member to get up and say that we need to depoliticize this and that the federal government is doing everything it can, frankly, I do not think that is true.

I would love the member opposite to give me a concrete example of something the federal government has done that saved a woman's life today.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives say that the Government of Canada has not done anything. The NDP says that the Government of Canada has not done anything. If I stand up and indicate that the Government of Canada has done a considerable amount and yet we still need to do more and are committed to doing that, it does not mean that I am wrong just because we have two opposition members who are saying the opposite.

If they are saying that I should sit back and just be told that the Government of Canada is doing absolutely nothing and it does not care, I am sorry, but I do not agree with that. Equally, I would say that we need to do more, and we will do more. Not just the national government, but everyone has a role to play in this. If the members who posed the questions disagree, then we will have to agree to disagree.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight with a really heavy heart to take part in this take-note debate. Unfortunately, the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is extremely prevalent throughout northeastern Alberta. One does not have to look very far to find way too many heartbreaking stories.

Here we are in the aftermath of hearing of more senseless deaths of four indigenous women from the Winnipeg region. I will read their names because we must not forget them. Rebecca Contois was 24 years old. Morgan Beatrice Harris was 39 years old. Marcedes Myran was 26 years old. Buffalo Woman was an unidentified loved one.

It is so difficult to sit here and hear that more women are going missing, more people are going missing, and we still do not have concrete action from the government. How many more people need to lose their lives before the government takes meaningful action? The government seems to be at a bit of a stalemate.

There is a lot of talk. There are a lot of grandiose statements. When push comes to shove, I do not see a lot of action that follows that. I tried to find online how many of the calls for justice were in progress. I could not easily find that. If members opposite have that information, it would be useful. I could not find it today. That goes to show there is not much progress on it.

As the member of Parliament for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, my riding is situated on the traditional lands of Treaty 6 and Treaty 8, the territory of the Cree, the Dene and the homelands of the

Métis people. This issue of missing and murdered indigenous women, girls and 2S+ people is a major concern throughout my riding.

I want to honour and acknowledge all the mothers, daughters, sisters, grandmothers, granddaughters, aunties, people and friends who are no longer with us because they unfortunately lost their lives. My heart goes out to all the family, friends and community leaders who have come together to share their stories, share their trauma, simply to demand action from our institutions and from the government.

The indigenous name for the Fort McMurray region is Nistawoyou. Since 2004, nine indigenous women from Nistawoyou have been reported missing or murdered. For the second time in this Parliament, I am going to read these women's names into the record: Elaine Alook, Shirley Waquan, Amber Tuccaro, Janice “Jazz” Desjarlais, Shelly Dene, Betty Ann Deltess, Ellie Herman, Audrey Bignose and Sherri Lynn Flett.

I take this opportunity to read their names because it is so critically important that we all remember we are not here talking about stats or something that happens distantly far away; these are people.

When I was a little kid, my mom was a hairdresser. She had a hair salon and barber shop in downtown Fort McMurray. Fort McMurray was sometimes a pretty rough and tumble place in the boom days. She would take us to her salon on Mondays. Her shop was always closed on Mondays, but she would often open up her salon on Mondays to serve indigenous community members who could not otherwise afford a haircut.

She would go down to the river and cut people's hair for free because she said, “If you look good, you feel good, and if you feel good, you're more likely to get a job. And do you know what? People are people.” My mom taught us from a really young age that if we treated people like people, they would act like people. That is a lesson that has stuck with me. My mom has been gone for about 13 years and that is something that I carry with me every single day.

We sit here and keep seeing women going missing because people are not treating them like people. They are treating them worse than they would treat animals. I am here begging the government to do more. It needs to use its voice and make a change. We all have this power.

● (2015)

This is a massive problem, and it is going to take every single one of us, but I challenge them to use the voice they have to make this a thing. I question why we are here doing a take-note debate and not an emergency debate. I do not know the answer to that, but it bothers me that this is the second time in six months that I have had the opportunity to speak in a take-note debate on an issue that is such a crisis in our country.



*Government Orders*

It has been more than three and a half years since the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls delivered its final report. It has now been one and a half years since the national action plan was released, yet we are here having another take-note debate. I am not quite sure what actions the government has been able to take in the six months since the last time we were here. I am not saying that as if it is somehow all the government's fault and therefore not ours, because it is every single person's responsibility to do everything they possibly can, but I really do think this is something that we need more action on.

The initial report concluded that indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to be murdered or go missing than members of any other demographic group in Canada, and 16 times more likely to be killed or disappear than white women. Those are staggering numbers that should give pause to anyone in this chamber. They are 12 times more likely to go missing or be murdered.

I want to read one particular story. It happened as I was an adult coming into my space, and it really hit me because she was almost my sister's age. Amber Tuccaro was 20 years old. She had a 14-month-old son. She lived in Fort McMurray and she was a Mikisew Cree First Nation member. She flew down to Edmonton, like so many people from Fort McMurray do, just to have a bit of a vacation, get away, get to the big city and maybe do some shopping.

She flew down with her son and a friend to go to Edmonton. Unfortunately, she was last seen on August 18, 2010. Fast forward a couple of years to when her remains were found by a few people out horseback riding. The case is still unsolved. Today, they still do not have any more answers than they did then. Her family has been actively pushing this issue, as so many families all across the country do.

It is left to the families to pick up so much of this, to bring these cases and these stories forward, to share their trauma and the worst situation they could ever imagine happening. It is left up to them because our institutions have failed. Our institutions are not protecting people. We are not allowing people to live in the dignity with which they were created to live in. There is more that each and every one of us can do, but specifically the government because it does have that ability and that power.

Therefore, I would like to give space to all of those who are struggling right now because they have just lost a loved one, a friend, a community member, someone they saw on the street, or someone they saw in their community coffee shop or just out and about. Perhaps it was someone they did not even know but who is close in age to them or close in age to someone else. As I was doing my research for this take-note debate, I could not help but reflect on the fact that some of these women who were murdered and who are gone were almost my age, they were younger than me or they were the same age as my siblings. That is a tough, tough space.

I really hope that six months from now we are not here doing another take-note debate, with no more action on this file, and simply here trying to do our best, as opposition, to bring more attention to this issue. With that, I would like to thank all the families for being so brave in sharing their stories.

• (2020)

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned using our voice as government members. I certainly want to assure her that I do that every single opportunity I have. I also know that I cannot wait for the government to act. In my home community, I meet with police regularly. I meet with the RCMP. I meet with health authorities. I meet with education boards. I meet with families. I attend vigils and marches. I demand action.

I am just wondering if she could speak to some of the things she is doing in her own home community to also demand action.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:** Mr. Speaker, I think that is a valiant effort. I know, for myself, that it has been a tough space.

I had the opportunity as a MLA, when I was a provincial member, to sit on Alberta's joint working group for missing and murdered indigenous people and 2S+. In that work, I got to sit and chat with a lot of elders and a lot of community members from all across the province, hearing about how this issue impacted the Alberta landscape. That spurred more conversations with local leaders and hearing some of the stories, which is really a challenging space to be in.

I have participated in marches and had different conversations along those lines. I appreciate what one is able to do locally, but I do believe that we do have a space and an opportunity for the government to start doing more when it comes to the calls for justice and showing us where we are in the progress of them because, quite frankly, having 231 calls to justice and no website one can go to in order to see how many have been completed is a failure.

• (2025)

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, settler colonialism, land displacement, genocide, missing and murdered indigenous women and the ongoing processes of resource extraction are all along a continuum. They are all linked. I think that the hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake raised the connection between her proximity to “man camps” and the frequency of violence against indigenous women.

I want to give the hon. member the opportunity to reflect on ways in which we can reduce this gender-based violence, this ongoing genocide, against indigenous women and the ways in which it remains inextricably linked to resource extraction in the country.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would really like to clarify some language here because I think language is super important. In the natural resources sector, they are not “man camps”. They are camps where people live. There are men. There are women. There are 2S+ individuals. There are a variety of people there. It is absolutely inappropriate to simply classify those as “man camps”.

*Government Orders*

I am very proud to be from a community where, no matter what one's gender is, one can have an opportunity and one can succeed. I see a lot going forward and a lot of awareness being brought to this issue because of the extractive industry, as it has been pushing forward on as much stuff as possible. I do know that this is an issue that is currently being studied by the status of women committee here, and I look forward to seeing their final report.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, previous speakers have talked about the lack of efficacy in spending on this issue and have alluded to how the government uses spending as an outcome, when we are in here, once again, six months later, having a debate about a tragedy that we should have prevented.

I am wondering if my colleague could comment on some of the ideas that have been raised about having independent review boards for the monitoring of spending, to ensure that when the government is talking about spending, it is actually getting to the people who need it to prevent these tragedies.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:** Mr. Speaker, I think that is an excellent question because I was also taught that we cannot just throw money at problems and hope they go away. Some problems we can throw money at and they will go away, but life is not that simple.

Frankly speaking, we are not seeing money being spent in the right ways. One of the things that has been championed quite a bit by the member for Winnipeg Centre is the idea of a red dress alert. Something like that, similar to what we have with the Amber Alert, could possibly save lives because it would quickly draw more attention.

We do know that the faster people go out looking for someone after they go missing, the better chance they have to come home alive and the better chance they have to have that case solved if they are, unfortunately, already missing.

Suggestions like that are meaningful, tangible suggestions that do not necessarily require a whole bunch of money. They just require will from the government to do so.

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Mr. Speaker, words do matter, and I want the hon. member to have the opportunity to clarify whether or not she believes, based on the study that just happened at the status of women committee, that proximity to resource extraction, in particular the oil and gas sector, has a higher propensity of violence against indigenous women.

These are not opinions. These are facts that have been borne through the House of Commons time and time again, so I want the hon. member to stand to clarify whether she agrees that resource extraction, oil and gas, being in proximity to northern indigenous communities, leads to a higher propensity for missing and murdered indigenous women.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that my colleague has an intense dislike of the natural gas industry—

**Mr. Matthew Green:** They are murdered women.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that, but I am not going to sit here and allow him to say an entire industry is somehow to blame for this issue, because we are seeing women,

girls and exploited people going missing from communities such as Winnipeg, Vancouver and a variety of communities all across the country. Frankly speaking, to just blame it on the extractive industry or natural resources is missing the forest for the trees.

• (2030)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know my hon. colleague's intention is great in this. I would like to speak on behalf of the status of women committee where we conducted that study. Education is critical, as is putting in changes to make sure everybody has the access to resources so these things are prevented.

I would ask my hon. colleague what she believes Liberals and New Democrats are doing on that end as well. Does she support a lot of these changes in education? That was the push in that study, and I know she has not yet had the chance to read it, but I am just curious of her thoughts on that.

**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:** Mr. Speaker, I think one of the things that is really important is that we have more education. That is one of the pieces the red dress alert would provide. It would give an opportunity for more information to go out quickly, and study after study has shown that, the faster people get information, the more likely a person is to be found and to be found alive.

I think that is so critically important, as well as having better information for our police officers. One of the interesting pieces we have implemented in the Fort McMurray region, and it has already happened in Calgary as well as Edmonton, is having more awareness around human trafficking, what that can look like and how that plays such a huge role in missing, murdered and exploited indigenous people.

There are different pieces, like #NotInMyCity, which is an initiative by Paul Brandt that brings forward more awareness around human trafficking. That can play a very important role in dealing with this, and that education factor would teach a variety of different people what human trafficking does and does not look like, how to intervene safely and that there is a safe space to go to.

In the Fort McMurray airport, YMM, there are stickers that say how to spot human trafficking, and if someone suspects they see human trafficking, how to get in touch with the staff who have that training. I think that is so critically important, because if we can intervene early, we have a better chance of having a positive outcome.

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will note at the outset that I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Sydney—Victoria.

*Kwe, ullukkut, tansi, hello and bonjour.*

I will also acknowledge this debate is taking place on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people as we acknowledge the horrific and devastating murder of four indigenous women in Winnipeg.

This is a week where the expression “being treated like garbage” took on a tragic and literal meaning. These women were and are the victims of senseless violence. Their lives were taken from them. Their futures were stolen from them and their families. Each of them were cherished and loved by members of their families and communities.

I had the privilege yesterday of meeting one of the families. I am obviously humbled by our conversations, and I want them to know, although I had little opportunity to speak as it was not my place, that I heard them. Nobody should have to go through this pain or the trauma of uncovering the truth. No one should have to struggle to obtain justice, and nobody should have to sift through the trash looking for their loved ones.

[*Translation*]

In a sad twist of fate, yesterday was the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. It was a violent femicide when 14 women were killed and 13 others were injured at the École Polytechnique de Montréal 33 years ago.

Quite frankly, I am disgusted by what is happening. There is a crisis involving the disappearance and murder of indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Together, as a nation and at various levels of government, we have the responsibility to respond to the calls for justice and to provide access to safe spaces and programs that help the most vulnerable to not be targeted.

Canada needs to do better for all of the families, the survivors and the communities that have to live with the consequences.

● (2035)

[*English*]

It was made clear in the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls that the federal government, all other levels of governments, the private sector and civil society each has a responsibility to address this national crisis that is ongoing. The report made clear that “jurisdiction” was a poisonous word and a word that contributes to the killing of indigenous women and girls.

While we are focused on a very tragic murder and the circumstances surrounding it, as governments and as people, we need to focus on every step of the way that put these indigenous women and girls in the vulnerable situation they found themselves in. Today, women on the street perhaps face that same challenge.

As a result of the final report on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, Canada funded projects to support families and survivors, build cultural spaces and strengthen capacity for indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations, as well as launched indigenous-led data initiatives. This includes many initiatives in Manitoba that many members have spoken about.

Over the past year, Canada has supported 65 cultural spaces and provided infrastructure investments that speak specifically to the priorities identified in call for justice 2.3. Despite these investments and despite the work we are doing to implement the calls to action, the progress is slow, and we keep failing indigenous women and girls across this country. Sadly, it is shameful that I am standing in the House saying that I do not know with any certainty whether any

### *Government Orders*

of those investments, had they been made in the places where they needed to be made, would have saved lives.

I will not go on much longer with this speech, but I do want to say that as a nation we have a duty to keep breaking down jurisdictional boundaries and keep breaking down the silos within our own government that keep failing indigenous women and girls. As I have heard from the House tonight, this needs to be bipartisan. I welcome initiatives from the House. I welcome initiatives for increased oversight to make sure the federal government is doing its part in responding to this tragedy.

No one should be bragging about what they are doing until every single indigenous woman, child and 2SLGBTQI+ person in this country is safe.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has said a lot of words over the last seven years, and the government has spent, or claims to have spent, a lot of money, yet here we are. I appreciate the minister's willingness to be non-partisan, but at the end of the day, he is the one who writes the memorandums to cabinet. He is the one who has responsibility for oversight. It is actually his fiduciary responsibility to the country to break down the silos, and here we are.

Would the minister today commit, in light of these murders, to immediately implementing the call for justice that would require an independent oversight body to ensure that the government is actually meeting its spending objectives, as opposed to just making announcements and then, per my colleague from Winnipeg Centre's Order Paper question from earlier this year, spending minimal amounts of money while indigenous women are still being taken, still being murdered and still freezing to death on the streets of Winnipeg?

**Hon. Marc Miller:** Mr. Speaker, in this context, independent oversight is absolutely key. I welcome the House's support of Bill C-29 to create a national council for reconciliation, which would be able to monitor, in particular, the TRC calls to action.

The government is also open to appointing an ombudsperson, in the right context, to monitor specifically the calls for justice from the final report on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. This work will have to be done in partnership. The Government of Canada cannot single-handedly impose that ombudsman without doing the engagement that is necessary. I think people's patience is quite thin in making sure that there are independent mechanisms to verify what we are doing as a government, but we would welcome that initiative.

*Government Orders*

• (2040)

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have been working with my colleague across the way to respond to the crisis occurring in our communities, but he just said something of concern to me, which is that he is open to establishing an ombudsperson. Call for justice 1.7 specifically calls for that. This is something indigenous women, girls and families are calling for. It is needed.

Will the minister commit today to putting that in place immediately, especially in light of the level of emergency we are in? Also, will he support the calls of the families to immediately put a moratorium on Prairie Green Landfill so the remains of their mothers can rest in peace and an independent investigation can occur regarding the feasibility of a search in the area?

**Hon. Marc Miller:** Mr. Speaker, I should have clarified my thought. We are supportive of putting in place call for justice 1.7, which does call for an ombudsperson. We need that engagement to occur so that it is done in the proper procedural way. This is something the government is open to and will be moving on.

As for the calls that we have heard from the families, I would have to see what exactly is being called for with respect to that site. I heard it clearly yesterday, but we need to understand exactly what needs to be put in place to support that. We clearly do not want remains being disturbed. The feasibility of doing searches, given the toxic nature of the land site, is something that I do not have expertise on. We need that expertise. We also need to put the resources in place to make sure these women are properly honoured and that if searches are done, they are done in an exhaustive fashion.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the minister's speech, he said progress is slow. For everyone watching at home and people sitting on this side of the House, I ask why.

**Hon. Marc Miller:** Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to answer this in a short time, but clearly what the final report said is that structural and generational elements have put women in the vulnerable situation they find themselves in today.

The member opposite mentioned land, extractive activities, the reform of child and family services and education as contributing factors that put women in this vulnerable situation. These are all reforms that take time. It is frustrating to hear that, but if there is anything the final report told us, it is that we need to attack this in a systemic and systematic way, and some of those reforms absolutely do take time. It does not mean lack of effort. It means the understanding that the genesis of this goes back decades, and it will take time to make sure that every indigenous woman and child is safe in this country.

**Mr. Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank hon. members who are here tonight to talk about this extremely important issue.

I would like to express my thoughts and condolences to the families and communities of the four first nations women in Winnipeg. The news is tragic, and it is a painful reminder of the discrimination and horrific violence that indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people continue to experience in this country.

These tragedies, these injustices, to put it bluntly, happen far too often in Canada. It is unacceptable. However, far too often when I come to the House and hear these debates about indigenous people, it is always in a very pejorative light. It is always very sombre and tragic and often filled with a lot of emotions, and I do not think we do enough to celebrate the indigenous women out there.

I think about my home, my Mi'kmaq community of Eskasoni, with 4,000 people. I think about the young girls possibly watching this debate tonight and what they must be feeling knowing that there is this despair and reality coming to them. We have seen it highlighted through the public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and the calls for justice. I also cannot help but think that we have to talk about the indigenous women champions out there who have done some great things over the years. I do so because I want those indigenous young women to feel that there is more in this country than despair.

We can look at the most recent Governor General of Canada, Mary Simon, the first indigenous woman to hold that role. This is a thing of pride that we should have as indigenous people in Canada.

I think about RoseAnne Archibald, the very first woman national chief. Young women in our communities can now say, "I could be a national chief someday."

I think about Michelle O'Bonsawin, the very first indigenous woman Supreme Court of Canada justice. I want the young girls at home to think they can be a Supreme Court of Canada justice in this country as well.

I think about all of the courageous women in my home province of Nova Scotia who have fought to ensure that their advocacy and their voices have led to a better tomorrow for indigenous women.

I think about the Native Women's Association of Canada, and the phone call I got to make to the then president Bernadette Marshall, who is a community member of Potlotek. I think of Lorraine Whitman, a former president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, and her daughter Zabrina Whitman, who helped push this proposal forward. These are proud, strong, amazing Mi'kmaq women who have advocated. When we made the announcement of more than \$8 million for something they had been fighting for for 30 years, they had tears of joy. They said, "We have been fighting for this."

I think if we just focus on some of the tragic things, we are not focusing on some of the amazing accomplishments of indigenous women, Mi'kmaq women.

*Government Orders*

I think about most recently, over the past month, going to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre in Halifax, where Pam Glode-Desrochers was able to work with our government and work with her staff to get a commitment for more than \$28 million for all the important services that Mi'kmaq friendship centres provide to indigenous women who leave their communities to go to university or in search of better employment. These are important supports they have and continue to move forward on.

It is important that when we talk about indigenous people and women in this House, we also talk about the champions. We have to give indigenous people hope for a better tomorrow. That is why I continue to have conversations about what we need to do.

We have the calls for justice, which are important, and I am committed to working with every member of this House to make sure that we fulfill them. However, I am open to ideas on how we move forward. I am also open to some of the programs that we are currently moving out.

One thing we have been able to do is make sure we look at projects across the country that are rolling out. Sixty-five projects have been funded from coast to coast to coast, and they are making a difference for indigenous communities. Some examples are long-houses, women's lodges, improved powwow grounds, heritage parks, cultural centres and other facilities to support cultural ceremonies and teachings with elders.

● (2045)

It has been an amazing experience, during my short time of three years as a member of Parliament, not only to be a part of and see this change, but also to recognize, as a first nations person living on a reserve for 43 years, that I am able to look at the indigenous women in my communities and say there is some important work going on.

I want the indigenous girls at home to know that when we are talking about them in the House, we are talking not only about the tragedies, but also about the hope we need to have in a better Canada, and about the fact that they are going to lead that for our country.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are indeed many accomplishments of which first nations and indigenous women in this country can be proud, but that is not for the government to own. In fact, many times it is in spite of the government that these women succeed.

Tonight we are here to talk about what the government will do to prevent further murder, further tragedy and further lack of opportunity for these women. The one woman from a first nations and indigenous background who actually had her hands on the levers of power was turfed by the government. We need to stop tokenizing first nations women and listing their speeches as if they were the government's accomplishments, and commit to action.

Does the member across the way regret not having a first nations woman at the helm of the justice ministry today?

● (2050)

**Mr. Jaime Battiste:** Mr. Speaker, I am really happy to hear Conservatives rise in the House to talk about indigenous issues during

emergency debates. I would like to hear more about it when they are talking about the overspending we are doing as a government as we try to remedy years of the Harper government, which continued to ignore indigenous issues. I know that as a government we have a lot of fixing to do because of years of disservice, but it is this party that continues to look to and promote indigenous women and candidates, and that is why we have first nations candidates on this side of the House.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to be able to rise today in this place to recognize so many indigenous women in my life, including my mother, my sisters, and people in the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement and across all of Alberta, and the work they continue to do every single day to make sure that women and girls are alive. They, not the government, are the front line.

What my mom, aunts and sisters and the people in my community have done to serve that community, to make it whole and strong, is they took care not just of themselves. Oftentimes they put the members of the community way ahead of themselves in order to keep that community and, oftentimes, children alive. These are the real heroes, and I want to thank my colleagues for recognizing the important work of indigenous women.

I have a question for the member in relation to action. We are talking about action here today. I want to hear from the member exactly what he is going to do tomorrow. Will he heed the calls from the survivors who made direct asks of the government? One is a moratorium on use of the landfill. What will the government do tomorrow to make that happen? I want to hear the member talk about that.

**Mr. Jaime Battiste:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his advocacy and for making sure he holds the government to account. I appreciate his words.

When I took on this position of being the first Mi'kmaq MP, one of the things I wanted to do was reach out to the Native Women's Association of Canada to see how I could create more justice. One of the things we did in our community was to create a national video with Myles Goodwyn and some of the Mi'kmaq singers, such as Kalo Johnson and Deedee Austin, which talks about the plight of missing and murdered indigenous women and tells the story and the facts with respect to that.

I do not have to wait until tomorrow; I continue to do it today, but with respect to my role as parliamentary secretary, I am willing to work on all sides to figure out how we can roll out money faster. I have talked about some of the projects that were important in my province that we moved forward on, and as much as these are infrastructure projects and I know the supports are coming from across Canada, I know we need to do more, and I am willing to work with members to figure out how we can do more.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I note that the theme of the parliamentary secretary's intervention today really departed from the themes of some of the other speeches we have been hearing and really focused on hope, celebrating and trying to showcase some of the incredible successes. I am curious if he can explain why he chose to do that.

**Mr. Jaime Battiste:** Mr. Speaker, I heard all of the comments tonight, and it created a bit of emotion in me. I did not want to go through the whole night without giving inspiration and hope to the young indigenous girls at home who may be watching, who may be interested, who may be going to university.

I wanted to say that, yes, we are talking about tragic events today, but tomorrow, with their leadership and their help, we could be talking about some of the amazing accomplishments of indigenous women in this country. I hope we will give that topic as much time as we give to talking about the negative and pejorative things that we have to discuss as well.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to rise in the House to speak on behalf of the members of my community of Peterborough—Kawartha. The purpose of tonight's take-note debate is to bring forth a discussion on a very serious issue and to call on the Liberals to listen. We have a crisis that has been happening for decades, and tonight we are demanding action.

I will provide a trigger warning for anyone watching or listening: This is a very heavy topic, and it can be triggering for some people.

Tonight, we are speaking about murdered and missing indigenous women and girls in Canada. Rebecca Contois, Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran and Buffalo Woman are the names of the four indigenous women murdered in Winnipeg. It is important to say their names. It is important to bring these women home to their families. It is important that the families of these women see justice.

The last updated number I could find was 307 murdered and missing indigenous women. As shocking as this statistic is, it is from 2018. How many more are there? Why is this not a priority? Indigenous women and girls in Canada are disproportionately affected by all forms of violence. Although indigenous women make up 4% of Canada's female population, 16% of all women murdered in Canada between 1980 and 2012 were indigenous. The 2019 general social survey on victimization, along with Statistics Canada data, has indicated that indigenous women were more likely to experience intimate partner violence than non-indigenous women.

During a study on sex trafficking of indigenous peoples, experts said that 52% of human trafficking victims are indigenous and that the average age of exploitation of an indigenous girl was 12 years old. Although the indigenous population up to the age of 14 makes up 7.7% of all Canadian children, they represent 52.2% of the children in the child welfare system. Studies have shown that these children in the system are more likely to enter into prostitution. This is not information that is new to the government. It is at the disposal of the government, but nothing has changed. We see no action on this human rights issue.

I will quote from Amnesty International's report, "Stolen Sisters: A human rights response to discrimination and violence against Indigenous women in Canada". It says:

When a woman is targeted for violence because of her gender or because of her Indigenous identity, her fundamental rights have been abused. And when she is not offered an adequate level of protection by state authorities because of her gender or because of her Indigenous identity, those rights have been violated.

The date of that report's release is 2004. It has been 18 years. This is shameful. Past governments, all of them, must share the blame in perpetuating the broken system that has left indigenous women and girls behind.

Two years after the release of the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls report, the government finally released an action plan on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. It is a plan that many have called flawed, toxic and unsafe. I will quote from an article:

University of Western Ontario professor Michael Arntfield — an expert on serial murder and cold cases — told the Toronto Sun the government and its army of bureaucrats are "chiefly to blame" for the continuing crisis.

"This is another solemn reminder of the fact that despite all the lip service in the world, the proper resources from the top down are still not being properly allocated."

Meaningful reconciliation involves more than just funding announcements and photo ops. It requires partnership and collaboration with indigenous communities across Canada. There is so much more work to be done to protect the lives of indigenous women and girls across our country. "Bad people commit these horrible crimes against Native women," said Malinda Limberhand, mother of Hanna Harris, who was murdered in 2013 on the Northern Cheyenne reservation. Malinda Limberhand continued, "but it is the system that allows it to happen generation after generation."

There has to be change. Enough is enough. We need to see tangible results that meaningfully improve the lives of indigenous women and girls. This starts with the federal government implementing its portion of the 231 calls to action from the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls report, including calls for a "standardization of protocols for policies and practices that ensure that all cases...are thoroughly investigated", "the establishment of a national task force...to review and, if required, to reinvestigate [cases] from across Canada", and ensuring "protection orders are available, accessible, promptly issued and effectively serviced and resourced to protect [victims]."

● (2055)

Canada's Conservatives are focused on bringing forward policies that make real and measurable improvements in the lives of Canada's indigenous people.

I would like to take this opportunity to speak about a devastating loss in my local community of Curve Lake First Nation. Cileana Taylor was 22 years old when she was brutally attacked by her partner on September 3, 2020. Cileana was on life support for six months before she passed away with her family at her side. The man who attacked her was out on bail for a previous assault charge dating back to 2019, when he was charged for aggravated assault on Ms. Taylor. He was released on bail on February 3, three weeks before Cileana died.

“The charge of aggravated assault is not enough when one of our young Indigenous women has died from his violent assault,” is a quote from Chief Laurie Carr, who sent a letter of support on behalf of the Hiawatha First Nation Council. “Our community has supported Cileana’s family and Curve Lake First Nation through prayers and offerings as they sat with Cileana in the hospital, and after her death. Cileana, as all our Indigenous women are sacred and a part of the continuation of life for our people, our culture and our traditions. They are the link, and the connection to our future generations,” Chief Carr said in her letter. She went on, “Cileana had value. Cileana had a full life ahead of her. The loss of Cileana’s life is unacceptable to our First Nation, to all our Peoples and to humankind.” The man who attacked Cileana was never charged with murder.

We do not need more headlines of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls. We need them to be safe. Cileana and all of our indigenous women and girls deserve justice. Tonight I ask the Liberals to listen and, most importantly, to take action.

• (2100)

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of working with my hon. colleague on the status of women committee. We are just finishing a study on the connection between resource extraction and increased violence against indigenous women and girls. I am very proud that everybody on that committee committed to that study in response to addressing violence against indigenous women.

One thing we have learned about on the committee is the importance of listening. Families are very clear. In this instance, a family came today to listen to what we had to say. One of the things families are calling for is a moratorium on continuing the use of the Prairie Green Landfill site, where the remains of their mother are currently suspected to be located. This was acknowledged by the police. It is a site that continues to be used for refuse.

Does my colleague support the family’s call in asking for an immediate moratorium so the remains of their loved ones can be left undisturbed and respected?

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is an incredible advocate and leader on the subject of missing and murdered indigenous women. I have the pleasure of watching her work and listening to her on the status of women committee.

This is deeply emotional. This is devastating. I cannot imagine not only having a family member murdered, but then knowing they are in a landfill and their family is not able to have their body back.

### *Government Orders*

The answer to my colleague is that there has to be something done. Members cannot sit on the other side of this House as a government and say they are fully committed, but do nothing.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are hearing some harsh truths tonight. We can hear the shaky voices. It is important to reaffirm our commitment and to continue to implement the national action plan. My colleague across the way talked about a broken system. I think it really will take transformational change.

What does she think are the root causes of violence against indigenous women and girls in Canada?

• (2105)

[*English*]

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, that is a big question. I think the first step is to listen. We need to listen to the first peoples of this country, to visit reserves, to sit with them, to understand them, to understand their life. We need to understand the systemic trauma they have experienced and to further understand how that changes one’s DNA and the neural science behind trauma, and why systemic trauma is so challenging to undo.

I think it would be arrogant of me to sit, as a white woman, and tell us this. I think we have to visit and be involved and listen and partner with people of Canada who are first nations. They will teach us. They know. I think the first step is to listen.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today first to acknowledge the humility and the insight of the member for Peterborough—Kawartha, who, it is very clear, in preparing for tonight’s take-note debate, has taken the learnings, perhaps from her committee or from her community’s proximity to other indigenous communities.

I want to provide the hon. member with the opportunity to expand on some of the learnings from the committee work that she has done.

She referenced education and, I think, to the best of her ability, tried to perhaps help her colleague in presenting what was a very non-partisan and cross-party effort to address the connection between resource extraction and the violence against missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

For the benefit of this take-note debate and perhaps even for her Conservative caucus, given her insight and her humility, I wonder if she could reflect on some of the key learnings of that committee, things that perhaps she did not know about going into it and which may have helped aid her in providing the insights that she has so eloquently provided this evening.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, it was a very important report and it was a very important study. We heard very powerful testimony from witnesses. I am not sure if it has yet been tabled in the House but I know that the full report will be released soon.

It is a challenge because the oil and gas industry is the number one employer for first nations, so we do not want to take away the opportunity that, hopefully, it will provide. However, there are often things that are happening that are not okay. We heard testimony and I think that the study was very effective in putting forth recommendations on how to prevent further tragedy, abuse and violence.

I think that there is a lot that we will learn from that report and I am very proud to have sat on the committee that studied this.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is a fierce advocate in her home community for mental health and talking about real supports for people who are facing a number of challenges.

I wonder if the member could comment on some of her own experiences. I know one came to light through her last election campaign. Perhaps she could comment as well on some of the challenges that she has seen in her community.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Mr. Speaker, I have been a very big proponent of mental health. First nations have experienced this very differently from everyone else and they know this first-hand. The short answer to that question is there is a mental health transfer that is in the works. The sum of \$4.5 billion was promised by the Liberal government for a mental health transfer, in particular for indigenous treatment and recovery. It is going to be different so we need to look at that.

There is a lot that we can be doing in terms of treatment and recovery and helping the trauma that is a result of a lot of past governments and a lot uneducated people, basically, would be the short answer to that.

I would love to see the \$4.5 billion of mental health transfer help people who are suffering.

• (2110)

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the unceded, unsundered territory of the Algonquin and Anishinabe people.

Land acknowledgements are not intended to simply check a box or even state a fact. They are meant to set the tone with pre-colonial respect and recognition. I wish to pay homage to matrilineal societies that thrived in Wabanaki territory, like where I am from, where women decided who the chiefs were, who the speakers were, held them accountable and could remove them, and democracy was by consensus. Women were revered as life givers and two-spirited peoples were held in high regard for their strength and gender fluidity.

Tonight I am grateful for this essential take-note debate to further bring awareness to the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and two-spirited peoples. However, I am devastated that as time passes, we continue to lose mothers, sisters, aunts,

daughters, cousins and friends. It feels as though we cannot move beyond this point of awareness to action.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to this House, to our government and to people watching at home, I say, no more. When will this stop?

Reconciliation is indeed a process. It is a journey, but the time it takes to heal wounds and to build bridges cannot mean more bright lights will be snuffed out as we iron out the details. It cannot mean that we will continue to stand idly by while families go without answers. It cannot mean that we refuse to do all we can to bring these women home.

Our discussion this evening was spurred by the latest loss of life of four important sacred women with value, with purpose, whose deaths must not be in vain: Rebecca Contois, 24 years old; Mercedes Myran, 26 years old; Morgan Beatrice Harris, 39 years old; and Buffalo Woman. Our goal tonight is to honour them by demanding action and accountability.

I want to acknowledge the strength and the incredible courage it took for Cambria Harris of Long Plain First Nation in Treaty 1 territory, the daughter of Morgan Harris, for her powerful speech delivered just outside these doors. She spoke truth to power and rightfully called out our collective inaction and indifference. Her plea to bring her mother home must be honoured. We must commit to deliver justice for those whose lives have been cut short.

I have mentioned many times in this House that I was an educator before coming here. I worked with indigenous students whose leadership and activism inspired me to fight for a better future where these discussions will no longer be needed. I remember clearly a time in 2010 when awareness in MMIWG had just started to grow. A viral campaign occurred and my students participated by taking photos with signs that said, "Am I next?" I love those students like they are my own children and it was gut-wrenching to think that we could lose them. Unfortunately, many of them know someone who has been murdered or who has gone missing. Imagine having to carry the weight of that reality around.

We know the statistics. Indigenous women make up 16% of all female homicide victims, 11% of missing women, even though indigenous peoples make up 4.3% of the population of Canada. According to the inquiry's report, they are 12 times more likely to go missing or be murdered. They are not numbers. They are human beings.



*Government Orders*

It is important to note that the current public data on MMIWG oversimplifies and under-represents the scale of the issue. It still demonstrates a complex and pervasive pattern of violence against indigenous women and girls who are often targeted because of their gender and indigenous identity. Violence against indigenous women and girls is systemic and a national crisis that requires urgent, informed and collaborative action.

The Sisters in Spirit initiative highlighted various systemic issues, including the impunity of many of the perpetrators. Their study found that nearly half of the cases involving indigenous women and girls remain unsolved and no charges were laid in about 40% of the cases.

It is now recognized that the high risk of violence experienced by indigenous women and girls stems in large part from a failure of police and others in the criminal justice system to adequately respond to or provide for the needs of indigenous women and girls and we see history repeating itself.

More than 2,380 people participated in the national inquiry. Expert witnesses, elders and knowledge keepers, frontline workers and officials provided testimony. The truths shared tell the story or, more accurately, thousands of stories of acts of genocide against first nations, Inuit and Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation. It is intended, rather, to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of life, of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves.

● (2115)

As stated in the executive summary of the inquiry's final report:

The objectives of a plan of genocide would include actions aimed at the “disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.”

Sadly, we have met that threshold.

As the inquiry's final report explains, “the steps to end and redress this genocide must be no less monumental than the combination of systems and actions that has worked to maintain colonial violence for generations.”

The calls for justice are based on a solid foundation of evidence and law. A human rights based approach is critical in efforts to bring about the paradigm shift required in Canada's relationship with indigenous peoples, particularly indigenous women and girls.

Exposure to violence must be seen as a systemic violation of the rights to gender equality and non-discrimination, requiring broad structural changes, such as policing practices or judicial restructuring, instead of as a symptom of service gaps requiring temporary solutions.

Families and survivors consistently refer to four general ways their experiences were rooted in colonialism across first nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives, as well as from the perspective of 2SLGBTQIA people. These four pathways that maintain colonial violence are historical, multi-generational and intergenerational trauma; social and economic marginalization; the maintaining of

the status quo and institutional lack of will; and the ignoring of the agency and expertise of indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Justice for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is justice for all women, and this work is critical for any hope of reconciliation. Women are the ones leading the collective healing required to move forward. We need to tackle the disease that is poisoning our society, namely misogyny, racism, white supremacy and colonialism.

We all have a responsibility to do better, to end this cycle of suffering and to heal. Until the root cause of hate is truly addressed, the tree of reconciliation will never grow.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is a tragedy that has happened in our major city in Manitoba, in Winnipeg, and I just wanted to offer my condolences personally to the families of the victims.

I also want to ask the member, as a member of the government, what she thinks should be done in regard to some of the questions that have been raised by other speakers here tonight and other questioners in regard to the future of dealing with the uncertainty around the people who have died and as to the whereabouts of their remains.

I know her colleague has indicated there are dollars and that we will all work toward finding the solution to this, but can she provide us with anything the government members may have spoken about among themselves to this point?

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin:** Mr. Speaker, on a personal note, I certainly support the very practical and reasonable demands of the family. I think we should treat this as we would treat our own family members. We would want to leave no stone unturned. I particularly am interested in supporting the red dress alert. I think it is incredibly impactful that, as other members have stated, the earlier we act, the more likely it is we can bring members home to their families.

We should also absolutely put a moratorium on the landfill until more can be done and until there can be an assessment of how best to address this issue. I understand there are logistical concerns, but certainly we must have technology. There has got to be something we can do. I think what the family really wants to see from us is that we are really looking at all options, and I know colleagues have had this conversation and that we are certainly committed to doing that. I will always add my voice to ensure that we do everything we can.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke very powerfully about the need to pursue justice for the families of the women murdered here in Manitoba. One of the clear calls to action is around housing, and particularly the need for access to low-barrier shelters for women fleeing violence. That is something the federal government can act on right now.

Does the member support her government taking action to establish low-barrier shelters for women fleeing violence in cities like Winnipeg and across our country?

• (2120)

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin:** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague is a staunch advocate and fights so hard for her community and all communities across the country around housing in particular.

We had a discussion today with our colleagues about how important it is to support not only urban communities, but also rural, remote and northern communities. There have been commitments made by our government. We see initiatives and investments made in housing, and we continue to push for more.

I do not think there is a number that is really going to hit the level of crisis we are seeing, particularly in the north, but I just want to remind my hon. colleague as well that it is even in small towns. We have a member missing in the Fredericton region as well. We certainly know that if there was low-barrier access to shelters, so many more people would be safe and secure, rather than find themselves in very dangerous and precarious positions, and perhaps we could save lives.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been very moved by what I have heard from colleagues on both sides of the House, and particularly my colleague just now. What I am interested in hearing about is her work as an educator. She talked about the human rights based approach and pathways to reconciliation. I would like to hear more, particularly on the application to education today. What more can we be doing to bring this very painful topic outside the House?

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin:** Mr. Speaker, I am extremely passionate about education. It is the key to unlocking so much of this. Some of the issues I mentioned were misogyny and racism. These are big issues. It is going to take so much to really get to the root causes of these societal and systemic problems. I think back to my wonderful times in education and working with students.

If one empowers their voices, if one teaches the truth about their history, about colonialism and, again, listens to their lived experience and provides that springboard for action, it is incredible to see the heights these students will reach. So many of my students are pursuing now their master's in social work or law. They will be the leaders who will replace us in the House. Those voices and that representation will matter in such a big way that it will start to break down some of these barriers that continue to oppress in society. Absolutely, education is the key. It will always be my passion, and I bring that into the House any chance I get.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that would be very important in addressing the safety of indigenous women and girls is access to housing. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls ac-

tually mentioned housing over 200 times, yet Canada still does not have an urban, rural and northern, for indigenous, by indigenous housing strategy despite the government promising it over and over again.

The government's own national housing council is calling for an investment of \$6 billion over two years dedicated to a for indigenous, by indigenous urban, rural and northern housing strategy. Would the member support that for budget 2023?

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin:** Mr. Speaker, I very much respect my colleague. Actually, earlier this evening, during a question she asked another member, I wrote that down to say this is something I want to push for and advocate for, that very tangible number. Of course, indigenous-led and for indigenous, by indigenous is so critical. I am happy to add my voice in asking for that to be included in our 2023 budget.

Again, to highlight some of the work that has been done in my own riding, we did see \$18.6 million given for a friendship centre that also has housing options and also deals with intimate partner violence. It is going to have social enterprise for women. It is going to provide those opportunities. Those individual projects are going to have ripple effects in each individual community. I hope to see that across the country. I think it could also lead to some solutions.

• (2125)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I start debate tonight, as other colleagues have done, I want to provide a bit of a warning at the top end of my speech, because what we are discussing here tonight is graphic and should not make anyone comfortable. It should make every person in this country deeply uncomfortable.

What we are talking about tonight are the horrendous murders of four indigenous women and countless others in our country, but I want to talk specifically about these four women and what the families have been going through, and then contextualize that with how much I really feel our country and our government has failed these families and what we need to do going forward.

The remains of these women are in Winnipeg-area landfills. That is what the Winnipeg police have expressed, I believe. I would like people to think about the refuse that they have produced. They should think about their kitchen trash bag or the smell of their garbage in the summer in their garages, and then think about the garbage they have produced being piled on top of these women. That is what these families had to go through this week. They were told by the Winnipeg police that it was not feasible to provide closure to them by searching the landfill for remains.

*Government Orders*

That really got me. When would it be feasible to provide closure to families? What would it take? Would it take it being the remains of a former male premier of Manitoba perhaps? Why are we just content to let these women's families sit like this? I cannot believe it, yet I can. I grew up in Winnipeg. I spent 25 years in Winnipeg, and I can believe it because the conversation we are having here tonight is something I have heard for the entire duration of my time on this planet.

I was eight years old when J.J. Harper was shot in Winnipeg by Constable Robert Cross. J.J. Harper was doing nothing wrong and was unarmed. He was just walking around and got shot for the crime of being a first nations man in Winnipeg. There were supposed to be all of these recommendations to make the police less racist in Winnipeg, and here they are today saying it is not feasible. Can anyone imagine? I cannot believe it. I am just going to say it. If it had been a man of upper-class society in Winnipeg, that type of a man, it would not have been okay to say it is not feasible.

The government is comfortable with its not being feasible. It is comfortable with it. Why? It is because for seven years first nations people have been tokenized, given platitudes, given promises and given nothing. That is fair to say because we are having the same debate again, six months after we had it the last time. This is a perpetual debate that we have in the House of Commons.

The government allocated \$78 billion-and-something in 2017 to address homelessness, and this past year the Auditor General said that, even though homelessness under this plan was supposed to have been cut across the country by at least one-third, there were more homeless people in Canada on the streets than ever before. When the government announces funding for homelessness, which is the number one determinant of the cause of death in missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada and the number one thing that the report talks about, how can Liberals sit here with a straight face and talk platitudes? How are we having this conversation?

• (2130)

There needs to be action. This is not about a government going and tokenizing women. I will say it again: The government had an indigenous woman with her hands on the reins of power in the justice ministry, and it turfed her. The Liberals are content to give platitudes and photo ops on funding but never to deliver. They are not content to allow for independent first nations oversight of government funding to address some of these issues.

Some of my colleagues, particularly my colleague from Winnipeg Centre who called for this debate tonight, have some really concrete suggestions to address, in the short term, the pain and suffering that these families are going through, but there are so many more. First of all, she has called, and many of us across party lines have called, for the federal government to address the fact that saying that it is not feasible to provide the families closure and saying that we cannot do anything about those remains in that landfill is not good enough. I agree with her. That line normalizes remains being left in a landfill. That is what it does.

I know in my heart that if it were not a first nations woman it probably would have elicited a different response. The federal government needs to move on that. It needs to give closure to these families. If anything, it needs to give closure to these families.

We have also talked tonight about having independent oversight of government spending or lack thereof. It is not just about spending. It is actual outcomes on some of the big issues, like housing, education and changes in justice. There needs to be independent first nations oversight. Clearly, this is not working. We are here talking about women in a garbage dump, and we are still getting platitudes and no concrete plan.

It is my job to hold the government to account. There is nothing to celebrate here. There is only tragedy to mourn and make right. Also discussed tonight was the need to have a red dress alert. Why do first nations women not have some sort of tool available to let the public and those around them know that there has been an abduction or a missing woman, or some sort of effort to find them and to intervene early so that we are not talking about the feasibility of excavating a garbage dump for remains?

Frankly, we also need to address the issue of trust with police for those growing up in Winnipeg and growing up through the J.J. Harper case. There was a report issued in 2020 that I remember basically saying that nothing had changed, that the vast majority of people since the J.J. Harper shooting in 1988 who were on the receiving end of deadly force by police in Manitoba were indigenous persons. When a family is sitting in with police and they are being told that it is not feasible to find remains or find justice, can we blame them if they do not trust them?

This is particularly true when there is a government that is content to give photo ops and say thanks for the donation, and then fire a first nations indigenous woman from the justice ministry and hope that we are all going to go into holiday recess and forget about it. Then what? Do we have this debate again in three months? That is the cycle here. That is the cycle that has to end. Something has to be done to establish trust within first nations communities, first nations survivors and first nations women that we are going to do something here. Nothing has been done. We are having the same debate.

In closing, the last thing I want to say is that I want to disabuse anyone of the notion that it is up to the first nations communities, and first nations women particularly, to do the emotional labour and heavy lifting of getting the government to move on these issues. They have enough to do just to survive on a daily basis.

• (2135)

It is up to each and every one of us in this place, and at home listening to this tonight, to understand that the government has not delivered. It has failed, and we cannot allow it to keep tokenizing women in these communities and abdicating its responsibility to provide action.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Chair, my colleague mentioned some of the failures of the police and some of the mistrust that exists. I wonder if she can speak to some specific reforms that need to happen within communities to address the policing issue, and the role of the police in this problem as well.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Chair, there is a report that is about three inches thick that was developed by the missing and murdered indigenous women inquiry and it has numerous calls for justice, including specific reforms around establishing trust with the police. Those are the words of first nations women who spent years putting those recommendations together, and the government has not moved on them.

Similarly, on a local level, particularly in Winnipeg, I know there was a similar report on how the police could reform, and numerous calls specifically dealing with some of the inherent racism, poverty and inequity issues.

The point I am making is there are reports. We all know these requirements. My job here tonight is to tell the government that it is not doing its job, and to do it.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, I want to thank my hon. colleague, not only for her intervention but for sharing her thoughts as somebody who lived in Winnipeg for a long time and knows the history of racism we deal with as indigenous people and certainly indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people in the city of Winnipeg.

I have been asking across party lines whether members of Parliament will stand behind these families and support the call for a moratorium on any sort of usage of the Prairie Green Landfill until further investigation can occur. I think it is a simple answer. Of course. Of course they support that, because to treat loved ones that way, as the member explained, is unacceptable. The answer should always be yes.

I wonder if my colleague supports the family's call for an immediate moratorium on the use of the Prairie Green Landfill site.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Chair, of course we should be providing closure for these families. I understand that there will be questions about logistics and this and that, but we have to understand how difficult it is for first nations and indigenous women in this country. Sometimes I think we prioritize our comfort over their discomfort, and that is why we are here.

I know my colleague has spoken about the need for an independent inquiry and assessment in this matter and said that it needs to happen because of that lack of trust in police. I agree with her. I cannot imagine being a member of that family and having the police just lay out a PowerPoint presentation for the family that is going through this, given the history and knowing the lack of trust. Of course.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Chair, I want to thank my colleague from Calgary Nose Hill for her presentation tonight. I also want to thank my colleague from Winnipeg Centre, whose call for this debate has allowed us to provide our remarks in the House of Commons this evening.

One of the major issues of a government is to make sure the country is secure. We often think of that as a defence mechanism

against a whole country, but a secondary process of security is the safety of every citizen in this country. We are talking tonight about how the safety of four individuals was completely compromised and the results of those actions, some of which have stemmed from many different situations with respect to the welfare and safety not only of these persons, but other individuals in Canada.

I just want to close by asking this question. My colleague mentioned 78 billion dollars' worth of support for homelessness since 2017 and that it obviously has not been enough or has not been used properly. Can she elaborate on why it is going to take a lot more than just money to fix this situation, and what she may recommend with respect to that?

● (2140)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Chair, talk is cheap. We need action. For seven years, the government has talked, and it has spent but I am not sure on what. How many first nations persons across this country still do not have access to basic, clean drinking water? How many first nations persons have no hope of shelter?

I feel the government has tokenized first nations and indigenous persons. I feel the lack of seriousness the government has shown in seeing why their "spending" has not resulted in any better outcomes for first nations and indigenous women should be lighting on fire the hair of every person in this country regardless of how they vote.

The government does not get a free pass on creating action for first nations and indigenous persons simply by virtue of it being Liberal. They have failed, and they have to be held to account for it.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Madam Chair, I want to first acknowledge the member's advocacy around the violence that women face online.

It has been reported that this serial killer expressed white supremacist views, neo-Nazi views, deeply misogynistic views and anti-Semitic views. This has been widely reported in mainstream media.

Does the member believe that the federal government needs to take action when it comes to the dangerous rise of white supremacy, which includes deep ties to misogyny, as a way of putting an end to violence against indigenous women and all women?

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Chair, absolutely. We need to stop white supremacy, we need to stop racism and we need to stop misogyny. Yes, of course. How we do that, though, is by not glossing over it when it happens and not turning a blind eye to it when it happens within our own tents.

I see a Prime Minister who did not hold himself to the same account that he held others to when he faced allegations of sexual harassment. Do members know what that says? It says, "He can get away with it so maybe I can."

*Government Orders*

There are so many things we need to change. I could speak for two hours, but I know I cannot. This is about everything, including the fact that the criminal harassment laws in this country are probably woefully inadequate. It is difficult for even women of privilege to get access to justice, never mind racialized women, women living in poverty or both.

However, the point that I think we agree on is that the government cannot keep dining out on the fact that it is a friend to marginalized groups, racialized groups and women, and then do nothing or make things worse by being silent and accepting the inertia that its lack of action has created.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Chair, it is clear that the government tabled its national action plan two years after it tabled the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls report. I will read a very short quote from Mariah Charleson, the former vice-president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council. She said, “We waited two years for an incomplete action plan with no deliverables, no landmarks, no immediate goals...no timelines, no budget.”

Does my colleague feel that missing and murdered indigenous women and girls are a priority in this country?

The Nuu-chah-nulth have felt loss. They are still waiting to hear why the police took so long to look into the deaths of many of their women, who are still missing to this day.

● (2145)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Chair, no they are not, and the plan to make a plan resulted in these four women being in a landfill, in a dump.

Are we are just going to sit here and do this again in six months? I hope the next time that people look in a garbage can they think of these women.

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I will be splitting my time with the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

[*Translation*]

First, I want to acknowledge that I join my colleagues here, and those present virtually, in Ottawa, which is on the unceded traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people who have lived on this land since time immemorial.

[*English*]

I too want to thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for her ongoing advocacy on this issue.

Tonight's debate reminds me of meeting for the first time with Bernie Williams and Gladys Radek, who came here to Ottawa on behalf of the families. They wanted us to know they wanted justice for the family member they had lost. They wanted healing for their families and they wanted concrete changes so no other families would need to go through what they had. They walked across this country seven times in the Walk4Justice.

It really was not until the death of Tina Fontaine, the surviving of Rinelle Harper and then the death of Loretta Saunders that the consciousness of all Canadians was raised.

This week, with the arrest of the serial killer in Winnipeg, it is a stark reminder of how indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people have been targeted and so disproportionately been murdered and gone missing. There is the serial killer in Prince George and the Highway of Tears, the horrific legacy of Robert Pickton.

On Monday I was able to be with my friend CeeJai Julian, a survivor from the Pickton farm. She reminds me every day of those we have lost and those whose lives, as well as the lives of their families and friends, have been changed forever.

Tonight's debate is about the hugely disproportionate numbers of indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people who have been murdered or gone missing. The numbers are horrific. Tonight we also must remember that they were mothers, daughters, aunts and nieces. They are loved and they are missed.

In 2016, when we launched the pre-inquiry, it was heartbreaking to hear first-hand from the circles of families and survivors coast to coast to coast. We had, I think, 17 circles, and they gave us advice on what they wanted to see in a national inquiry. They were also very clear, as we have heard tonight, that they wanted changes in policing and child and family services. They were clear that from the search to the investigation, from the charges being laid to the plea bargaining and to the sentence that the treatment was very, very different if the victim was indigenous.

We heard from families who, when their loved one went missing, felt they should not correct the missing person notice if it said that the person was white, because they felt the search, the investigation and everything would be different. We are really grateful to commissioners Marion Buller, Qajaq Robinson, Brian Eyolfson, and Michèle Audette who we are so proud to have here as a fellow parliamentarian in the other place, for their truly important report.

I particularly thank Gina McDougall-Wilson and all of those who served on the core planning committee to develop the national action plan. This week, I was honoured to meet with Sylvia Maracle, who chaired the subcommittee on the 2S chapter. I know it should be in the libraries of all the schools across this country how homophobia arrived on the boats and the history of how important the two-spirited people are in those communities, yet now they are so unfairly targeted.

*Government Orders*

Diane Redsky and her chapter on urban we know led to the \$2.2 billion that was in budget 2021. We know we have very much more to do, but we are inspired by the changes in indigenous policing. There is Bill C-92, where families will be kept together. There is the incredible success of the rapid housing initiative for indigenous people.

• (2150)

Everyone who was at the Equal Voice reception tonight wishes that they could be part of this debate. We have a lot more to do and we will do it together.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, there are a lot of people watching. There are a lot of people who are dealing with the trauma, both at a distance from past events, but also for the people who were here this evening, the family members.

A comment was made by the member for Calgary Nose Hill. I do not want to attribute malice to what was said, but in her closing remarks, she said that when people look at a garbage can, they should think of the family. I did not want to have this take-note debate and just allow that comment to pass. My hope is that, at the appropriate time, the member or a member from her party would perhaps retract that statement. When it goes into Hansard, it stays there forever.

I want to make sure that in those remarks, when we are talking about the dignity and sanctity of life, we do not ever refer to it as a reminder when people are passing by landfills or trash cans.

This is not a question. It is a comment. I am not sure if the hon. minister wants to respond to it or not. It was not directed at the hon. minister. It was directed at the previous speaker, the member for Calgary Nose Hill.

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett:** Madam Chair, I want to thank the member for the comment. I do want to say that those kinds of comments actually diminish why we are here today. We actually know that the first nations, Inuit and Métis women, girls and leaders want hope. They want to see that they can be their full selves. The way the member referred to it is hurtful.

I think it probably came from a good place, but I think we actually have to listen to first nations, Inuit and Métis leaders, and particularly women, on how they want to go forward and what their view would be on that. I do know, from hearing from some of the people in Winnipeg, that they want that landfill to be put on hold, in ceremony, and that it be treated very differently from this time forward.

We have to deal with the various families and—

**The Assistant Deputy Chair:** I am sorry, but I have to give time for other members to ask questions.

The hon. member for Churchill—Keewatinook Aski.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Madam Chair, I want to acknowledge that we are all here under very sombre circumstances. We are honouring the lives of Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran and Rebecca Contois, and a fourth loved one who has yet to be found.

We are also here demanding action from the federal government. The hon. minister knows this national tragedy so well through the

work she did to support an inquiry. As was clearly said, what we do not need is for the 231 calls for justice to sit on a shelf. What families and communities are asking for is federal action now, not just in the case of supporting the search in the landfill, but also as was so powerfully shared by Cambria Harris, which was to put an end to the genocide that indigenous women are facing.

What concrete action is the federal government going to take now to put an end to the genocide that indigenous women face in our country?

• (2155)

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett:** Madam Chair, I thank the member for her leadership on all of these things.

The work that has been done, as she knows, on changing child and family services has been absolutely transformational. When we look at the results from the study this week at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata in Winnipeg, we can see that over 90% of those families were brought back together. Those children are being raised in their language and culture. This is the way forward. This is what we heard about in the inquiry. The apprehension of children put them at high risk and aging out of care put them at high risk.

I think there are significant changes. The changes to the child and family services is a significant advance.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Chair, it is an honour to rise this evening to take part in this debate on such a serious, sombre and important subject.

[*English*]

I am here this evening on the traditional territory of the Kanienkehaka, an area known as Montreal, within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. In the time I have, reflecting on all the important speeches given tonight, I want to focus on what we were told in the inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and two-spirit people plus.

The hon. member from northern Manitoba was just mentioning that, in looking at this debate, we have a question of what we have done in relation to those calls for justice. I am struck by, two and a half years after those calls for justice, how little we actually look at what the inquiry told us to do.

[*Translation*]

However, that was abundantly clear in the inquiry report. The most important thing every single Canadian can do is read that report.

*Government Orders*

[English]

We received advice and instructions, while sitting in the Grand Hall in the Museum of History on that crowded June day and receiving this very important report. The commissioner said, “Every Canadian, please read it.” We should take stock. Have we read it? Do we understand what it said?

Obviously, the killing of indigenous women and girls continues and accelerates. The recent killings, the charges laid in Manitoba in Winnipeg, and the four women killed in that serial killing remind us, if we did not need reminding before, that we have not responded to the report of the inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. What did they tell us to do? They told us to read the report, accept that this is a genocide and move on to actually implementing the recommendations.

I will just refer to a few of those recommendations that we fight for, many of us in this place, every day. One of the recommendations of the inquiry was to bring in a guaranteed livable income to eradicate poverty. The reason so many indigenous women and girls and men are vulnerable to killings and vulnerable to violence is that they are poor. Economic injustice as well as racism are at the heart of why so many indigenous women and girls go missing. The inquiry called for justice and to bring in a guaranteed livable income.

It also called for us to end what are called “man camps” by indigenous women and girls. They are large construction projects, usually dedicated to resource extraction, the resource extraction itself violating the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I know it has been controversial and people who work in those industries say, “Don’t paint us all as violent criminals”. No, we do not, but we recognize that these large camps full of workers, men who are away from their families and who are subject, themselves, to trauma and addiction, are a condition that leads to the increased vulnerability of indigenous women nearby. That was an inquiry recommendation and we have expanded the man camps instead of ending them.

Another key recommendation was that we move to provide supports for indigenous women and girls who have been the victims of violence, including that there be trauma counsellors and that there be assistance to get through the criminal justice system. These are important recommendations.

I want to draw our attention to another area where there is no mystery as to how indigenous women and girls were killed. They were killed by the police. Chantel Moore was killed in June 2020. She was a Nuu-chah-nulth woman from Vancouver Island who had recently moved to Edmundston, New Brunswick. There is no question as to how she died. She died at the hands of a police officer on a “wellness” check. In the intersection between mental health responses and police, far too many vulnerable women and indigenous women end up in a morgue. That is not a wellness check and we need to really look at what happened, particularly in the case of Chantel Moore. I will say in the House again that I think she was murdered. The facts point in that direction, and her family waits for answers.

We have an obligation in this place not to take note. We have to take action.

• (2200)

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Chair, I really appreciate my friend's speech and I appreciate her. She knows full well that I live in Nuu-chah-nulth territory. I represent the Tla-o-qui-aht people here in Parliament and I bring their voice here. I am grateful that she talked about the late Chantel Moore. The fact of the matter is that there was an independent investigating officer team that came in from Quebec, with no indigenous representation, to investigate her death when she was shot by police.

Lisa Marie Young, a Tla-o-qui-aht member in Nanaimo, is still missing after 20 years.

“Creating a national task force to review and re-investigate unresolved files of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people” is actually a commitment in the national action plan, but there is no timeline and no money. The government has not acted on it.

Can my colleague speak about the importance of an action plan, not just for these two unresolved files but for the women from Winnipeg who were just stolen through this genocide that is taking place in this country?

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Chair, indeed, both of us know family members. We know Chantel's mom and her family and her friends, and we know that this is not being properly investigated, as is the case for many more indigenous women and girls.

Sometimes we know who the killer was, but it is brushed over because it was a police officer. Sometimes we do not know, and we can only conclude from the lack of attention to it.

I do not want to criticize policing in Manitoba. It was in the span of a year that we now believe that four women were murdered by the same man. We do not know for sure, but we can make educated guesses that had those four murdered young women been white women, we might have seen more warnings, more action to take on the bits of clues and evidence that suggested that the same man had committed all the crimes.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Madam Chair, I wanted to also raise an issue that I believe my colleague from Hamilton Centre raised. I am really haunted by the thought of the families of these women having to deal with the remains of their loved ones in a landfill. Words matter, and if my question or my comment to try to express that caused any harm, I unreservedly apologize and retract them.

However, I think we should be haunted by this fact. I think we should be haunted and concerned and disturbed that these women are in landfills.

*Government Orders*

I wonder if my colleague could comment on some of the recommendations our colleagues have made earlier tonight about looking for ways to remedy and provide closure to the families, given the situation and the location of the remains.

• (2205)

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Chair, from the bottom of my heart I want to acknowledge the courage of what the member for Calgary Nose Hill just did. It is all too rare in this place to apologize for words, especially when they were meant, as the hon. member noted, from a good place.

However, it is appalling that the landfills remain open. I hear the voices of Morgan's daughter and Mercedes' family and other people, saying, "Look, stop putting garbage there, at least. Let us find a way to find the remains of our loved ones."

We already have the loved ones, the children who were stolen over so many years in the residential school system. Those children are still underground. We have to acknowledge that the grief of families is never resolved through having the remains, but the wound remains far more open when the remains are not available for burial, for respect and to be brought home.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I will be splitting my time with the member for Vancouver East.

I stand today in solidarity with Chief Kyra Wilson of Long Plain First Nation and Cambria and Kera, the daughters of Morgan Harris, who was murdered and whose body was found at a landfill, in seeking justice for indigenous families. I call on the government to finally start to end the genocide by implementing the MMIWG calls for justice and the demands made by those I stand with today, including helping to search for Morgan Harris so her daughters may have the closure they seek.

I am concerned with some of the questions that have been asked in the House tonight. As much as I have appreciated MPs' interventions, the words are distant and, while empathetic, make it clear to me that violence against indigenous women is clearly not understood.

As an Inuk, I have experienced violence and have seen violence. I grew up with violence in my life. Here is what violence feels like. There is so much physical pain that it is unbearable to breathe, it is unbearable to cry and it is unbearable to ask for help. There is so much misguided love and trust that keeping the unhealthy relationship going feels like the only way. When there is finally courage to leave that violent relationship, women are put into other violence situations.

Cambria and Kera have asked us to help them end the genocide. I frequently have asked tonight how we can do this. How can we in the House guide the federal government to end Canada's genocide against indigenous peoples?

The federal government must create policies and programs and provide better resources. The federal government must help lift up indigenous peoples and their sense of cultural identity.

It must ensure that systemic racism is addressed by improving law enforcement and policing for the overincarceration, overpolicing, underenforcement and underpolicing of indigenous peoples. It

must lift up indigenous families that still suffer the effects of inter-generational trauma and ensure they are encouraging each other to rely on each other the way they used to before colonialism. It must help indigenous families find the remains of their loved ones. Victims of genocide are targeted because they belong to a certain group. As such, targeted resources must immediately be released to protect indigenous girls, women and two-spirit people. Last and certainly not least, it should implement fully, not incrementally, UNDRIP, the TRC's calls to action and the MMIWG calls for justice. These instruments provide the framework to end genocide.

I note the words of Chief Kyra Wilson, who said, "We have 231 calls to justice, we need searches, we need support and it needs to start now." I will end with what the beautiful, amazing and courageous Cambria Harris said at the presser yesterday: "Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois and...Buffalo Woman. Remember these names. Shout them from the roof of your lungs and bring the justice that these women deserve."

• (2210)

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Chair, I want to thank our colleague from Nunavut for her bravery, her courage and the way that she brings a forceful truth to this place that needs to be heard across the country. I just wanted to thank her.

**Ms. Lori Idlout:** *Uqaqtittiji*, I appreciate the encouragement. It does take a lot of emotion and strength to speak. I especially need to thank my party, which has been great in allowing me to share my experience and my voice, and also making sure that indigenous people's voices are being amplified in this House.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Madam Chair, I appreciated hearing what the member had to say. I also appreciate working with her on the indigenous and northern affairs committee. I have learned a lot from her and appreciate her valuable input each and every day.

I know that often in this place, our time is short but our thoughts are many, and I was just wondering if the member had anything else she would like to touch on that she did not have enough time to complete in her speech.

**Ms. Lori Idlout:** *Uqaqtittiji*, I also enjoy working with the member on the indigenous and northern affairs committee.



I have changed my speech a lot tonight. One of the things I wanted to remind the House of is this. There were many questions about what women can do, and I kept thinking that this is not just a women's issue. This is not just a government issue. This is not just an indigenous issue. This is something that we all must do and we all must work together on: men, women, indigenous and non-indigenous. We all need to be working together to make sure we are part of a system that can say we are the ones who ended genocide in our time.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, the hon. member quite rightly identified the need for targeted interventions. I know of her tireless work and her advocacy on the deplorable conditions of northern housing. I would like her to have the opportunity to reflect on how having the stability of dignified, safe housing for people in her community might help prevent some of the preconditions that lead to the atrocities committed against women, including Inuit women in her communities.

● (2215)

**Ms. Lori Idlout: Uqaqtittiji,** the member's question is very important. I have risen in this House so many times to speak about how impactful overcrowded housing is to my constituency, how the poor conditions impact the mental health of the people I represent, and how, because of those conditions, we suffer worse mental health impacts.

We definitely need more investments in housing, to make renovations to improve housing and to also fill empty units. There are many empty units in our communities that need to be renovated and reopened.

I also wanted to very quickly say that more of our communities in Nunavut need safe places for women to go to. I know personally of two women I wanted to mention who I think would not have been murdered if they had had a safe place to go, because they were murdered having been in unhealthy, very violent relationships. We also need to be investing in ensuring that women have safe places to go to in their communities, so that they do not have to leave their communities and can remain with their families and keep raising their children in their home communities.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Chair, I want to take a moment to acknowledge my colleagues, the member for Winnipeg Centre and the member for Nunavut, who spoke very powerfully and so starkly about the situation that indigenous women and girls face.

I was reflecting about what I was going to say and I changed my mind about 100 times. I have landed on this. I reflected back to seven years ago when the government made the announcement that it was going to initiate a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. I have to say my heart sang with joy thinking of the changing moment, the significant moment where the voices of indigenous peoples and families had been heard finally, and the government of the day was going to do something about our stolen sisters, indigenous women and girls.

I was not part of the Liberal government. I am still not part of the Liberal government. I will never be a Liberal member. However, my heart sang with joy, because of the hope that it represented. Then as the work continued, I started to have a sinking feeling. Re-

### *Government Orders*

flecting back, Marion Buller, the lead commissioner, and her team advised nine months into the inquiry that they were using their own personal cellphones and their own email. They did not have office space to undertake the work.

Fast forward to after the report was put out, where a genocide had been recognized even by the government, and 231 calls for justice had been put on the public record. The government promised that it would put forward an implementation plan. Three years later, where is that implementation plan? It is nowhere to be found.

It is not just New Democrats who are saying this. Marion Buller said on the public record that the federal government had “fallen flat on its face”. She said:

We don't have an implementation plan. There hasn't been any sort of cohesive statement on the part of the federal government about what it plans to do. There is no looking forward. If there is an implementation plan, I don't know about it and they're keeping it quiet. But, they have quite literally fallen flat on their face in terms of their responses.

She said, “I just find it appalling that the genocide is continuing, because it is and they're not being held accountable.”

That is the reality of where we are today. Consequently, we in the community and my colleagues see loved ones of family members grieving, in pain and in anger at the loss of their loved ones. Hence we are having this debate tonight.

Tonight I had the pleasure, the honour and the privilege of meeting the family members just outside of the chamber. I shook their hands, looked them in the eye, and made the commitment that we will never stop fighting, even when they leave this place. We should not have to do this time and time again. We should not have to say the names over and over again, and each time with different names, with more hurt, more pain and so much loss, with hope dashed to say that something will happen.

My riding of Vancouver East is very similar to that of my colleague's in Winnipeg Centre. I remember so many years ago when I was just an activist, walking the streets, doing rallies and protesting about a serial killer in Vancouver East. People denied it. When we raised it, people accused us of trying to obstruct justice by suggesting that there was a serial killer and demanding an inquiry.

● (2220)

To the names of the people who have been brought up today who went missing and who have been murdered, Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois and Buffalo Woman, I add these names: Tatyanna Harrison, Chelsea Poonman, Noelle O'Soup and Ramona Wilson. These are just the latest few, and there are so many more.

They do not have to be dead. They did not have to die this way. It does not have to be this way. For tonight, once and for all, will the government take action and fully implement the 231 calls for justice?

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Chair, I want to start by recognizing what a strong voice the member is in this place in calling for housing that is for indigenous, by indigenous.

*Government Orders*

As the member calls out for the federal government to follow through on all 231 calls to justice, at least nine of them relate to housing. I wonder if she would like to comment further on the critical need for the federal government to follow through specifically on the calls to justice related to housing.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Chair, there is no question that housing matters, and it will save lives. The missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry mentioned housing over 200 times. Can members imagine not being able to access housing, and as a result of that being subject to extreme violence every moment of the day to the point where their lives are lost?

What the federal government can do is, in budget 2023, ensure that there is at least \$6 billion over two years for a for indigenous, by indigenous urban, rural and northern indigenous housing strategy and let the indigenous community lead this work. There is already a coalition that has been set up to do this work. The government needs to fund it, be that true partner and get the job done.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Madam Chair, I want to be quite frank. We have heard a lot of discussion today, and for indigenous people, whether it was yesterday or tomorrow, their lives will largely remain the same, and I am angry because of that. I am upset and angry that we have to have this discussion in this place constantly, and that the lives of indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people continue to be ignored constantly. I am angry about that, but I also know that, when an indigenous person like myself gets loud, people stop listening.

I want to be as clear as possible. We cannot continue to wait, but there is a long history here. This did not happen overnight. Colonialism, racism and, to be frank, misogyny are the reasons we are here today. Indigenous women are not the problem. Colonialism and violence against these women are the problem.

Can the member speak about the root cause of the tragic losses of indigenous women, girls and two-spirit folks that is so deeply rooted in our history here in Canada?

• (2225)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Chair, I have to say that there is no question in my mind that it is colonialism that is the root cause of this. There is no question that governments and the successive governments allow for the genocide to continue, which is also the ongoing problem of the situation.

When everybody in the House got up to say that they hear the families, they see them and hear them, well then, I ask them to take action. Words are cheap, but lives are not cheap, and the lives of these indigenous women and girls and two-spirited people matter.

They matter very much, and we need to honour them. We need to honour them from this perspective as well: They are the very first people who were the owners of this land, and we are their guests on their land. We need to honour them and respect them and take action. We do not need more words.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Chair, we heard today the government side, unfortunately, frame this about hope, about these communities demanding hope. However, I do not recall there being 231 demands for hope. There were 231 demands for justice, demands for action.

I would love for the hon. member, in her closing remarks, to explore why it is important that we do not just sit here with platitudes, offering talking points about hope, but that this government takes responsibility for taking clear and targeted steps towards action.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Chair, as we continue to talk about this, which the government is doing, people are dying and lives are being lost. The violence taking place is real.

When we say we need to do this work, what we need the government to do is put actions to words. I want to see in the budget real, significant investments, and want the government to spend those investments, not just to put them on paper and not take action. I want to see the government's implementation of call for justice 1.7, because we need the government to take responsibility and ensure there is independent accountability for that work, not just platitudes.

**The Assistant Deputy Chair:** It being 10:28 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, the committee will rise.

(Government Business No. 23 reported)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 10:28 p.m.)





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