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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1005)

[*Translation*]

FEDERAL LAW—CIVIL LAW HARMONIZATION ACT, NO. 4

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (for the Minister of Justice) moved that Bill S-11, A fourth Act to harmonize federal law with the civil law of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law, be read the first time.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise to present a petition that deals with health care. It is such an encouraging day today, as the Prime Minister is meeting with the premiers to talk about the importance of health care. That is exactly what the petition is calling for.

The residents of Winnipeg North want the different levels of government to work together to deliver to Canadians the five fundamental principles of health care and to look at issues such as mental health, pharmacare and other services that are provided to Canadians. It is a program that Canadians are wholeheartedly behind in every way.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present a petition from 213 Canadians that refers to the medical assistance in dying changes. Medical assistance in dying risks normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness, and Canada should focus on increasing mental health supports and improving access to those supports instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

Therefore, the 213 Canadians, mostly from North Okanagan—Shuswap, my riding, present this petition asking for the stoppage of medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAX

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC) moved:

That, given that,

- (i) the Bank of Canada governor has admitted that the carbon tax contributes to inflation,
- (ii) the Parliamentary Budget Officer says that households will pay more in carbon tax costs than they get back,
- (iii) the government plans to triple the carbon tax, which will increase the price of gas, groceries, and home heating,

the House call on the government to immediately cancel the carbon tax.

He said: Mr. Speaker, after eight years in government, the Prime Minister is out of touch and Canadians are out of money. Nowhere is that more evident than in the words of the Prime Minister's own top minister from Newfoundland and Labrador, who said he is "sick and tired of people talking about the cold winter". He is sick and tired of hearing the stories of seniors in his riding calling to complain that his tax is making it impossible for them to heat their homes.

Business of Supply

If he is sick and tired of hearing about the pain and suffering that his Liberal government is causing after eight years, why do they not stop causing that pain and suffering? If he is still sick and tired, why does he not get out of the way and let another government step in and stand up for the people who are trying to heat their homes? Maybe this out-of-touch Liberal minister needs to hear more, not less, of the stories of his own constituents.

I have an article from the government's own propaganda arm, the CBC, entitled "Diesel, home heating fuels see significant price spike in unscheduled adjustment". It reads, "Diesel and two types of home heating oils saw massive price increases Friday", which was the Friday that just passed, "in an unscheduled adjustment by the Public Utilities Board."

What is the solution the Liberal minister from Newfoundland and Labrador has to these skyrocketing prices? It is not to produce more affordable energy here in our country, even though his province has access to immense offshore reserves that the Prime Minister has discouraged. His solution instead is to triple the carbon tax on his own residents.

If he is tired of hearing about the cost of home heating now, just wait until he imposes that tax increase. This tax is particularly painful for those people who are already living in economically depressed parts of this country and who are forced to heat with oil and propane, the cost of which is already higher than it is in other places.

As we see across northern Ontario, Canadians will be paying drastically increased home heating bills, with the support of the NDP in its coalition with the Liberals. We have, for example, the member for Timmins—James Bay voting to raise home heating bills on his constituents. An NDP member who was elected to serve his constituents is now serving and bowing before the Liberal Prime Minister by raising taxes on his own constituents.

It is not just in oil-heated communities; it is also in places like Hamilton. The suffering is now spreading. A headline from *The Hamilton Spectator* reads, "What am I going to do, go cold?": Natural gas bill sticker shock triggers anger for inflation-weary Ontario residents". What is the solution from the NDP member for Hamilton Centre? He wants to triple the carbon tax on hard-working blue collar folks in Hamilton. Thankfully, even though they are temporarily stuck with an NDP coalition member as their MP, the Conservatives are fighting for the hard-working people of Hamilton and opposing this carbon tax increase.

Let me quote further from the same article:

When a nearly \$250 natural gas bill arrived for November, Lily Francisci called her parents with questions. Her dad's response: "Get used to it," the north-end Hamilton resident said, or keep your house at 20 C.

Then December's bill arrived: \$353.08.

Imagine what January's bill will look like, as it was even colder than December. The bills keep rising and the temperature keeps dropping.

Therefore, I announce on the floor of the House of Commons today that the Conservative Party has launched a nationwide campaign to get the NDP-Liberal costly coalition to wake up. This

coalition is taxing our people and we have had enough, so we are launching a campaign to keep the heat on and take the tax off.

We will keep the heat on this costly coalition to take the tax off so that not just heat becomes more affordable but food does too. Remember, the carbon tax is actually a tax on the food we eat. Why? It is because when we tax our farmers who produce the food and tax the truckers who deliver the food, we tax the food itself.

Let me note the data provided to me by a major mushroom farm just south of here, about half an hour south of Parliament Hill, called the Carleton Mushroom Farms. It is an unbelievably successful farm that employs about 100 people. It supplies the nation's capital with the mushrooms we eat. Its natural gas carbon tax bill was \$9,000 for the month of July. The bill expected for January is \$14,275. That is for one month.

Do members think that does not get passed on to consumers? Ultimately, at the end of the day the farmer has to pay the bill somehow. Ultimately, Carleton Mushroom Farms will take a hit. It will suffer, and probably produce fewer mushrooms than it otherwise would, which of course means that we will import more mushrooms from foreign, polluting jurisdictions, driving jobs out and pollution up. The consumer will also have to pay a higher price for those mushrooms.

• (1010)

Why do we not take the tax off Carleton Mushroom Farms so that it can lower the cost of its produce and increase the amount of food it produces in this country? We should be more self-reliant. We have the fifth-biggest supply of farmland per capita on planet earth. It is unacceptable that we cannot feed ourselves. We should be a nation that stands on its own feet, kneels before no nation and feeds itself. That is what will happen.

The pain and suffering is spreading across the land. For example, the other day, I was in an east end Ottawa grocery store and a cook walked up to me. He said that he had to delay his retirement because, after eight years of the Prime Minister, inflation is at a 40-year high and he cannot afford to retire on schedule. The thing that really broke him up was that he could no longer buy the ingredients to cook at home that he uses at work.

He held up a frozen pizza and said that he was stuck eating that frozen pizza rather than making his own food. It was probably a foreign-made pizza that was produced in some faraway land that is generating a lot more pollution, with processed ingredients that are not as nutritious. This gentleman, who has worked all his life feeding other people, is not able to feed himself better than that.

That is because of the inflationary deficits and taxes that the government has imposed. These are the inflationary deficits and taxes that the hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn, as my finance critic, has been fighting against. That is why I am so proud to be splitting my time with him.

His story epitomizes the Canadian dream. His parents came here with modest means as immigrants. He grew up in a tough but proud neighbourhood. He went on to study finance, got a finance degree and then went off and opened his own business. He built homes to house our people and paid paycheques to other Canadians.

Do members know what I am so proud of? It has been the tradition that we have big shot Bay Streeters as ministers of finance. Our shadow minister of finance has created real jobs, worked with his hands, built businesses and helped troubled youth. He has the practical hands-on experience to know what this country should be: a country where everybody who works hard gets a fair shot at life.

When we get rid of the carbon tax, when we cancel the inflationary deficits and when we reform our tax and benefits system so that people bring home more of each dollar they earn, it is not just about mathematics. It about restoring Canada's promise: a country where hard work pays off and where everybody who gets out of bed in the morning and contributes to their country can make it better for themselves and their families.

That is the country we are going to restore. Let us keep the heat on and take the tax off. Let us bring it home.

• (1015)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to read from the Conservative platform that the member for Carleton, the Leader of the Opposition, ran on in the last election. It says, "Conservatives will work with the provinces to implement an innovative, national, Personal Low Carbon Savings Account. This will put a price on carbon".

The leader of the opposition at the time, the member for Durham, said, "We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms." The Conservative member for Calgary Centre, when commenting on that platform, said, "I think it's an evolution for parts of our party".

We have now seen seven or eight motions similar to this one that have come forward in the House since the Conservatives ousted the previous leader. It has actually been 150 days to the day since this member became the leader of the official opposition, so congratulations to him.

My question—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order. Can we allow the question to proceed?

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, the only thing that out-did that applause was when the member said he was splitting his time with somebody else, which goes to show how trained the seals are.

Business of Supply

In any event, my question to the member is this: In 150 days, why has he not given a single idea to Canadians on what his plan would be for the environment?

• (1020)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for acknowledging the 150-day mark of my leadership. I am just disappointed he did not get me a nice present to honour the occasion. Maybe that question was the present. He often lobs me these softballs across the way.

The member wants some ideas. Here are some ideas: Why do we not use technology instead of taxes to fight climate change? Why do we not support our energy sector in pumping the carbon back into the ground through carbon capture and storage? Why do we not speed up nuclear power so that we can have more emissions-free electricity on our grid? Why do we not get out of the way of the people of Quebec and speed up the approval of future hydroelectric dams so they can produce even more prodigious emissions-free electricity? There are some ideas that would actually protect our environment and our customers.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to point out that this is the fifth out of eight supply days that the Conservatives have used to talk about the carbon tax.

Every time, the Conservatives' solutions involve depriving the government of revenue. They are not presenting solutions that would help increase household income. They are not presenting solutions that would have big businesses pay their fair share of taxes. They are also not presenting solutions that would have banks and multinationals decrease their profit margins at a time when citizens are making sacrifices.

There is nothing in today's Conservative motion to address the sources of inflation. On the contrary, it gives a gift to oil companies.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, first, the member is wrong. She says that we have not come up with any proposals to abolish unjustifiable corporate profits. In fact, yesterday, we moved a motion in the House of Commons to take away McKinsey's unjustifiable profits. We said no to the big contracts the Liberal government awards to major corporations and the contracts worth \$1,500 a day, or even an hour.

We are the ones going after the subsidies to Liberal businesses that profit from Liberal gifts. What is more, the Bloc Québécois is in favour of these gifts. We want to lower taxes that are weighing heavy on ordinary Canadians, but we do not want to lower them for Liberal businesses.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, this morning I had representatives from CLC in my office talking about the just transition and talking about the need to make sure there are workers at the table for these conversations. They are worried about climate change. They are worried about climate change for the sake of their children and grandchildren.

Can the member expand on the impacts of climate change and tell us what he is hearing across the country?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, what I am hearing is that the NDP-Liberal plan to triple, triple, triple the carbon tax will do nothing to fight climate change. The NDP has nothing to say about workers. It has abandoned workers. The NDP members believe that the greedy government, of which they are a part, should have more of workers' paycheques.

There was a time, way back in the day, when the NDP actually fought for working people. Now they fight for big government and special interests in Ottawa. They have abandoned and are now attacking the working people by raising their home heating bills, raising their gas bills, raising their grocery bills and raising their taxes so the government, the bureaucracy, the special interests in Ottawa, the McKinseys of the world who get these juicy contracts, for which the NDP voted, get more and the working people get less. We believe exactly the opposite.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Madam Speaker, after eight long years of the current Liberal government's economic mismanagement, Canadians are paying the price. The Liberals' reckless government spending, coupled with their love of taxes, has caused this inflation crisis. Their failed policies have left this country with a 40-year high inflation, interest rates not seen since the 2008 recession, and continually rising taxes that seem to end up in the hands of wealthy Liberal insiders or sent out the door in inflationary spending. Worst of all, the government is going to triple, triple, triple the destructive carbon tax and add a second one on top of it.

The reckless spending by the current government started even before the COVID-19 pandemic. The Prime Minister's promise of \$10 billion was broken when, even before the pandemic, he had already spent \$100 billion. After telling Canadians he would have only modest deficits, he broke that promise completely. Of course, during COVID, the current government kept the money printers going, adding half a trillion dollars to the national debt, and 40% of that spending was not even pandemic-related.

Former finance minister and random Liberal Bill Morneau has admitted that the government overspent during the pandemic. Lucrative government contracts have gone to companies like SNC-Lavalin, WE Charity and the company run by former Liberal MP Frank Baylis. Of course, Canadians got nothing out of those contracts in all those cases, but the Prime Minister's friends were happily paid off and it cost Canadians. The Auditor General has even reported that \$32 billion went to people who should not have received COVID benefits, including prisoners, dead people and even foreign nationals. It seems the Prime Minister ranks Canadians lower than even criminals.

Who can forget the \$54 million spent on the ArriveCAN app, which failed to do anything but wrongly send vaccinated Canadians into government-run quarantine centres? What is worse is that the Liberals thought they should add \$15 billion a year in spending on contracts that go out to high-priced consultants who have personal connections to cabinet ministers and even the Prime Minister. As the Parliamentary Budget Officer once said, this is not "keeping one's powder dry".

The Governor of the Bank of Canada, Tiff Macklem, has said that inflation is a homegrown issue. He admitted to the finance committee that the current Liberal government's out-of-control spending drove up the inflation that plagues Canadians today. He even indicated that the eight consecutive interest rate hikes were necessary because the Liberals cannot help but spend, spend, spend.

The former Bank of Canada governor and future Liberal leadership candidate Mark Carney told senators that inflation is a domestic problem. Former Liberal deputy prime minister and finance minister John Manley said that the Liberal spending is working against the efforts of the Bank of Canada to control inflation. He added that Liberal spending is fuelling inflation.

Inflation has also been fuelled by the current Liberal government's adding tax increases after tax increases. There is the triple, triple, tripling of the carbon tax, the new, second carbon tax coming this year, the payroll tax and the undemocratic escalator tax on the drinks Canadians enjoy.

When asked by Conservatives, the Bank of Canada governor admitted that the failed carbon tax is driving up inflation. It is not hard to see why. While inflation caused by Liberal spending has made everything more expensive, the Liberals' carbon tax is punishing Canadians, businesses and farmers for living their lives. Agriculture producers are dealing with higher prices for farm fuels, fertilizers needed to grow crops, and the feed they need to keep livestock alive. We know that, once tripled, the failed carbon tax will cost a typical farmer \$150,000 a year, and the agriculture industry could lose upwards of \$50 million on fertilizer emissions costs. The price of natural gas will jump as the tripling carbon tax adds about 30¢ per litre. Businesses are taking on the higher costs of buying goods, paying for transportation and paying for refrigeration and storage.

If farmers and businesses want to survive in the Prime Minister's Canada, they have to raise their prices. At the end of the day, they still need to pay their employees, pay the rent and pay for the Liberal tax increases. When producers making the goods are forced to pay more, it costs more for businesses to buy, transport and store goods, so it is not rocket science to see that it costs Canadians more to pay for the gas, groceries and home heating they need to survive in Canada.

• (1025)

It is that cost of living that is the issue. One in five Canadians is out of money. They are skipping meals or accessing charity services just to meet their basic needs; 60% of Canadians are cutting back on groceries, while 41% are looking for cheaper, less nutritious options. The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment across Canada's 10 big cities is over \$2,000 a month, compared to \$1,171 a month in 2015. That is an almost 90% increase in rent. The average homeowner's mortgage payments have more than doubled since 2015, going from about \$1,500 to more than \$3,000 a month. Inflation on the interest on mortgages is up 18% year over year. It takes 60% to 70% of Canadians' paycheques to pay the mortgage, while inflation and the cost of living eat up the rest.

As we see skyrocketing home heating prices, due to the Liberal government cancelling good, clean energy projects that could have been made here in Canada, we also see that the carbon tax takes up about 18% to 20% of everyday Canadians' home heating bills. When Liberals triple, triple, triple the carbon tax, it would take anywhere from 40% to 60% of the bill alone, just on carbon tax.

Eighty per cent of variable rate mortgages have now hit the point where their mortgage payment is entirely just interest. The bank is forcing Canadians to pay more to pay down the principal part of their mortgage, and 45% of those homeowners on a variable rate mortgage will have to sell their homes in nine months. People living in one of the hot housing markets, like Ontario, could lose 30% on the sale of their house if they bought it in the last 12 months.

This carbon tax is a complete failure. It has failed to reach the Liberal emissions targets. In fact, Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries in climate change performance. We rank lower than China and the U.S., and just barely perform better than Russia. It is clear the Liberal carbon tax is not an environmental plan; it is a tax plan. If Canada is to succeed on the environment and in our economy, government needs to get out of the way, incentivize businesses and let them thrive.

For decades, the private sector has been the innovators and developers of the technology that drives our economy forward. The right approach to addressing climate change is through technology and innovation, not tax. Liberals have crushed the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit and have even driven away investment. Since 2015, Canada has only seen a decline in investors wanting to bring their money to invest in our world-class businesses and industries, because of uncertainty caused by out-of-control Liberal spending, inflation and taxation.

We need to restore affordability and confidence to the Canadian economy. To do that, government is not, and will not be, the solution. Instead, it is time to fire the gatekeepers, cut the red tape and end the punishing tax burden on Canadians. Canadian workers and

Business of Supply

businesses are ready to get this economy back on track, restore good paycheques for our workers and reverse the damage caused by the Liberal government.

On this side, we know that the only way out of this affordability crisis is to stop the crazy government spending and instead make more of what money buys: affordable homes, affordable Canadian food and affordable, responsibly sourced Canadian energy. At a time of crisis for Canadians, Conservatives and our Conservative leader are listening and ready to act. Canadians are ready too, but they need to get the government out of the way. It is time to end the inflationary spending spree, end the cushy Liberal contracts and stop the tax increases. It is time to axe this failed carbon tax and let Canadians keep more in their pockets.

• (1030)

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask a question about the price on pollution. We agree that the challenges facing Canadians right now are significant. You have well explained the increases in fuel prices over the last few months. However, there has been no increase in the price on pollution in that period. You are continually blaming it on the price on pollution, which is actually giving back more to most people than we are levying. Could you explain why these prices have been going up over the last few months, even though there has been no increase in the price on pollution, and why you continue—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Before I give the floor to the hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn, I would just remind the hon. member that she should speak to the Chair. I have not spoken about anything.

The hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, if someone wants to send a page over here, I can give the member a report by their own public budget officer that proves that more Canadians do not get money back in their pockets. They actually get more taken out of their pockets.

The pain that the member is talking about is caused by her government. The out-of-control spending has caused this inflationary crisis, which was proven by random Liberals, previous and current ones. This inflationary crisis was caused by their government. On top of that, the Liberals pile-drive Canadians with more taxes and with more carbon tax. They need to axe the tax and let Canadians keep more money in their pockets.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to give my colleague a bit of advice. I have a few years of experience in marketing, and it is common knowledge that when a slogan is no good, it does nothing for the cause.

Business of Supply

For francophones in Quebec, “triple, triple, triple” is kind of the equivalent of “Oui, papa” or “Pop-Sac-À-Vie-Sau-Sec-Fi-Co-Pin”, or even “Je n'aurais jamais assez de Sugar-Crisp”. At some point, if the slogan is not working, it is time to get a new one.

The motion the Conservatives are moving today is against the carbon tax. In Quebec, we do not have the carbon tax, it does not apply. Instead we take part in the carbon exchange. Quebeckers, however, are currently under the same economic pressure. Inflation is hurting Quebec families as well. Clearly, the problem is not just the carbon tax.

What I see in the Conservative motion today is the cancellation of the carbon tax, but I am not seeing any solutions to help Quebec and Canadian families.

I would like my colleague's thoughts on that.

• (1035)

[English]

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, the member actually highlights how effective the slogan is. He repeated it twice, so I thank him for doing that.

When it comes to what the Conservatives are proposing, which is to cut the carbon tax, not only would it help Quebec, Quebeckers, Quebec businesses, the people of Quebec and the farmers, but it would help everyone. It would help all Canadians across this country to lower their costs. It is just too bad that the Bloc continuously helps to prop up the government and make things more expensive in this country. The Bloc members need to stand with Conservatives and with Canadians, cut the tax, axe the carbon tax and help Canadians keep more in their pockets.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am not sure about the member, but in the riding of Port Moody—Coquitlam, the two highest impacts on people's budgets are housing and child care. The NDP has a solution on child care, and it also has a solution on housing. What I do not see is the Conservative Party supporting initiatives around child care to make it more affordable, and it certainly has fuelled the market lens and the market-driven housing problem that we have in this country.

If we are talking today about affordability, are the Conservatives going to support the child care bill? What more can be done to make more affordable housing in this country?

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives did support the child care motion that was passed in the House just recently. The problem is that the Liberal Party and the NDP ideologies do not match up with everyday Canadians' with respect to choice, freedom and letting people keep more in their pockets so they can make their own choices and thrive in this country. I come from the home-building industry. We see that the problem today is the supply of homes. There are just not enough. There is too much red tape, and the government is not helping. It needs to get out of the way. It needs to stop being a gatekeeper and let more homes be built here in this country.

In the meantime, the Liberals need to help lower the taxes on Canadians so that Canadians can actually have a chance. There are many people here who cannot afford to put away dollar for dollar

and save up to have a down payment for a home today, yet the Liberal-NDP government continues to take more out of the pockets—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg South.

I am pleased to take part in today's debate. I would like to say that the Conservatives introduced an opposition day motion to talk about the importance of fighting climate change, but they are not quite there yet.

The Conservative Party has had a new leader for 150 days already and yet it still does not have a plan to tackle climate change. It is anybody's guess as to when its plan will be ready. Last time, it took the Conservative Party nearly a year after choosing its previous leader to come up with a plan to fight climate change.

As many members know already, Canada has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% to 45% below 2005 levels by 2030 and to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

[English]

Our 2030 emissions reduction plan tabled last March lays out how we will get there. Pollution pricing is the backbone of our climate strategy. It is foundational, because it has been proven to work all over the world, not only to drive down carbon emissions but also to raise innovation and energy efficiency, and to create jobs in the emerging green economy. It also supports and amplifies every other climate measure, and creates an incentive to invest in low-carbon solutions across the economy.

Conservatives used to know this. In fact, carbon pricing is the kind of market-based mechanism that earlier generations of fiscal Conservative thinkers used to embrace. Many in the Conservative Party, including the Leader of the Opposition's own communication director, used to support carbon pricing, or at least he did until he started working for the Conservative Party. Today's Conservatives are penny-wise and pound foolish.

They have been fighting climate action for years in Canada. Today we face literally billions of dollars in cleanup and adaptation costs from extreme weather events that are stronger and more frequent because of climate change. The fact is that carbon pricing is central to our climate plan, because it is the most efficient and lowest-cost policy to reduce greenhouse gas pollution, and the cost of doing nothing is staggering.

When we introduced carbon pricing in 2019, we were not only putting a price on pollution, but we were also putting in place the building blocks for the future we know we need for ourselves, for our kids and for our grandkids.

● (1040)

[Translation]

Our approach has always been based on a set of ambitious but realistic standards for carbon pricing, the federal reference that gives the provinces and territories the flexibility to implement their own carbon pricing system.

Setting the trajectory until 2030 provides certainty for Canadians and the investor community and will be transformative by creating incentives for the new technologies we need, for both our industry and society.

We have just come to an agreement with all the provinces and territories on increasing carbon pricing. I will reiterate that we negotiated a more ambitious price on pollution with each province and all the territories for the coming years.

[English]

I want to impress on the House just how foundational this price trajectory is to the success of Canadians' low-carbon economy and the jobs that will come with it.

Last fall, at COP27 in Egypt, I spoke with Brian Vaasjo of Capital Power, one of Canada's largest private sector electricity producers. Brian told me that pricing pollution and providing certainty and long-term predictability in pricing are key to unlocking investment on some very good projects, including a \$2-billion carbon capture electricity project that would not go ahead without it. Susannah Pierce, president and country chair at Shell Canada, noted that Shell's big investment will not make sense without carbon pricing in Canada, and that regulatory certainty is the key to good business decisions.

The Conservatives have now abandoned the energy investors and energy companies, but they are pretending to be on the side of those facing energy poverty. Canadians have been riding the roller coaster of volatile global oil and gas prices for years, and Conservatives said nothing about skyrocketing profit margins from oil and gas producers. Instead, they make up a lot of misleading claims about the price on pollution.

Here are the facts. About two-thirds of the increase in what Canadians are paying at the pump is due to crude oil prices going up, largely because of Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. Another 25% of the price is the result of everything from provincial taxes to refining margins, which have increased by more than 110% in the last two years. That means, all told, 95% of the price of gas has nothing to do with the price on pollution. In fact, the price on pollu-

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tion puts more money back in the pockets of Canadians, and it remains one of the best ways to fight climate change and keep our air clean.

[Translation]

Stakeholders across the country have told us that consistency and predictability are essential to promote investment in a low-carbon economy. We also know that businesses and industries are developing innovative technologies and approaches to reduce this pollution. They need incentives and clear support to commercialize and implement these technologies. Carbon pricing creates incentives without dictating a particular approach. It lets businesses decide on the best way to reduce their pollution.

[English]

What is most galling are the lies of omission and the things left unsaid, like those quarterly climate action incentive payments that go directly to Canadian households in backstop provinces every three months. For the first time, households in three Atlantic provinces will receive quarterly climate action incentive payments totalling hundreds of dollars a year. The first rebate payment will come in July, which is the same month that the fuel charge will take effect for the first time. The vast majority of households will never be out of pocket, with lower- and middle-income families benefiting the most.

Starting next July, a family of four in Nova Scotia will receive a climate action incentive payment of \$248 every three months. In Prince Edward Island, it will be \$240 per quarter. In Newfoundland and Labrador, it will be \$328 every quarter. For an Ontario family of four, the quarterly payment will be \$244 starting in April. In Manitoba, next year's quarterly payment will be \$264 every quarter. In Saskatchewan, it will be \$340. In Alberta, a family of four will receive \$386 four times a year.

In total, 90% of the proceeds from the fuel charges are returned directly to Canadian households through the climate action incentive payments. The rest will be returned to businesses, farmers and indigenous peoples through various federal and provincial programs.

● (1045)

[Translation]

I want to say two things about affordability. First, I know how concerned Canadians are about household budgets in these inflationary times. I understand, and I share each and every concern that Canadians have.

*Business of Supply**[English]*

That is why we are making sure that rebate payments go directly to households every three months, and eight out of 10 get more than they paid.

Equally important is the hard fact that if nothing is done about climate change, it will cost us far more. The parliamentary budget office recently estimated the cost to the Canadian economy of \$25 billion per year by 2025 if we go about business as usual.

[Translation]

The status quo is not an option. Some may argue that we can simply go back in time and pretend that climate change does not exist. They would probably have better luck buying cryptocurrency.

Our goal is to keep life affordable while developing a clean economy, good jobs and safe communities. A stable, affordable and predictable price on pollution is a key component of that.

[English]

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Madam Speaker, the minister, as well as the Liberals, like to pretend that energy prices, gas prices in particular, are like the weather. They are not responsible for it. They blame Russia. They blame everything else. I am going to give the minister an example and ask him to respond to it.

My riding of New Brunswick Southwest is next to the state of Maine. Almost every day, the price of gasoline is 50¢ different. It is cheaper in Maine than it is in New Brunswick. All the gasoline comes from the refinery in Saint John, New Brunswick, so it is not like the Americans are producing cheaper gas from another source. The difference is all tax, and every year that gap is growing because of the Liberal carbon tax.

The minister needs to own up to it. The carbon tax is meant to make prices higher, and it is working.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault: Madam Speaker, here we have another clear example of misinformation that is being spread in the House, and it is somewhat ironic that it is coming from this member. He supported his province in implementing the federal backstop system on carbon pricing, and he mentioned it would mean that people would get money in their pockets. I do not know who coerced him to make this intervention in the House this morning, because just a few months ago he was in favour of carbon pricing in his home province of New Brunswick.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for his speech.

I want to talk about the shortcomings of the carbon tax. In April 2022, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development analyzed carbon pricing, focusing on how the program was designed. He wondered whether a significant portion of emissions was covered by carbon pricing. The conclusion was “yes” for individuals but “no” for large emitters, even though large emitters benefit from relief programs.

I would like to hear the minister's thoughts on that. I would suggest that this aspect of the carbon tax needs to be corrected.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question and her advocacy on this issue.

However, I would like to remind her that we were not in government 10 years ago. The carbon pricing system that was proposed at the time was the Harper government's, not ours. That government was in favour of imposing a carbon tax one day, against it the next, and then in favour of it again the day after that. The Conservatives are still doing the same thing today.

I would also like to remind my colleague that institutions such as the International Energy Agency and the International Monetary Fund have said that our carbon pricing system is a leading model for fighting climate change. According to these institutions, if only two-thirds of the countries in the world adopted the Canadian carbon pricing system, then every country on the planet would have already met the Paris targets.

[English]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, of course we are under siege with the climate crisis. In British Columbia we experience extreme weather from fires to floods. Lives were lost and there have been damages of untold millions of dollars. What is needed is not the solution the Conservatives are proposing, to not address the climate crisis through carbon pricing.

What we need is for the government to take on big oil. The minister supposedly came from the environmental sector. Why is he not taking this on and imposing a windfall tax on big oil? It made a record profit last year of \$147 billion. Why are we not taxing big oil to address the climate crisis?

- (1050)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault: Madam Speaker, I can reassure my hon. colleague that I do not supposedly come from the environmental sector. I am from the environmental sector. I have the arrest record to prove it.

We have put in place a number of measures to tackle the emissions of the oil and gas sector. In fact, our emissions reduction plan presented last March is the first time in the history of this country when we have set a trajectory for emissions reduction for the oil and gas sector. We are working on a number of different elements of regulations to tackle the emissions of the oil and gas sector.

We eliminated international fossil fuel subsidies just before Christmas, and we are working with the party of the member opposite on eliminating those subsidies in Canada in the first half of this year. We will be doing this two years earlier than all of our G20 partners who have committed to eliminating those fossil fuel subsidies by 2025.

Business of Supply

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, indeed it is a privilege to rise today to participate in this important debate on carbon pricing. Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time and carbon pricing is the backbone of our government's climate plan, as the minister has just said.

In recent years, climate change has had unprecedented effects on Canadians. Impacts from climate change are wide-ranging, affecting our homes, cost of living, infrastructure, health and safety, and economic activity in communities across Canada. The latest science warns that, to avoid severe impacts of climate change, the most severe greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced significantly and urgently to hold the global average temperature rise at 1.5°C.

We know that farming, in particular, faces these impacts. As noted in the "Canada in a Changing Climate: National Issues" report, agriculture is highly sensitive to climate and faces risks from extreme weather events. The costs of these events can be enormous, in the billions of dollars. Climate change is already increasing the likelihood and severity of droughts in Canada, and we need to act now to reduce our emissions alongside our global partners to avoid even worse impacts.

On March 29, 2022, our government released the 2030 emissions reduction plan outlining how Canada will meet our 2030 target of 40% to 45% below 2005 levels and the path to net-zero emissions by 2050. The plan builds on a strong foundation, starting with Canada's first-ever national climate plan in 2016 and then our strengthened plan released in 2020. Carbon pricing is central to these plans because it is the most efficient and lowest-cost policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Canadians and businesses understand that putting a price on carbon pollution spurs the development of new technologies and services that can help reduce their emissions cost-effectively, from how they heat their homes to what kind of energy they use to do so. Our government has established a globally recognized pricing system that is encouraging decarbonization across the economy while also putting money back in the pockets of the average Canadian household.

Our approach is flexible. Any province or territory can design its own pricing system based on local needs, or can choose the federal pollution pricing system. The federal government sets minimum national stringency standards, called the benchmark, that all systems must meet to ensure they are comparable and effective in reducing GHG emissions. If a province decides not to put a price on carbon pollution or proposes a system that does not meet these standards, the federal system applies.

On November 22, 2022, our government announced the provinces in which the federal carbon pollution pricing system will apply for the 2023 to 2030 period, as well as the funds that will be returned to households in each province that has the federal fuel charge. Again, carbon pricing systems in Canada are designed to maintain competitiveness and position Canada as a leader in the global low-carbon economy.

Businesses and industries are developing innovative technologies and approaches to reducing emissions. They need consistent, pre-

dictable policies and strong incentives and supports to put these technologies into practice. The multi-year carbon pricing regime established by our government creates those incentives without dictating any particular approach. It lets businesses decide how best to cut their emissions.

Federal and provincial carbon pricing systems for industry are designed to ensure there is a price incentive to reduce emissions, spur innovative and encourage the adoption of clean technologies while maintaining Canadian industry competitiveness vis-à-vis global competitors. The federal approach to carbon pricing is designed to maintain the consistency demanded by industry and investors while prioritizing affordability for Canadians, including farmers.

Most households and jurisdictions where the federal fuel charge applies end up with more money in their pockets than what they paid. When federal fuel charge proceeds are returned directly to these households, eight out of 10 families actually get more money back through the climate action incentive payments than they faced in increased fuel costs.

• (1055)

In 2023, for example, quarterly climate action incentive payments for a family of four will increase to \$386 in Alberta, \$264 in Manitoba and \$340 in Saskatchewan. This is the prairie economy I come from, and those payments will be made quarterly. Families in rural and small communities are also eligible to receive an extra 10%.

I would like to emphasize that farmers continue to have significant relief from carbon-pollution pricing under the current federal approach. While farmers are key to reaching Canada's climate targets, Canadian farmers are not required to face the challenge on their own. Emissions from livestock, which represent the majority of greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, are not priced. There is also no carbon price on the gasoline and diesel used in tractors and other farm machinery, just as fishers do not pay the price on fuel for their vessels.

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Greenhouse operators also get 80% relief from the fuel charge on natural gas and propane used to heat their greenhouses. Recognizing that many farmers use natural gas and propane in their operations, our government has also established a refundable tax credit for farming businesses operating in provinces where the federal fuel charge system applies. There are also opportunities for farmers to earn revenue by reducing emissions, under provincial and federal GHG offset credit programs, which are being developed.

We will be reviewing carbon pricing systems in Canada by 2026 to ensure they continue to be consistent and effective across Canada. This will provide an opportunity to take stock, together with provinces, territories, indigenous organizations and governments, to make any necessary changes in a way that maintains strong incentives and minimizes disruption.

Agricultural producers are key partners in the fight against climate change and are already taking action to improve the sustainability of their operations. Our government is making other significant investments to support this. For example, we are investing \$470 million in the Agricultural Climate Solutions-On-Farm Climate Action fund to help farmers adopt sustainable practices, such as cover crops, rotational grazing and fertilizer management. We are also investing \$330 million to triple the funding for the agricultural clean technology program, which supports the development and purchase of more energy-efficient equipment among farmers.

Climate change is a serious challenge, but it is also an opportunity. Analysis by the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate estimates that transitioning to a low-carbon economy will generate 65 million new jobs. Canadians want to take advantage of these opportunities.

Just as we are putting a price on carbon pollution, we are also making historic investments in clean technology, innovation and green infrastructure to drive growth and reduce pollution, including \$9.1 billion in new investments to cut pollution and grow the economy as part of the 2030 emissions reduction plan.

Canadians know the cost of inaction on climate change. They know it is enormous. This includes more severe floods, forest fires, heat waves and droughts here in Canada, and the potential for massively disrupting the climate worldwide.

Canadians have been clear about what they want. They want clean air, good jobs, a healthy environment and a strong economy. That is what this government is giving Canadians.

• (1100)

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague across the way talks a lot about GHG emissions. In the public accounts, we are actually studying the government's plan for greening government, which is called the greening government strategy.

Part of the role set out by the Treasury Board is that the assistant deputy minister has to sign off on the integrity of the government's GHG emissions, but 75% of the ADMs refused to sign off on the integrity of the government's numbers. Guess which department also failed that integrity test? The department of Environment and Climate Change.

How can the minister and his assistant, the parliamentary secretary, stand and talk about the environment when their own ADM refused to sign off on the integrity of their numbers?

Mr. Terry Duguid: Madam Speaker, all I know is that for 10 long years, the Conservatives of Stephen Harper did nothing on climate change. They cut \$350 million from the environment and climate change budget.

We are investing in the economy of the future, with \$9.1 billion in our emissions reduction plan. This is on top of the \$100 billion we already invested in climate change. We are making a difference. Our emissions are going down. Our economy is being built for the future, for our kids and grandkids. The Conservatives have no plan for climate change, no plan for affordability and certainly no plan for building the economy of the future.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, inflation is caused by more than 20 different factors, one of which is a labour shortage. The Century Initiative, led by certain McKinsey executives, recommended encouraging people aged 55 to 74 to return to the workforce if they had retired. Pensions are fixed incomes, and pensioners are the most affected by inflation.

My question is this. Was increasing pensions for only those 75 and over really just an implementation of the Century Initiative approach, which ultimately hurts those aged 65 to 74?

[English]

Mr. Terry Duguid: Madam Speaker, again, one of the first things we did when we formed government was putting the age of retirement back to 65 so seniors would not be left in poverty. Indeed, in our last budget, we increased the OAS by 10% because our seniors are more vulnerable as they age, with more needs for health care and medicine.

The hon. member mentioned workers. Since the topic is climate today, we are working very hard to prepare our workforce for a future that combats climate change and creates that clean economy and the good jobs of today and tomorrow.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend, the parliamentary secretary, said in his speech that emissions are going down. I have seen no evidence of that. We had a dip during COVID, but the expectation is that our emissions will go up. We have the worst record in the G7 since 1990. Our emissions continue to climb upward more than those of any other country in the G7.

Business of Supply

At the same time, subsidies disguised as climate action are increasing. When the Liberals throw out the numbers for how much is spent on climate action, it includes carbon capture, utilization and storage, which is a subsidy for the fossil fuel industry. It helps them produce more oil by getting what they could not otherwise reach by shooting carbon dioxide down deep wells. We are seeing an increase in subsidies, where we have wasted \$21 billion on the Trans Mountain pipeline. As a reminder, a billion is a thousand million; it is not just a little bit more. The hon. member will remember the Prime Minister promising in the 2015 election that he would never approve this pipeline. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

• (1105)

Mr. Terry Duguid: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her advocacy and for her friendship.

We are turning the *Queen Mary*, as they say. The Conservative government of Stephen Harper did nothing on climate change for 10 long years. We are reversing that trend. We are investing billions of dollars in climate action and into the new economy. We have eliminated six fossil fuel subsidies and are on our way to eliminating nine. We need to use every tool in the tool box to reduce our emissions, including carbon capture.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, the motion before us today—which, as everyone can imagine, the Bloc Québécois will not be supporting—deserves to be defeated and deconstructed. That would allow us to point out the nuances that should be part of it, but that, not surprisingly, are completely missing from the wording of this motion.

Before I focus my remarks on environmental concerns, which should still be part of our debates in 2023, I want to criticize the official opposition's approach with the amendment introduced by my colleague from Calgary Forest Lawn.

I would submit—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am sorry, but I must interrupt the hon. member.

[*English*]

I would ask hon. members who want to have conversations to have them in the lobby.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Repentigny may continue her speech.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Madam Speaker, using institutions such as the Bank of Canada and the parliamentary budget office to lend the motion credibility in points (i) and (ii) is misleading, to say the least. I am compelled to speak out against this kind of manipulation.

At point (i), the motion states that “the Bank of Canada governor has admitted that the carbon tax contributes to inflation”. Inflation was not caused by the new tax. The tax is a necessary measure designed to change and orient the behaviours of Canadian society as a whole to achieve a net-zero future. Perhaps the official opposition needs to be reminded that Canada made a commitment to the global community to achieve net zero by 2050.

There is a global economic context that gave rise to the conditions we are experiencing now. Simplifying inflation like that is irresponsible, and I think the public deserves a much better motion than this one.

It goes without saying that taxes affect inflation, but any motion we put forward should be grounded, first and foremost, in the concatenation of factors and economic circumstances. One-dimensional motions like this are best avoided, but that is not what we are seeing here.

The official opposition appears to be unaware that there are many sectors of the global economy that have been adversely impacted by the pandemic, and that there has been an associated domino effect. I will spare the House the details of the other factors involved, including the war in Ukraine.

Point (ii) of the motion states that “the Parliamentary Budget Officer says that households will pay more in carbon tax costs than they get back”.

I am not sure how they so carelessly arrived at this conclusion, because what they are really doing is using the Parliamentary Budget Officer's words for their own ends. They skilfully cut out all the nuances necessary to understand and appreciate the results of the analysis, namely that the Parliamentary Budget Officer is focusing on household net carbon costs for 2030, the year in which the tax should reach \$170. Things will change between now and then.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer analyzes both the fiscal impact, namely the levy of the goods and services tax, and the economic impact, meaning the lower income as a result of pricing.

I forgot to say that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

When the Parliamentary Budget Officer considers only the fiscal impact, the vast majority of households in backstop provinces see a net gain, as they receive rebates that exceed their carbon costs.

It is also important to note that, even considering the economic impact, net carbon costs have a progressive impact. Pricing affects households differently, depending on the composition of their spending on goods and services. According to one report, “high-income households, which have relatively high carbon-intensive consumption, bear a larger cost burden compared to lower income households”.

It is therefore absolutely false to claim that, in the current context, households will be paying out more than they receive. That would be in the 2030 fiscal year.

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The Conservatives' motion is first and foremost an attempt to eliminate the measure required in Canada, the country that, after all, still subsidizes hydrocarbons; the country where the most polluting vehicles on the planet are made and driven, according to the International Energy Agency; and the country beset, dare I say it, by a type of political schizophrenia in the fight against climate change, which results in contradictory announcements with meticulously crafted virtuous words and messages.

I will agree that, with this motion, the Conservative member is taking a direction that differs from that of the government. I just presented a few truths about the current situation in Canada and summarily described the government's approach to climate change, because, as I would remind members, Parliament has a responsibility to be transparent to voters. I am not naive, and I do not believe in miracles, but I believe that it is important to raise the issue of transparency.

It is a well-known fact that the Conservative Party is first and foremost concerned about the oil and gas industry. That is essentially its whole vision. Its approach, which I would call demagogic and populist, is patently obvious.

The carbon tax does not even affect the largest emitters, since the government built in safe-conducts, mitigation measures to ensure that the shock to these poor companies would not be too brutal. This bodes well for a sector with record-breaking profits, a boon for shareholders. Need I remind members that ExxonMobil, or Imperial Oil, raked in \$74 billion in profits?

• (1110)

We would not want the shock to these companies to be too brutal. This is absolutely ridiculous. The elimination of the carbon tax seeks first and foremost to help the oil and gas industry. It is the best solution to lock society into negative behaviours that hinder our fight against climate change.

Since I am a proponent of transparency, I must say that I do not believe that the Conservative Party will see the value of implementing any meaningful measures whatsoever to encourage Canadians to change their behaviours and reduce their dependency on oil. I also do not believe that they will see the value of supporting public policy focusing on energy efficiency. I certainly am not expecting the Conservative Party to support the measures proposed by the Bloc Québécois, which would have a direct impact on the very people the Conservatives seem to want to help. For example, we are proposing adjusting the increase in old age security, building social and community housing to meet current needs, improving the energy balance of hundreds of thousands of commercial buildings by fostering energy efficiency policies aimed at breaking our dependency on oil and gas, and taxing massive fortunes, even temporarily.

It is our responsibility to implement measures that will ultimately change people's behaviours. I will give the example of cigarette companies. In 2015, the British Medical Journal analyzed 100 Canadian and American studies on tobacco taxes. Findings showed that taxation was a powerful tool to reduce smoking. Thanks to the tax, people who smoked either quit or began to smoke less, and that had a positive impact on young people. Measures like this are nec-

essary to change our behaviours, and we need to change our behaviours if we are to take up the climate challenge.

The oil and gas sector has been aware of the impact of its pollution since the 1970s. The harmful effects of air pollution on human health have been widely documented. This is compounded by the impact of the growing levels of greenhouse gas emissions. We need to stop pretending that we are not dependent on oil and gas or that this dependency has no financial, economic or health repercussions. I am not talking about the benefits to oil companies, which, as we know, are considerable. Their senior executives, the insurance sector and the banks continue to allot a disproportionate share of their investment portfolios to the oil industry.

I am talking about the health and environmental costs. Air pollutants such as toxic gases like nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide reduce people's quality of life and increase the prevalence and incidence of acute and chronic disease. Since air pollution affects almost everyone on earth, it is a global public health priority. Moreover, as the World Health Organization put it, climate change is the greatest health threat of the 21st century.

The stubborn refusal to link pollution to extremely serious health problems and to recognize that dependency on fossil fuels adversely affects human health and the environment is irresponsible. I would even say that it is cowardly not to make the connection. Medical and scientific researchers who study the causal links between the environment and the development of human pathologies are now planning their work on the "multimorbidity" phenomenon.

We need to keep the fuel tax. We cannot give in and cancel it, which would be dangerous and get us nowhere. I never said it would be easy. It is not easy, but we have to do it. There are solutions when it comes to improving the quality of life for most people in the current environment. I would like to end my speech by saying that all we need is the political courage to implement them and find a way to strike a balance between the most pressing needs and interests. Most importantly, we have to stop repeating falsehoods in the belief they will come true, and we need to be transparent.

• (1115)

[English]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. colleague across the way sits with me on the environment committee, and we have great discussions there. I am glad to have a discussion with her today through you, Madam Speaker.

Business of Supply

I really appreciated her pointing out the Parliamentary Budget Officer's numbers and how they are being interpreted. When we go from annual payments to Canadians to quarterly payments, the amount going out in the financial period is going to be smaller. When we look over the whole year, it is going to be the same, but at a point in time, they can say we are not returning the money to Canadians. Could the hon. member comment on how the money is getting to Canadians and Quebecers throughout the course of the year?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Madam Speaker, the House adopted a carbon tax that sets out just such mechanisms. In our opinion, the great thing about those mechanisms is that the biggest polluters, meaning those with the biggest environmental footprint, will pay more than the most vulnerable members of our society whose environmental footprint is smaller. That is how this tax is assessed. We are pleased to note that this provides some measure of fairness for taxpayers.

[*English*]

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I find many of the conversations around the carbon tax interesting, especially those coming from the Bloc Québécois. They have a cap-and-trade system in the province of Quebec that is quite different from that in the rest of the country.

How does that member feel about a federal government that is imposing its will and its specific requirements? It seems as though the Liberals and other left-leaning parties within Canada's Parliament talk about this somehow being a market mechanism, yet it seems to me more like a bureaucratic heavy hand from the nation's capital.

How does the member, who is in a party that talks often about standing up for its province's interest, reconcile a government that is imposing on, rather than collaborating with, provinces?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, who also sits on the same committee as I do. There is one thing I find a bit surprising in the official opposition's position. The carbon tax is a market-based solution, and usually the official opposition supports market-based solutions rather than direct regulation. This is true of the cap-and-trade system. Every year, new money flows in from different sources.

Another thing I found surprising from the official opposition is that we are talking about a lot of money. Money is important for the Conservatives. However, let us look at a few figures. The current economic cost of the health impacts of pollution represents 6% of the GDP, and that figure is already a few years old. It is from 2018, I think.

People are being affected financially. They are sick and going to the hospital with kidney problems, asthma, pulmonary diseases and so on. That also has to be taken into account in the money taxpayers have to pay. All of these public health problems are a result of pollution, of industrial and oil and gas emissions, of all of the emissions that are in the air.

• (1120)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I would like her to talk a little bit more about the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, who was attacking the official opposition, saying that it has no plan, that its plan is non-existent. I would like my colleague to talk about the fact that, despite the price on pollution, the Liberal government is failing to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.

Is that not a result of all the conflicting decisions, such as Trans Mountain, Bay du Nord and oil subsidies, that are undermining the efforts of this government, which talks out of both sides of its mouth?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Madam Speaker, I would just like to remind my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie that I mentioned this in my speech. Indeed, when they are putting forward measures to fight greenhouse gases but are also increasing oil production in the oil sands or natural gas and investing in fossil fuels, there is something wrong. They are saying one thing and doing the complete opposite.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, what a surprise this morning's motion is. For the umpteenth time, the Conservatives are proposing that the carbon tax be eliminated, because they believe this is the best way to help ordinary people deal with the rising cost of living.

This is the result of the brainstorming they did over the holidays five weeks ago. They racked their brains and looked for solutions. Now they have decided to propose the same thing they have proposed to Parliament four or five times already, even though the other parties said no every time.

Once again, the Conservatives are trying to solve real problems with fake solutions. People are rightly concerned about the rising cost of living, particularly at the grocery store. However, that does not mean that the price increases are a direct result of the federal carbon tax.

Eliminating the carbon tax would have a limited effect. As my colleague so ably explained, it would have a one-time effect, but no real impact in the long term. Inflation hits across the board, so eliminating the tax on one product will have no effect on the overall problem.

The Conservatives are using the skyrocketing prices of food and other goods to pursue their long-standing ideological crusade against the principle of putting a price on carbon pollution, by attempting to link it to the ongoing inflation crisis. However, the price of grain, which includes the price of meat because cattle feed on grain, is negotiated based on the Chicago Board of Trade. It is hard to see how carbon pricing in the Canadian Prairies, for example, could affect the Chicago Board of Trade.

Ironically, of all the tools available to fight global warming, which today's Conservatives claim they want to do, carbon pricing is probably the public policy approach that is most compatible with their political philosophy. It is a solution based on market forces rather than direct regulation.

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As we know, since we have often discussed it, pollution pricing is a system that varies depending on the government. The provinces and territories either adopt a pricing system tailored to their needs or join the federal system, which includes a regulatory charge on fossil fuels and a performance-based system for industries. I should remind my colleagues that the federal pricing system does not even apply to Quebec.

I would be curious to hear my Conservative colleagues try to explain how eliminating the federal carbon tax will help Quebecers save money, since I admit I do not understand. If, as the Conservatives claim, the federal carbon tax were responsible for price increases, then inflation would be higher in the provinces where carbon pricing exists than in the provinces where it does not. That is not the case, however.

The wording of the Conservatives' motion looks serious and has the ring of truth. However, if we look a little more closely, we can see that that is not necessarily the case, as happens all too often with the Conservatives' motions.

Point (ii) of the motion states that "the Parliamentary Budget Officer says that households will pay more in carbon tax costs than they get back". We only need to read the document in question once to realize that the Conservatives' motion distorts the Parliamentary Budget Officer's findings regarding the federal carbon pricing system.

Contrary to what the Conservatives have been saying, the tax does not end up costing 60% of households. That is a projection for 2030-31 at \$170 per tonne. Moreover, the tax is progressive because of the refund: lower-income families will see a net gain. Currently, 80% of households get more back than they pay in carbon tax. That includes all low- and modest-income households, and that is as it should be. As we all know, inflation hit basic necessities hardest in 2022. Housing prices went up by 8.7%, food by 9.8% and gas by 28%. Core inflation, which excludes the food and energy costs that eat up a disproportionate amount of low-income households' budgets, was 5.3%.

The problem with the carbon tax has more to do with the rules for businesses. Small and medium-sized businesses are being penalized while major emitters take advantage of carbon tax relief programs designed to increase fossil fuel production. Oil companies pocketed the proceeds of massive oil and gas price increases attributed to international tensions and the war in Ukraine, reporting record profits in 2022.

• (1125)

I will repeat something my colleague said, because it is important. Imperial Oil raked in \$58 billion U.S. in profits, which corresponds to \$74 billion Canadian. That is unprecedented. Oddly enough, the Conservatives are not proposing to tax these excess profits and redistribute them to those who are paying the price.

Why would we not do that? It seems to me that this could help Quebecers and Canadians cope with inflation. Why should we let the oil companies make billions of dollars on the backs of poor people who are struggling to pay their housing, grocery and electricity bills? Last August, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres denounced the greed of the big oil and gas companies, which are

making outrageous profits on the backs of the poorest people and at great cost to our climate.

In their motion today, the Conservatives are proposing instead to exempt them from the carbon tax. This is nonsense. Let me remind the House that Canada's greenhouse gas emissions have increased by more than 20% since 1990, largely due to emissions from the oil and gas sector. The real challenge is to create a sustainable and resilient economy, one that creates wealth while respecting nature's limits, and to make this transition to the new economy in a way that is fair to workers and families.

This requires reflection and searching for more far-reaching and perhaps more complex solutions than what is on offer in the usual Conservative rhetoric. We should also remember that most of the Conservative's solutions deprive the government of revenue. That does not necessarily mean that household incomes will increase. It also does not mean that big corporations will pay their fair share of taxes or that the banks and multinationals will reduce their profit margins while people are making sacrifices and seeing their purchasing power decline sharply.

As was mentioned, inflation is real and affects all sectors, including housing, food and motor vehicles. This requires measures that are far more comprehensive than those proposed by the Conservative Party's rather populist position.

I would like to see the Conservative members propose concrete solutions to fight climate change instead of spending their time trying to abolish measures that will fight the climate crisis. However, like the abolishment of the carbon tax, it will probably never happen. In any event, hopefully that will not happen as long as the Liberal government is in power. As parliamentarians, we must force the government to take further action to address the risks of the climate crisis. We do not discuss this enough.

Obviously there are many solutions for helping the public get through the unfortunate effects of inflation. The Bloc Québécois has proposed several. I will leave it to my colleagues to talk about that later, but the solution that really speaks to me is reducing our dependence on oil. The price of gas, which jumped by 33.3% between December 2020 and December 2021, is a major determinant of inflation. It drives up the price of every good whose production requires fossil fuels. Beyond the conditions around the economic recovery from lockdown, the price of oil is chronically unstable and known for its tendency to increase suddenly and drastically, so much so that inflation metrics do not factor in energy. Since the cost of oil is essentially tied to the London and New York stock exchanges, there is little that can be done to mitigate the fluctuations and price hikes.

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However, it is possible to make the economy more resilient to these fluctuations by reducing our reliance on oil and by accelerating the transition to renewable energies. We need to take real action to accelerate the energy transition to shelter the economy from sudden spikes in the price of fossil fuels. This can be done in several ways. I will name a few and I invite the Conservatives to pick their favourite one.

There is the electrification of transportation, energy retrofitting and support for businesses that want to move away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy. Financial flows could also simply be redirected toward green economic development. There are many options, and they would have a real impact on people's wallets. There is another easy solution that I think several parties in the House like, and that is making things fair and taxing the ultrarich. As I mentioned earlier, why not tax oil companies, which are generating enormous profits?

I think that the proposal that has been made several times to do away with the carbon tax is not the right solution. I invite my Conservative colleagues to propose better solutions to help citizens deal with the increased cost of living.

• (1130)

[*English*]

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her remarks here today. She and I have had contrasting views regarding the importance of the Canadian oil and gas sector and overall prosperity, including in her home province, where the revenues of that industry help contribute to a lot of social good, not only in Quebec, but also in Nova Scotia.

My question for her is about Quebec's energy future. Estimates suggest that we have to double our electricity generation across the country. That would also be the case for Quebec in the energy future she is talking about. I am curious what her view is, specific to Quebec, on what she would like to see her province do to generate and double electricity in her province, whether that would be through more hydroelectricity, or whether she is open to the idea of nuclear energy. I am curious where that might fit into what her view for Quebec is so it can position itself, as a province, in the days ahead.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, what my colleague is saying is very interesting. Those kinds of decisions are made by the Quebec National Assembly. However, when it comes to what we do here, I invite the federal government to look to Quebec for inspiration. Quebec has been relying on green and renewable energy for a long time. Obviously, we need to do our part like every other nation in the world, but I think that Canada has better things to do.

I heard my colleague say that some of the profits contribute to the social good in other areas. Wait a minute. Do we want to start looking at all of the negative effects of climate change and how they affect people's health? We are going to have to pay an increasingly higher price in the coming years. I would invite my colleague to pay attention to that.

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, this morning I had a great meeting with representatives from the CLC. We talked about the issues around a just transition, and they were very concerned.

Right now, there is funding to assist people in retraining into more environmentally friendly jobs, however, they are very frustrated because the government has indicated that they have to quit their existing jobs before they can get this funding, which is counterintuitive to the fact that people need to continue to earn a living in a means available to them while they seek these other roles.

I would like the member's feedback on that. How does she feel about being required to stop one's source of income in order to get funding for training in another area?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, without a doubt, as the federal government transitions to a greener economy, it will need to support affected workers, families and industries. However, the government still needs to start that transition, first. Unfortunately, it is clear yet again that it has not.

We are waiting for the government's plans detailing future climate action initiatives. We know that our economy will need to be broadly transformed in the coming years. However, we still have no idea how this will be accomplished.

I can understand why workers, who feel uncertain about the future of their job or the industry in which they have been employed for years, are concerned. Perhaps the government needs to ensure greater transparency and predictability, and to support workers during this obviously major process. Perhaps the government could also help us better understand, too.

• (1135)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I would like to circle back to a point that I find particularly relevant, and that is the Liberals' fear or reluctance to go after big oil's profits. There is a double standard towards ordinary Canadians.

We have pointed out that the oil companies have doubled their profits, that the government continues to hand them subsidies and that it does not dare tax them more, despite pleas from the UN Secretary-General.

In my colleague's opinion, why do the Liberals not dare go there, when it is a pretty easy and obvious answer?

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I was getting to that in my speech. I know my colleague has already mentioned several numbers. The Canadian company Cenovus Energy posted net earnings of \$2.4 billion in July, which is more than 10 times its earnings for the most recent quarter last year. The same goes for Suncor, which is making huge profits.

Business of Supply

I do wonder why the government refuses to go there. What we have seen so far is that the government is struggling to make tough decisions, struggling to go up against industries that are putting enormous pressure on the government. Why is the government holding back from making those tough decisions?

It is because it knows that it will have the NDP's support no matter what it does. Why bother wading into difficult situations?

The government is comfortable in its partnership with the NDP, which backs up every major decision it makes. That is my answer to my colleague's question.

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak, once again, on the important topic of climate change. Unfortunately for the Conservatives, I think we have had seven motions on the carbon tax and not a single one that talks about the problem of climate change.

We know that even if we had stabilized climate change in 2015, the costs already would have taken \$25 billion off of GDP growth in Canada. Therefore, the economic costs of not acting on climate change are quite large.

We can talk about economic costs all day long, but we also need to talk about other direct costs like fires and floods. We need to talk about health care costs, increased lung problems, asthma problems. We need to talk about the results of fires with respect to smoke, and drinking water quality, as toxins are released into the atmosphere and end up in our drinking water.

In all those things, we also need to talk about the actual losses suffered by families and individuals.

We had a huge heat dome in British Columbia and across western Canada in 2021. In the week from June 25 to July 1 of 2021, the B.C. coroner's office estimated that there were 619 heat-related deaths, 619 families losing loved ones as a result of an event, which the Columbia Climate School of Columbia University studied very carefully and laid squarely at the feet of climate change. It said that there were two factors that caused that heat dome. One was the disruption of the jet stream and the other was the warming of oceans and of the soil.

Instead of expecting something like a heat dome once every 100 or 200 years, the Columbia Climate School at Columbia University now says we need to expect those kinds of events once every 10 years.

During that week, the village of Lytton set a new record for a temperature in Canada, 49.6°C. The next day, after setting that record, a wildfire swept through the town, killing two people and destroying the entire town of Lytton. More than 200 homes were lost.

We can talk about large numbers in climate change, but when we actually look at what happens to individuals, to families and to communities and what will happen increasingly often as climate change proceeds, it seems misdirected to spend all our time talking about a carbon tax, misdirected for two very good reasons. One is, again, the fact that the larger impacts of climate change will cost far

more than any climate-related carbon tax. I have not even talked about things like the drop in agricultural yields and the loss of fisheries that are coming up, all of these things we see on the horizon as a result of the climate change.

I forgot to say at the beginning, Madam Speaker. I will be splitting my time with the member for Vancouver East, so I apologize for that.

When we are talking about the Conservative motion today, the Conservatives continue to repeat and bring back their slogan, and I hesitate to repeat it myself, which has something to do with something tripling.

In fact, we know that nothing has actually tripled. In fact, we know that where families will face increasing costs directly through fires and heat-related costs, they will also face it in increased insurance premiums for their home insurance, as insurance companies attempt to recover their losses from these climate disasters.

In fact, if we look at the increase in the carbon tax, which is designed to reduce our emissions and has been proven as one of the most effective ways to do so, on April 1 of this year, the tax will increase from \$50 per tonne to \$65 per tonne, and I do not see any system of math where that is a tripling.

When we look at the increase of the tax on a litre of gas, it goes from 11¢ a litre to 14¢ a litre. Again, there is no tripling there. Also, that is way less than the inflated profits that the oil companies have been squeezing out of all of us during this climate crisis.

Focusing on the carbon tax seems misdirected at best, especially when over half the households in Canada are not affected by the carbon tax when it comes to things like home heating.

● (1140)

In British Columbia, we have a different scheme. Therefore, taking the carbon tax off home heating would nothing to relieve costs for British Columbians or Quebeckers, who also have a different scheme.

I will politely call this a sleight of hand with figures. We know right now that eight out of 10 households get more back on their rebates than they pay in carbon tax. The Conservatives like to cite a parliamentary budget office report, which talks about 2030 and about estimates of what might happen in seven to eight years from now. Again, speaking about tripling and using figures like those being used here is at best inaccurate.

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What has the NDP said about things like home heating costs? At this time of inflation that is certainly a great concern. I remember that one of the times this motion came forward we asked the Conservatives to accept an amendment to their motion to support removing the GST off home heating for every household in Canada and they refused. They were so focused on the carbon tax that they refused a measure that would have helped every Canadian household meet both the costs, specifically of home heating, and the generalized squeeze that they were finding on their incomes and on their ability to make ends meet at the end of the month.

In his opening speech on this motion today, the Leader of the Opposition talked about nuclear power. I have heard some other members in the House, including some on the government side, talking about nuclear power as if it somehow provides some kind of solution to climate change. The member for Carleton said that it would be a good way to combat emissions. Let us take a look at that backward-looking, rear view of the world.

Nuclear power is far too expensive and far too slow to provide any solutions to our emissions crisis at this time. We need to reduce emissions right now. The average planning time to construct a new nuclear facility is over 10 years. That is from start to finish. We know when construction delays are factored in that the actual time for a new nuclear plant to come online around the world now is about 15 years. That is way too late to address the climate crisis we are in now. Let us say we ignore that and nuclear power were to go ahead. What would it cost to build nuclear power as opposed to renewables?

If we take the all-in costs right now, the best figures I could find for solar and wind power, including the cost of storage and the cost of the networks that must be built, is about \$2,000 per kilowatt hour of production for renewables. That has dropped 69% over the last decade. Technology is improving and with economies of scale, the cost of renewables continue to drop each and every year.

Over the past decade, nuclear costs in contrast increased 25% in that same period. There is no indication that those costs will drop any time in the future. If we are talking about large-scale nuclear power projects, the costs are estimated at over \$10,000 per kilowatt hour. That is five times the cost of renewables. That is five times as much energy one could produce for the same investment from renewables over nuclear, and of course it could be done now instead of in 10 to 15 years.

If we are talking about what some people like to talk about, the new technology of nuclear, which is small-scale nuclear reactors, the cost for small-scale reactors is estimated at \$16,000 per kilowatt hour. That is 16% more than a large-scale project and eight times more than renewables. Therefore, by any stretch of the imagination and by any measure we want to use, it is foolish to talk about nuclear energy as a solution to our climate crisis. Instead, we need to be talking about renewables.

The other part, which I have been interested in ever since I became a member of Parliament, is that these jobs in renewable energy use many of the same skills that workers have in the current energy industry in places like Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland. We need to focus on investment in those renewables and

investment in creating those well family supporting jobs in renewable energy.

We cannot really ask ordinary working families to pay the cost of this transition with their jobs and with their houses. We have to ensure that those new jobs in renewable energy, those sustainable jobs, will be in place for workers as we head into a future where hopefully we can avoid the climate disaster that is on the horizon.

● (1145)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, British Columbia has participated in the global carbon market for a number of years now and has had the economic benefit of that as well as some climate change benefits, as the member has mentioned, with new industries coming to British Columbia. I have seen a lot of EV adaptation in British Columbia compared to places that do not have participation in the carbon market.

The member also mentioned health benefits. As someone who has asthma, I know that having clean air is very important to being able to breathe everyday.

Could the hon. member talk about what it means to be in the carbon market versus sitting on the sidelines of the carbon market, as this opposition day motion would ask us to do?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member gets to the real heart of the matter.

We can talk about what might happen in the future, but we know what we can do about this now. By being in the carbon market, we can provide the right signals in the economy. However, I am a bit of a skeptic about how fast that carbon market would bring about the changes we need. What I would like to see is large-scale investment right now in renewable energy projects, starting in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador, where the need to replace jobs right away for workers who face job losses as we go forward is most acute.

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, I found the member's speech somewhat factually challenged on many metrics, such as the drop in agricultural yields. The method the government is using to try to curb carbon emissions in agriculture is going to reduce yields by 30%. That is food for our country and the world that the government is designing out by manipulating the process so we produce less food in Canada.

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I will ask the member about the cost of renewable energy, which he noted. He put down nuclear energy as an option, which is actually a very low-cost option for Canadians. Renewable energy, by itself, is extremely expensive and has continued to escalate costs for Canadians, whose electricity bills are going through the roof.

Can the member tell us how this is actually beneficial to Canadians when their electricity bills are going to quadruple with the unreliable power that will be provided by the renewables he preaches about?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, my most charitable comment is that it is looking in the rear-view mirror to say that renewables are extremely expensive and unreliable. This does not take into account the real world of renewable energy in this day and age, where costs are dropping and have continued to drop substantially over the last 10 years.

We will see very soon that many economies around the world will be shifting completely to renewable energy and away from fossil fuels, and Canada needs to get on that bandwagon.

• (1150)

[Translation]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for the NDP's consistent attempts to establish a baseline for policies in Canada.

I would like him to share his thoughts on the federal government's attitude toward everything Quebec has been doing for decades to make its energy supply almost 100% clean, even though past premiers and ministers had to turn to Wall Street for funding because the Canadian government did not want to help them.

What does my colleague think of that attitude toward Quebec, considering we are leading the environmental charge in Canada? I would like him to comment on that.

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, I think there is a point on which we can agree: Whenever we see innovative attempts to move forward in the attack on climate change, like many of those we have seen in Quebec, the federal government needs to get on board and support them as quickly as it can.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, first I want to thank my hon. colleague from Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke from the bottom of my heart for actually pointing out that nuclear makes no sense as a climate solution. Why is it, then, so heavily promoted? I would like to pull back the corporate veil. The big winner in this is SNC-Lavalin, as the projects are controlled by SNC-Lavalin. SNC-Lavalin bought AECL for \$15 million in the Harper years and has its fingers in every pie, but it is well hidden.

I wonder if the hon. member has any comments on that.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, I do not think we can emphasize enough that going down the path of nuclear power was wrong in the beginning and is extremely wrong now given the costs. That is without even talking about the production of nuclear waste that would last forever.

We need to pay attention to the corporate interests that are promoting the idea of nuclear power as a solution to climate change. It is no solution. It is expensive, and it is dangerous.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am happy to enter this debate today.

There is no question that people are struggling to pay for the rising cost of living on groceries, housing and energy. Just name it and they are struggling, while billionaires and big corporations are getting richer than ever. Big oil companies and CEOs are getting wealthier off the backs of Canadians, who are struggling with the rising cost of living and dealing with the devastating consequences of extreme weather caused by the climate crisis.

B.C., my home province, is still trying to recover from its devastating wildfire and floods. In 2021, there were 1,600 fires in British Columbia, and together they burned down 8,700 square kilometres of land. The summer of 2021 saw the village of Lytton burn to the ground, with the cost estimated at \$78 million. That is not to mention the emotional trauma and damage this has done to the community and individuals who suffered this loss.

Then came the floods in November 2021, when the communities of Merritt, Princeton and Abbotsford in southern British Columbia were flooded, with an estimated cost of \$450 million in damages. Again, that is not to mention the emotional trauma that people are still struggling with.

Of course, B.C. is not alone in this experience of extreme weather. This is happening across the globe. It is happening right here in Canada from coast to coast to coast. I will not go on to list all the examples, as we all know them and have spoken about them in this House. However, what is clear is that urgent action is needed to address the climate crisis.

The Conservatives are choosing to close their eyes and turn a blind eye to this reality. To be clear, carbon pricing is revenue-neutral, so all revenues are returned to the province or territory in which they are generated. Households receive 90% of revenues raised from the fuel charge through a direct rebate, and these rebates are paid back quarterly in my home province of British Columbia. There is also an additional supplement available to people who live in small and rural communities.

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The PBO has estimated that eight out of 10 households will receive more back in rebates than they pay in fuel charges. The Conservatives' claim that 60% of households incur a net loss is based on the PBO's estimates of the economic impact of federal carbon pricing in 2030. That is seven years from now, just to be clear and to put that on the record. Those estimates incorporate a projected loss in economic efficiency from carbon pricing and do not attempt to account for the economic and environmental costs of the climate crisis. I just put on the record the cost to British Columbia when it experienced the floods and wildfires. That has not been accounted for.

Looking at the direct fiscal impact only, the same PBO report found, "For the vast majority of households in the backstop provinces, their rebates exceed their carbon costs." The net benefits of the federal carbon pricing system are broadly progressive by income group. Households with the lowest incomes receive the largest net transfers, and only the wealthiest households pay more than they get back in rebates.

Why let the facts get in the way of the rhetoric? Why let the facts get in the way of the Conservatives' attempt to fundraise for their own political gain at the expense of the climate crisis? Instead of focusing on real solutions, they choose to engage in cheap politics. That much is clear.

• (1155)

The Conservatives said no to the NDP's proposal to exempt the GST on home heating. That would have made a real difference in support of everyday Canadians who are struggling to pay their energy costs. However, the Conservatives said no to that and rejected it. That is the truth.

They also refuse to go after the biggest polluters and refuse to go after the ultrarich. When the New Democrats called for a tax on the excess profits of huge corporations to make life more affordable, the Conservatives and the Liberals voted no to making big oil companies pay what they owe to help families cope with the high costs of living. They refused to go after big oil, which is making record profits to the tune of \$147 billion in profit last year. The Conservatives have selected to give them a free pass instead.

Under Canada's carbon pricing system, the biggest polluters pay the lowest carbon tax rate. Loopholes allow for oil and gas companies to only pay a tiny portion of the costs for their pollution. In fact, 80% to 90% of emissions are exempt. Suncor only pays one-fourteenth of the full carbon price. These loopholes need to be closed so that big oil pays what it owes for its pollution. More than that, the UN Secretary-General said, "Polluters must pay", and called on countries to implement a windfall profit tax on fossil fuel companies.

The Conservative government in the U.K. has already put a 25% windfall tax on oil and gas profits. The EU has announced plans for a tax on windfall profits. Spain, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria have all implemented a similar levy, yet both the Liberals and the Conservatives oppose making big oil companies and the ultrarich pay their fair share.

The NDP has a very different perspective. This corporate greed has to stop. Families are struggling, and one way to help them tack-

le the high cost of living is to put in a windfall tax on excess profits for the ultrawealthy. Both the Liberals and the Conservatives need to step up and support the people across this country. They have voted against the NDP's motion on an excess profit tax for the ultrarich to help struggling families. It makes no sense.

The federal carbon pricing system, by the way, only applies to provinces and territories that do not put a price on pollution or do not meet the federal standards. Across the country, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories, British Columbia and New Brunswick all have their own carbon pricing solutions that they have already put in place. That means that what the Conservatives are talking about with their rhetoric would not actually help those provinces and territories.

The Leader of the Opposition claims that he is there for the working people, the working class, and we heard it today in his speech. What do they want? They want the government and the Conservatives to support the fight against greedflation. They want that action. They want to see a windfall tax or an excessive profiteering tax for the ultrawealthy CEOs. They want real solutions, not just slogans. Divisive rhetoric and fearmongering will not help with the struggles people face every day.

I would be remiss if I did not point out the offensive comment that came from the leader of the Conservatives. He called my riding "hell on earth". It is despicable that he would use that language to describe any riding in this country. Of course, our community is struggling; we are struggling. However, we have people in our community who are working every single day and putting their lives on the line to support people in the community. For the leader of the Conservatives to call my riding hell on earth is despicable, and he needs to apologize.

• (1200)

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has stated numerous times in this House that the government is putting a price on pollution. Actually, the NDP-Liberal government is putting a price on people, not pollution. Why does this member punish the people of this nation with bad policy instead of supporting technology that would reduce emissions and actually make a difference?

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, first off, the member is wrong. There is no coalition government. The NDP is not part of the Liberals. We have a supply and confidence agreement, but we do not sit in cabinet. We are not there at that table. If it were an NDP government, we would have different policies; that is for sure.

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On the issue around the climate crisis, I think the member did not hear what I said. I invite him to come to British Columbia to see the aftermath of the fires and floods and what is going on. Conservatives can continue to be climate deniers or they can step up and actually make the wealthy pay and get the big oil and gas companies to pay their fair share so we can really fight the climate crisis and support Canadians in their everyday struggles.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly admire the member's passion for putting a price on pollution. One will not hear an objection from this side of the House; it is the only way to go. If I am quoting her right, she said "polluters must pay", yet I cannot help but reflect on the fact that the NDP has been supportive and plans to vote in favour of Bill C-234, an act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act. This bill would specifically remove a price on pollution, or the carbon tax, from certain sectors. If the member is such a huge fan of pricing pollution, why would she vote in favour of Bill C-234?

• (1205)

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, to correct the member, if he actually paid attention to my speech, he would have heard me say that I was actually quoting the UN Secretary-General.

That said, we do believe we need to tackle the climate crisis. There is no question about it. We have been calling on the government to take exactly those actions and make the biggest polluters pay their fair share, yet the Liberals continue to exempt the oil and gas companies. In fact, they would go as far as to provide them with a subsidy so they do not have to pay their fair share.

Through a supply and confidence agreement, we are pushing the Liberals every step of the way to make them step up. That is why we are seeing a tiny bit of action on the subsidy aspect.

To the member's final comment regarding the bill, when there are no alternatives, we need to provide alternatives to address the climate crisis. That is why we did what we did on that bill.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I really want to thank my colleague from British Columbia for bringing us back to what happened there in the summer of 2021. I do not think even colleagues who think they know about it really do. Over 619 people died in four days from a heat dome. In the same year, we had the atmospheric rivers. I know the hon. member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke spoke to this too, but the temperature record hit 50°C at its peak; this was in the backyard of my husband's family farm. My stepdaughter, who is in her mid-30s, nearly died.

We are still not preparing. We are still not understanding. In the context of my friend from Vancouver East's riding, people who are homeless were unable to get to cooling shelters because none were set up. They were kept out of parks, where they went for shade, for fear they might set up encampments. Again, the equity issues, the intersectional issues of the climate crisis are ignored in pointless debates about a carbon tax, which is a necessary but completely insufficient way of addressing the climate emergency.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, my colleague raises exactly the right point about the real impact for people. In my riding, and particularly in the Downtown Eastside, people can actually suffocate

and die when there is a heat dome like that. In the SROs they are living in, there is basically no air circulating. That is why people took to the streets. If people want a solution, we need an investment in housing as a basic human right to address the housing crisis.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

I am very pleased to speak today to our Conservative motion to cancel the carbon tax. People will often say that our role as the official opposition is to question the government and hold it to account, but they also ask what we would do differently if we were in government. Today, our motion to immediately cancel the carbon tax would give Canadians an actionable item to help address the 40-year-high inflation that is hurting households, farmers, not-for-profits and small businesses right now. I hope that all members in the House will support this motion.

I look for every opportunity to bring the voices from my riding of Kelowna—Lake Country to Ottawa. With the debate today on the Liberals' failed carbon tax, I would like to quote Bob, who wrote to me recently. He wanted to inform me that his household had "just received our house gas bill, and we have a carbon tax of \$32.24" even though his family had "installed a high-efficiency furnace". Therefore, even when Bob takes action to reduce his carbon footprint, he still gets hit with a tax bill. There is a reason for that: The carbon tax is a tax plan, not an environmental plan. It is a classic high-tax Liberal move for the high-spend Liberal agenda.

The results of this policy are now on full display. For Canada's climate change goals, the Liberals have missed every target they set and left Canada 58th out of 64 countries on climate performance. This is according to the new Climate Change Performance Index presented at COP27 last year. However, it does not have to be this way. The U.S. does not have a carbon tax; therefore, Canadian people and businesses are at a disadvantage because they have to pay more taxes than Canada's closest trading partner does.

This Liberal carbon reduction plan is here to tax Canadians. I was speaking with a young woman recently who is a university student living in her parents' house. In addition to being stressed out for herself, she was also very concerned about her parents, which really touched my heart. She said her parents are middle class and she sees how hard they work. She said their household expenses are not keeping up, and she is worried about her parents' stress level and future retirement. After eight years, the Liberals' economic plan is to keep increasing the carbon tax, even though Canadian families, farmers, not-for-profits and small businesses are being squeezed by 40-year-high inflation and the largest jump in interest rates we have seen in a generation.

The Bank of Canada's governor, Tiff Macklem, addressed finance committee members in a letter. He said that the Bank of Canada's experts have calculated that the carbon tax is contributing to the inflation crisis. According to Mr. Macklem, removing the carbon tax on gasoline, natural gas and fuel oil would have reduced the level of inflation that Canadians are facing. However, instead of giving Canadians relief, recognizing the generational inflation crisis in our country and eliminating or even just pausing the carbon tax increases, the Liberals are once again planning to increase the tax on April 1.

This cruel April Fool's Day increase is not a joke to the single parent who has to fill up their car to take their kids from school to appointments and extracurricular activities. It is not a joke to the small business owner who still holds over \$100,000 in new debt because of government pandemic policies and who finds it harder to make payments and cover their bills every month because of inflationary cost increases. It is not a joke to the senior who sees their CPP and OAS pensions shrink compared with rising inflation, making them question whether they can afford their heating bill next month.

Richard from my riding wrote to me recently, saying, "We got our first OAS cheque of 2023. It went up \$2 per month. That means we can buy half a grapefruit once a month. How do the Liberals and NDP figure that helps seniors? When you figure inflation in, we have lost money, so there goes our half grapefruit."

• (1210)

Conservatives have brought the heartbreaking stories of many Canadians to Parliament. However, Liberal ministers shamefully brush them aside and continue to double down on the harmful policies that are squeezing our middle class.

This Conservative motion today is calling on the government to give people a break and immediately cancel the carbon tax.

The Liberals shrug off worry about the carbon tax hike and say that it is not a big deal because Canadians will be getting money back in rebates. In reality, despite what the Liberals claim, most Canadians will pay more in carbon tax than what they will receive back.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer, a non-partisan office, has calculated that in provinces where the Liberal government has forced the carbon tax directly onto residents, most households will see a net loss in their income as a result of this tax. In provinces like B.C., which collects the carbon tax and leaves it up to the provin-

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cial government to determine if it gives any back to its people, the federal government still imposes the amount that has to be charged.

By 2030, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, some households will be paying thousands more into the carbon tax than what they will receive in rebates.

From the Parliamentary Budget Officer to the Bank of Canada and regular Canadians, it is very clear: This carbon tax is hurting Canadians, who are already struggling with a generational cost-of-living crisis. We have a housing crisis, an economic slowdown, and now, further tax increases.

For residents in my community, an increase in the carbon tax means paying more for essentials from farm to table. I want to talk about how the carbon tax affects farmers. About 45% of the land in Kelowna—Lake Country is agricultural land. Farmers across B.C. and Canada are being hit by the carbon tax, and this is affecting our food security.

Farmers know what the carbon tax does to their products. It raises the cost of growing, packaging and shipping them. This is multiplied if an agricultural product is turned into a value-added product, where the costs are added at each stage because of the carbon tax for production and distribution.

Ultimately, these businesses make less, while some costs are passed on to consumers. This continues the cycle of ongoing inflationary increases the Liberals are creating with the carbon tax.

One of Canada's top agriculture experts, Dr. Sylvain Charlebois from Dalhousie University, told the agriculture committee that the cost chain will not just worsen if we continue with the carbon tax. Rather, it will collapse. Too many farmers across Canada are at risk of their farms falling apart altogether.

I should not have to explain the domino effect that this will cause on our grocery bills. We have already seen a surge of food bank usage. The Central Okanagan Food Bank reported a yearly increase of 30%, which is similar to numbers that have been reported across the country.

A family knows what the carbon tax means: a freezer less full, a fridge less stocked and a cupboard emptier. A restaurateur knows what the carbon tax means: higher costs for all their ingredients.

In my opinion, the Liberals have a clear choice to make today, as do all members in this House. They can continue with their activist, inflationary agenda of increasing carbon taxes, which has been proven not to work since the Liberals have not met any of the greenhouse gas emission goals.

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Alternatively, they can acknowledge that after eight years of Liberal policies, they are causing inflation to be as high as it is and that they need to reverse course on their inflationary policies, which are crushing Canadians' pocketbooks and spirits.

There is hope. A Conservative government will put people first.

• (1215)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question.

If the member is so opposed to a price on pollution, why did she run on it in the last election?

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I do not believe those were the specific words I would have used. However, when we were looking at the last snap election in 2021, which was triggered by the government, we had ash falling from the sky in my community. It was really out of touch for the government to call an election at that time. Since then, we have seen record-high inflation. We have 1.5 million people a month going to food banks. We have 40-year-high inflation. It is not a good state. This is not the time to be increasing any taxes on Canadians, including the carbon tax.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague had a lot to say about food, agriculture and all that in terms of money. I would also like to talk to her about health. I have some numbers to share. Pollution is costly.

According to Health Canada, in 2016, there were 2.7 million asthma symptom days and 35 million acute respiratory symptom days, and those numbers are rising. Many of those days are lost work days, so there is an impact on productivity. It also means people have to spend more on taking care of their health, at the pharmacy and so on. Furthermore, pollution causes 10.7 million cases of kidney disease per year. That is the estimated global burden of kidney disease attributable to fine particulate matter. That costs people money too, and it is caused by pollution.

I would like my colleague to comment on that.

[*English*]

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate everything the member said, but all of that has absolutely nothing to do with the carbon tax.

The carbon tax is just a tax. It does not reduce emissions. Adding this tax only makes the cost of everything go up, so they are really not related at all. The carbon tax makes the price of heating homes go up for people. The carbon tax makes the price of everything that is transported across the country go up, a lot of which is food and essentials.

Today, we are talking about inflation. We are talking about the cost of everything going up because of the carbon tax.

• (1220)

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals deliberately mislead Canadians on two points. The first is that they said they would never go over \$50 a tonne, yet

here we are on our way to \$170 a tonne. The second is that they say that nine out of 10 are going to receive more money back than they pay, but they conveniently ignore the hidden costs of the carbon tax, which are on people's grocery bills and the general cost of everything. The clothes we wear have a carbon tax buried into them. We do not see it on our receipt when we purchase those items, yet it still exists.

I wonder if my colleague has any comments about the hidden costs of the carbon tax.

Mrs. Tracy Gray: Mr. Speaker, first of all, we have to remember that this is a government that said, when it was elected in 2015, that it was just going to have little, tiny deficits. This is this government that is not exactly known for keeping its promises.

When we are talking about hidden taxes, they absolutely add to the cost. They are called "cost of goods" or "cost of sales". We see it as well in shipping, for example. Costs will be added on as fuel surcharges, and a big part of those is taxes.

I remember hearing from many of my constituents before Christmas, and one was really relevant. He was shipping a very small container of Christmas baking, and the fuel surcharge plus all of the taxes were actually more expensive than the cost to ship the baking to his relative. Those are the kinds of things that showed up on his bill, but many times they will not actually show up on a bill. The hidden charges are definitely increasing inflation across the country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Kelowna—Lake Country for her passionate speech. I think she demonstrated that the carbon tax does not need to be increased. That is what we are calling for.

People keep saying in their speeches today that the Conservatives will not let up on this topic and that we keep repeating the same message in our opposition motions. Why would that be? It is because we in the Conservative Party want to work for Canadians.

Economically speaking, we are in a precarious position. We are on the edge of a crisis, and by all indications, things are going to get worse in the coming months.

Our Conservative conscience is prompting us to beg the government to give Canadians some breathing room. It is odd that we are being accused of hammering away at this issue. I think it is our duty as parliamentarians. Our Conservative values will always motivate us to go in that direction.

I would like to remind the House that my colleague from Calgary Forest Lawn moved an opposition motion today. It is clear. I am not saying that out of partisan pride or sheer stubbornness. We just need to take a good look at the situation.

The first point in today's opposition motion states that "(i) the Bank of Canada governor has admitted that the carbon tax contributes to inflation". It is not our partisan colleagues, the Bloc Québécois, the NDP or the Liberals who are saying this; it is the Governor of the Bank of Canada. It is important to understand that there is some separation. Perhaps that makes the information more serious, unequivocal and impartial.

The Governor of the Bank of Canada is not the only one backing up our discourse and our request. The second point of the motion states that "(ii) the Parliamentary Budget Officer says that households will pay more in carbon tax costs than they get back".

The Liberals are saying that there is no problem with their tax because they are putting the money back into taxpayers' pockets. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that, yes, there is a rebate, but it is not equal. Once again, this leaves less money available to Canadian taxpayers.

The third point of our motion states that "(iii) the government plans to triple the carbon tax, which will increase the price of gas, groceries, and home heating". That is a fact.

Let us consider Canadian citizens. I hope that all members of the House meet with their constituents. People in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier are telling me that everything is more expensive.

If the government were sensitive to those concerns, it would do what several other countries are doing and cancel all tax hikes. I think that is reasonable under the circumstances. That said, the Liberals and the government are not that sensitive.

The Liberals have been in power for eight years. They talk until they are blue in the face about how the carbon tax is the best way to reduce greenhouse gases and how it is the magic solution. It might be the easy solution. The government is pocketing more money while seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They are trying to pull the wool over the eyes of Canadian taxpayers because there have been no results.

Unfortunately, in eight years, there has been no reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. However, there is more revenue flowing into government coffers. In this economic context, I believe it is reasonable to give Canadians a little bit of assistance.

• (1225)

I would like to set the record straight on something. This morning, I listened as members of different parties described the Conservatives as climate change deniers. I want to make it clear that our leader recognizes climate change, but he is not in the habit of taking shortcuts and waving a magic wand. The past eight years have shown us what happens when one waves a magic wand.

I have a document here. It is part of my notes, so I can show it to members. It is a chart from the Conference of the Parties, or COP, on the environment. There are 63 countries on it. At the top of the chart are Denmark, Sweden, Chile and Portugal. Then, in the next section, we see Egypt, Greece and Indonesia. Even further down the list, in the orange section, we see Thailand, Belarus and Turkey. Incidentally, I want to say that my thoughts are with the people of Turkey. I can only offer them supportive thoughts because, unfortunately, I am not there, but I think that the international community

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needs to take action to help the people of Turkey who are dealing with this disaster.

I will keep going with the list. The United States is ranked 52nd, and Canada is ranked 58th. Ouch. Nevertheless, the government is determined to increase the carbon tax. That does not make any sense.

As I was saying, the Conservative Party cares about the issue of climate change, and we have solutions. We are being accused of criticizing the carbon tax without offering solutions. As our leader mentioned this morning, we need to provide help to the clean technology sector.

Canada is unique in that it is the second-largest country in the world behind Russia. The carbon tax may not be effective here. We should not be using the same model as a European country whose population is very concentrated when our country is very different. Let us do the smart thing and develop clean technology. Yes, it can be an economic lever. Money is the main thing, but that money needs to be raised honestly, by creating prosperity, not by taking it out of taxpayers' pockets through a carbon tax.

Why not invest in clean technology? Why not develop it here? Canada has talent and know-how. We could then export that clean technology and make Canada a leader on the environment and on clean technology. Why not?

According to an article on the Radio-Canada website this morning, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change is focusing on Quebec's caribou population. He should instead be working on reducing greenhouse gases by identifying methods other than the carbon tax. He should let the provinces take action and look after their own territory. Quebec has a better record than Canada on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In their eight years in power, the Liberals have never managed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In closing, I would like to quote a passage from the Radio-Canada article. In response to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Quebec's minister, Benoit Charette, said that he had the impression that the agreement reached in August with Ottawa would preclude federal intervention. He stated, "The federal government's approach in this matter is hard to follow".

It is hard to follow on many files. We need only think of the official languages file, Bill C-21 and McKinsey. I do not know if anyone is at the controls in this government.

It is unacceptable that we are being criticized. We, the Conservatives, are working on behalf of Canadian taxpayers, and we will continue that work.

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• (1230)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could explain to the 80% of constituents in Winnipeg North why the Conservative Party is saying that it wants to get rid of the price on pollution, the carbon tax, when 80% of the people I represent get more money back than they pay into it. In other words, a Conservative government would take money out of the pockets of 80% of the residents of Winnipeg North. How would he justify that action?

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Godin: Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear my colleague speak in the House. He is a colourful and dramatic speaker.

Perhaps my colleague, being a Liberal member, can provide that privilege to the 80% of his constituents who are getting back more money than they are paying into the carbon tax, but I would remind him that the Parliamentary Budget Officer says that “households will pay more in carbon tax costs than they get back”. Those are not my words.

The people of Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, meanwhile, have to pay their own way. They do not have that privilege. Is it because I am in the opposition? Is this a privilege given to Liberal ridings?

It is a serious question, because I do not understand my colleague's intervention.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to read from the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report:

The carbon pricing system is revenue neutral at the federal level, so any federal revenues generated under the system will be returned to the province or territory in which they are generated. Households will receive 90 per cent of the revenues raised from the fuel charge proceeds via a direct federal rebate.

Similar to the results of our May 2019 report, we estimate that...households will receive higher transfers than amounts paid in fuel charges.

Where did my hon. colleague find the numbers he mentioned? For households that would not receive the same amount, what is their income level?

Mr. Joël Godin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Beauport—Limoilou. We both work on some of the same files.

People seem to be getting lost in the weeds and straying from the debate. I think it is important to focus our debate on the fact that the carbon tax is abusive. The member for Winnipeg North says it is 80%, and the Bloc Québécois says it is 90%. The main goal of the carbon tax is to produce results and reduce greenhouse gases. The government has been in power for eight years, but it has not produced results, unfortunately.

Whether people pay 10% and get back 15% or 20% is not the point. Those were examples I gave my colleague because he put that number out there.

I quoted the Parliamentary Budget Officer. My colleague gave us numbers from 2019, but it is 2023.

• (1235)

[English]

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are disadvantaging the province of Quebec. It is not receiving the rebate, as my colleague referred to in the previous question, but it is paying the carbon tax indirectly on goods that are being shipped into Quebec and being sold. It is paying for the cost of the carbon tax, yet it is not realizing the rebate that the Liberals are saying is going to make this whole entire program revenue-neutral.

I am just wondering if my colleague would like to talk a little more about some of his constituents who are having to absorb these costs but are being disadvantaged by the Liberal government.

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Godin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to say that Quebec taxpayers are being put at a disadvantage. There is no rebate in Quebec because it has a carbon exchange.

Now, the carbon exchange must be harmonized. Recall that when the carbon tax was imposed—yes, I said imposed—on all provinces and territories, those with models that could match outcomes were exempted.

Forward-thinking Quebec had taken the initiative and implemented a carbon exchange. Sadly, this exchange does not give credits to Quebec taxpayers, and that is very unfortunate. It was a Liberal government that put it in place.

[English]

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back in the chamber. I hope you had a great holiday. This marks the first time I have had the opportunity to be back in debate. I always love the opposition day motion. I will start by recognizing that I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague from Winnipeg North, who is no stranger to getting up and making sure he is able to share his wisdom with colleagues here in the House.

Of course, I do welcome the opportunity, and this is the seventh time I have had the opportunity to speak to carbon pricing as it relates to Conservative opposition day motions. It seems as though that is all that party wants to talk about, and I look forward to engaging today on the topic.

I have heard conversations about affordability and about climate change. What this comes down to is how we incentivize the technological and innovative solutions we need to reduce emissions. That is the key element here. Yes, there are other considerations, including affordability and how we actually tackle the existential threat before us, but it comes down how we drive that innovation to get to that solution. That is what I look forward to talking about today.

However, I will start with why we have a carbon price in the first place. The science is clear that we have a major challenge in climate change, and the predominant concern is greenhouse gas emissions. As I am one of the younger members of Parliament in the House, my wife and I think about our future and having a family. At 32 years old, I want to make sure that, when we do hopefully have that opportunity to raise children in this world, there is a good future for my kids. Indeed, I think many Canadians, as well as everyone around the world, are thinking about how we make sure we preserve a planet and preserve a society that we have been able to benefit from. Notwithstanding all of the challenges, we are extremely privileged to call Canada and our world home.

The enemy is emissions, not a particular industry. That is a point I want to raise as part of this debate, because sometimes I hear in the House that certain industries are bad, that with certain industries there are challenges and that we cannot be supporting certain industries anymore. I think the Minister of Labour does a very good job of saying we have to be laser-focused on emissions reduction and asking how we go about accomplishing that.

My colleagues will know I am actually a pretty strong supporter of the Canadian energy sector. I remark on the technology and innovation that drove oil sands in Alberta. Is there environmental impact? Yes, there undoubtedly is. They have also been an extremely important economic driver for the country. They continue to be so. We are the fourth-largest oil producing country in the world, and I had an exchange with one of my Bloc colleagues earlier today. What I think we sometimes fail to remember is that, because of the revenues that are generated in this country and are then available through taxation purposes and shared through equalization, that industry has helped contribute to the social welfare of this country from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and Labrador and every place in between.

While I talk about the importance of the Canadian oil and gas sector, and the energy sector in particular, I talk about it through a lens of saying it actually has to innovate as well, because this is about reducing emissions associated with that sector. I do not vilify the Canadian oil and gas sector, but I also stand here and recognize that, if we do not drive innovation in that sector, it will not be around by 2050.

How do we focus on the technology and solutions to make sure Canada can continue to be competitive in the global marketplace, while also tackling the existential threat around climate change and reducing emissions, that being the enemy? I do not see those things as mutually exclusive. Some members in the House would say I am trying to have it both ways, but is that not the Liberal approach? We are pragmatic individuals who try to find solutions to be able to get to shared mutual outcomes.

At its core, the carbon price is a market mechanism. It is about actually trying to create incentivized change by putting it as a market price, and I sometimes chastise my Conservative colleagues, because at its core, it is small-c conservative. Many of my Conservative colleagues talk about the importance of the market economy and the importance of the private sector, yet when it comes to actual solutions to tackling the challenges around reducing emissions, they seem to want big, bossy government programs or they actually do not provide any solutions whatsoever. We know from the OECD

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and from the International Monetary Fund that a carbon price is actually signalled as the most efficient way to reduce emissions.

• (1240)

There are a couple of things I want to mention. First of all, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, contrary to what is said in the motion, explicitly makes clear that eight out of 10 households are going to receive, and do receive, more money back than they pay in on a federal backstop carbon price. The PBO report also mentions that that number is not as high when broader economic costs are recognized.

However, the idea that we can tackle climate change with no cost at all is simply a fallacy. Maybe my Conservative colleagues will not believe me, but hopefully they will believe Stephen Harper. In 2007, he recognized that the government at that time was looking at an emissions-trading type of scheme to incentivize the change I am talking about now. He said, “We happen to believe we’ve set it up so that those costs are manageable, so that we provide incentives for firms and sectors to exploit the technology opportunities that this regime requires. But the fact of the matter is it will cost.” Mr. Harper was right. There is a cost to transition, but there are also opportunities.

The government has constructed its policy around carbon pricing to seek to drive innovation and technology where it is available, but also seeking to manage the costs associated with that transition to protect households. That goes back to the way this policy was constructed where eight out of 10 households come forward.

That brings me to this question. If not this program, what then? My candid advice to the loyal opposition across the way is that I really believe that our politics and democracy in this country would be better served if the Conservative Party would say that, while it does not believe in what the government is doing on its carbon price system, here is our solution to drive that innovation and that technology. What a better place it would be.

Furthermore, what if, while they do not necessarily agree with what the carbon price policy looks like from the government, they offered some suggested amendments that they think would better reflect them, to be able to get to that goal. That is not what we hear. Although, of course, I want it for Canadian democracy and the betterment of this country, politically I encourage them to continue to do what they are doing, because it is going to allow the parties that are actually focused on that to continue to govern and have electoral success. Canadians expect the ability to walk that nuanced line, and the Conservatives are not doing it at this point.

There are areas where I think the carbon price system could be looked at and adjusted. Mr. Speaker, you and I are both rural members of Parliament from Nova Scotia. This is a harder sell in rural than in urban Canada. There is a 10% top-up. That is really important.

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I think that there is an opportunity to look at whether 10% is an adequate enough amount to make up for the difference between some of the lived realities of rural constituents and urban. That does not mean I am against carbon pricing. That means I would like to see if we could look at amendments. We never hear about any opportunity to amend and work within the system on the federal side.

I also worry about the definition of “rural”. My understanding is that the way it is calculated right now is on a census metropolitan area. The Halifax Regional Municipality, or HRM, for example, would be considered an urban municipality, but not all areas within HRM could certainly meet the definition of an urban community. Those are little areas I think we could look at and that I think can make sure this policy reflects, attracts and benefits as many people as possible.

The other element is small and medium-sized enterprises. As we move toward 2030, I think there has to be some thought given to their propensity to contribute and how we can incentivize a corporate return such that they are not disadvantaged over the long term. Again, there is a balance between industrial carbon pricing and the household level and how we tackle that as it relates to affordability.

The last thing I would like to say is that sometimes the narrative from the opposition benches is that one cannot both put in place policies to try to fight climate change, to reduce emissions, and also support affordability. I would argue that those two things are not mutually exclusive. Look at programs this government has put in place around the greening homes initiative that allow homeowners to be able to invest in their homes to increase the equity that they have in those, but also to reduce their energy bills at the same time.

In our region of Atlantic Canada, \$120 million was announced by the Minister of Environment in October. Additional funding was announced by the Minister of Natural Resources that is specific to individuals who are on home heating oil, so they can make that transition to bring down the cost of their energy bills, put more money back in their pockets and also be able to help reduce associated emissions. Those are examples of policies where we can have the opportunity.

The last thing I will say is that there are also really good ones on agriculture. I hope one of my colleagues will have the opportunity to ask me that question so that I can finish those remarks.

● (1245)

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as another Atlantic Canadian, I would like to ask the member about the carbon tax and the idea that government keeps raising taxes. People cannot afford the tax burden. Down east we have so many people who use home heating fuels to heat their home, prices are going up, and the government's solution is to try to catch that up with another government program. We have countless programs and rising prices.

Our amendment is to scrap the carbon tax, bring down fuel prices, energy prices, particularly in the winter, and turn to technology. I hope the government will consider this and move in that direction, instead of making prices more expensive, which is what the government has been doing for eight long years now.

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, perhaps my hon. colleague missed the core element of my speech, which was, what is the Conservative Party actually going to do to incentivize that technological change? I have yet to hear anything from the opposition benches as to what that represents.

The member talks about the carbon price as a tax. I do not refer to it as a tax, because all of the money is returned back to Canadian individuals and households. Indeed, in his own riding, in New Brunswick, where the premier has actually adopted a carbon pricing system, money is returned back. In my home province of Nova Scotia, in July, when this actually comes in, eight out of 10 families are going to be receiving more money back than they pay in.

The member has to explain to his constituents why he does not support the idea of more money going back to households to support affordability, and also the programs that the government is putting in place to reduce emissions and to actually help fight the rising cost of energy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Kings—Hants for raising constructive points on a day of debate where it still feels like all we do is discuss negative things.

In the context of climate change, I think that the carbon tax is important, but we also need other measures.

On Parliament Hill, there are people who are working in the area of energy efficiency to bring technologies to the table. This includes smart buildings, infrastructure, smart grids and industry 4.0 for a net-zero future.

I would like my colleague to talk about constructive proposals. Obviously, the climate change issue will have to be addressed on multiple fronts, including energy efficiency.

● (1250)

[*English*]

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I completely agree. There is not one single silver bullet solution to tackle this challenge around emissions and fighting climate change. It takes a variety of different programs.

We happen to be talking about carbon price, which is one of the key underlying principles. I agree with the member on energy efficiency. As a member of Parliament, as I have said in this House, what I worry about is how we are going to double electricity generation in Canada over the next 15 to 20 years. As we talk about making a transition to electric vehicles, as we talk about being able to decarbonize, that actually requires more energy and more electricity.

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How are we going to do that? Part of that is going to be accomplished through energy efficiency, but we also need to make sure we are focusing on the question of generation. Some of it has to be through hydro. I am absolutely pro-nuclear. I think that is part of the solution, in terms of a zero-emission technology that we readily have, and Canada is already seen as a global leader. There is energy efficiency, but how we are going to double that generation is one of the most important topics that every parliamentarian should be thinking about right now.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kings—Hants is also the chair of the agriculture committee. He mentioned there were some benefits around agriculture that he did not address in his speech. Maybe he could comment on that. In terms of fertilizer use, one of the areas we are focusing on is a more efficient use of fertilizer with the four Rs and reducing emissions from fertilizer. Maybe the member has other examples of what we are working on.

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, although the hon. member is in more of an urban area, agriculture is so prevalent in his riding, as it is in mine, in Kings—Hants.

A couple of the programs I never had the chance to talk about are the on-farm climate action program and the agricultural clean technology program. These are government initiatives that are helping to invest in the agriculture community. It is actually driving their competitiveness and reducing emissions at the same time.

It goes back to that theory of suggesting, maybe from the opposition benches, that those two things are mutually exclusive. I am of the view that we can walk the line between making sure that agriculture businesses and farms are competitive and also reducing emissions. We need to be there to work to incentivize that technology and in some cases help make that investment possible.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the last number of years, we have seen a government that has brought forward legislative and budgetary measures to ensure that we have a healthier middle class, that we continue to create jobs and that we have an economy that works for all of us, no matter what region of the country we are talking about.

When it comes to issues, I go to the residents of Winnipeg North and listen to what they have to say. We hear a lot about inflation, so I am glad the motion before us deals, at least in part, with inflation. We also hear a lot of concern with regard to the environment and, once again, the second part of this motion deals with the environment.

I would like to spend the next nine or 10 minutes talking about both of those issues. I would like to demonstrate the contrast between the Conservative Party of Canada and what the Government of Canada has been doing.

On the issue of inflation, we have to take into account what is happening around the world. Canada's inflation rate, compared to that of other countries, whether it is the United States, Germany, all European countries or the United Kingdom, is lower. However, we understand that we cannot just sit back and look at what is happening around the world and say that we do not need to do anything because our inflation rate is lower. Rather, we have come up with a

number of programs and thoughts to help Canadians through inflation as much as possible.

I will give a few examples that are very tangible. We eliminated the interest on student loans. We doubled the goods and services tax credit for the short term, for six months. We put forward the dental program, which would help children under the age of 12. We brought in rental support and the Canada workers benefit. These are the types of programs that we are bringing in to support Canadians on inflation.

How does that contrast with the leadership of the Conservative Party of Canada? I have now heard the second real, tangible idea that the Conservatives are talking about. They want to get rid of the price on pollution. They have made that very clear. That is the second idea.

What was the first idea? It should come as no surprise that it was the cryptocurrency flash. We will remember that the leader of the Conservative Party, not that long ago, said the way to fight inflation is to invest in cryptocurrency. That was the message. That was one of the first policy stands with regard to fighting inflation. I have said before in the House that I cannot imagine those who would have followed that stupid idea. They would have lost life savings if they had invested their savings in it. That was the first economic inflation-fighting policy I heard from the Conservative Party.

We have heard the Conservatives talk about the “triple, triple, triple”. I think they should pay some sort of dividend to Tim Hortons for the double-double. At the end of the day, it is all about misinformation. Their second policy on fighting inflation is to spread false information. In fact, the leader of the Conservative Party proclaimed it today, saying they are going to get rid of carbon pricing or the price on pollution or the carbon tax. It was not that long ago that 338 Conservative candidates, including the member who made the statement that he is going to get rid of it, campaigned at the doors and said in their policy platform that they believed in a price on pollution. How things have flipped-flopped once again.

● (1255)

The Conservative Party, with its spreading of misinformation, is actually going to pay for advertising, which I think kicked in today, coincidental with this particular motion. What Conservatives are telling Canadians is that they are going to save them money by cutting the tax, cutting the price on pollution.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I heard one member say “woo-hoo” and another say “hear, hear”. Well, I can tell members that this is the misinformation that the Conservatives are spreading.

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In Winnipeg North, as in most other constituencies, the PBO, the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer, made it very clear that eight out of 10 households are going to get a net benefit. In Manitoba, a household of four would get over \$800 a year in quarterly payments. If we get rid of the price on pollution, that rebate is gone too, and for 80% of my constituents, that rebate is more than they are actually paying. However, the Conservatives are going to try to mislead not only the residents of Winnipeg North but all the provinces where the price on pollution is put in as a backstop to protect our environment. They are going to try to give the impression that cancelling the price on pollution is going to put more money in their pockets. That is balderdash. That is just not true, and they know it.

It is one thing to stand in the House and spread misinformation and even go into communities and possibly town halls that they are having, but now the Conservatives are going to be paying for advertising. They have actually bought advertising spots to spread false facts.

This will depress a lot of people. I think it is 150 days of the current leadership of the Conservative Party, and it took one of the former leaders, the current Conservative House leader, over 400 days to come up with a plan on the environment. His plan incorporated a price on pollution, and now he is the House leader. The leader who followed him actually made the commitment, which every one of them campaigned on, that there would be a price on pollution.

How many more days is it going to take for the Conservative Party to be more transparent and honest with Canadians as to what their plan is with regard to the environment? Is their only line or bumper sticker going to be “We’re going to cut and get rid of the price on pollution” as other jurisdictions around the world are incorporating what Canada has put into place? Eighty per cent of Canadians are actually benefiting from it, and we are dealing with the environment at the same time. There is a huge vacuum there that needs to be filled. We are waiting, and we will continue to wait, I suspect.

How long is it going to be before the Conservatives start telling the truth as to what they are going to be doing in terms of their environmental plan? All we know is that they misled Canadians in the last federal election, all 338 of them. We are going to be reminding Canadians that at one point the Conservative Party, under different leaderships, supported the price on pollution. At the end of the day, they have flipped-flopped, which is to the disadvantage of our environment, and it is going to hurt Canadians.

● (1300)

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I heard my hon. colleague start his speech talking about Bitcoin. I would like to remind him that Bitcoin has increased in value by 37% in the last month. He is such a stalwart member of the carbon tax cult, but if he looked deep inside himself and reflected, he would need to question some of his beliefs.

The Governor of the Bank of Canada says carbon tax is intrinsically inflationary. The PBO says that most Canadians will pay more in carbon tax than they will receive. However, Liberals constantly refute that. Every time we question them about carbon tax, they always come back and say that the carbon tax is going to stop the

hurricanes that start near Africa from moving up the Atlantic coast into Atlantic Canada. He must know Atlantic Canadians are not that stupid. They all know the carbon tax cannot stop hurricanes. Maybe you could explain this wonderful technology, the dome that is going to protect Atlantic Canada from hurricanes.

The Deputy Speaker: I want to remind folks to run their questions through the Chair and not to address the members directly.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the PBO, the organization the member just made reference to, also made it very clear that eight out of 10 Canadian households will have a net gain. They get more money in their pockets as a result of the price on pollution. One cannot change that fact, even if one advertises otherwise.

What amazed me is that he brought up Bitcoin. He said that it has gone up in the last month by, I think, 30 percentage points. Do we have the Conservative Party, once again, encouraging people to invest in cryptocurrency? That seems to me what the member is suggesting.

Thousands of people lost their life savings because of cryptocurrency, and they are jumping back on to that bandwagon. How ludicrous is that? Is that the type of policy advice the Conservative Party members are coming up with? Today it is to get rid of the price on pollution, because they do not give a darn about our environment, they do not care about the rebates Canadians are receiving, especially at a time of inflation, and by the way, buy more cryptocurrency. Wow.

● (1305)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will try to tone things down, but still get straight to the point.

The parliamentary secretary said that the carbon tax is not the only thing that can lower greenhouse gas emissions. We completely agree, except the data on Canada is not very good right now.

As far as renewable energy is concerned, Canada ranks 54th out of 61 countries. There is work to do on that front. As for greenhouse gas emissions, Canada ranks 56th out of 61 countries. For fossil fuel subsidies, we rank second out of all the G20 countries.

I agree with my colleague that there is a great deal of work to be done. I would like him to talk about the other ways we can lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Business of Supply

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt what is important is that the Government of Canada needs to take initiatives. We have seen many of those initiatives in budgetary and legislative measures, and I make reference to the net-zero legislation as an example. However, it also needs to work along with other provinces, as it did with the Province of British Columbia, where it worked with the NDP government and came up with the LNG project.

There is no doubt that, for many environmentalists, it puts a bit more pressure on the government at a different end. In good part, it is working with the different jurisdictions and doing the best it can to try to decrease emissions. At times, there are some developments that do need to advance, but it needs to be done in an environment that is sound and by working with indigenous communities and the different provinces as much as we can.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals in the debate, all day long, keep saying that Canadians have never had it so good. They seem exacerbated as, again, we fight against their punishing carbon tax.

We are going to keep fighting against the carbon tax so that Canadians can keep their heat on, can drive to work and can afford nutritious food. We will never apologize for that.

We have heard today some version of what they call an environmental plan, but make no mistake. The Liberals gave us an environmental plan, or they gave us a tax plan that was disguised as an environmental plan, and it was directly cited for the higher prices. In fact, their tax is working so well that we have already seen it raised three times. We are still no closer to meeting any sort of environmental goal.

In fact, Canada is the only G7 country, if we want to play the facts game, that has raised fuel taxes during a period of record-high inflation. That should tell us everything we need to know about where we are in this.

We are in the depths of winter and home heating costs are, in some cases, up 100%. Heating one's home in Canada is not a luxury. I do not know why we have to say it, but it is a necessity in this country. All one has to do is go outside for 30 minutes.

There is no denying that the government and its NDP coalition partners who vote with it every single time, although they get up in the House and scream at the government that nothing is going right and then continue to support it, are making prices higher for families. They make this necessity more expensive with a plan to triple the tax, no matter what they say outside of this place. No matter what motion they bring forward, they are the ones who support the government in making things more expensive for every single Canadian.

It is a plan that disproportionately punishes people in rural areas who have no choice but to rely on heating oil or other heat sources made more expensive by the carbon tax. It is a plan that disproportionately punishes families, including parents who are struggling to feed their kids, who are struggling to get to work and who are struggling to drive their kids to activities and school.

I know they do not like to hear it, and they certainly do not want to talk about it. We would be here for an eternity if they had to admit it. However, for more Canadians, things have never been so bad, and a little humility and an admission of responsibility would go a long way for the people across the aisle.

The Liberals laugh, and they say that the stories that we tell in the House are not real. They must not speak to the same people we speak to. They must not listen to the same people we listen to. They must not go to the places we go. If they did, they would know that these stories are very real.

They are painfully real for millions of Canadians, and they are growing in number. The most out-of-touch thing that anybody can do, while serving others in this place, is to bury their heads in the sand and pretend that everything is fine, because it is not. It is far from it.

Here in Canada, the Liberals have given us the highest inflation in 40 years, some of the highest interest rates in the G7, the highest in a generation, and the highest home prices ever. Add a carbon tax on top of that. We will continue to speak against that tax in the House until we have the opportunity, as a government, to remove it.

If the government was in touch at all with the economic reality, it would know that one cannot tax one's way to prosperity. It does not work. It never has.

With respect to our farmers, the hon. member for Foothills speaks with farmers, and I will be splitting my time with him.

On everything that we eat, on everything that we buy and on everything that we use, the Liberals have imposed a tax. It started at \$30 a tonne, then it went to \$40 a tonne and now it is at \$50 a tonne. They promised Canadians, before the last election, that it would never go up. Never is a really long time, but it did.

We should have known better. We should have known that \$30 was going to be \$40, then it was going to be \$50 and now it is \$170. That might not mean a lot in terms of tonnage, but it makes everything that we buy, that we eat, that we use and where we go more expensive. It has an effect throughout the economy.

They will tell us that Canadians get back more than they pay. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said the opposite. Tripling the price, without even making a dent in emissions, and presenting it as if they are returning that money to Canadians is the only misinformation that we have heard in the House today.

Business of Supply

• (1310)

Why, after all of this evidence, are they still saying that over and over again? All they have to do is open the report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that the Liberals appointed. There are 20% of Canadians skipping meals just to make ends meet, because the cost of groceries has gone up 11%. They have not gone up because I have said they have gone up, but they have actually gone up. People are not angry because I said that they are angry. They are angry because they are hungry and the price of groceries has gone up 11%.

It is a direct result of the carbon tax, because it costs more to grow, more to harvest, more to transport and more to buy. The Liberals blame someone else, something else or somewhere else for that failure, but it is their fault. It is squarely their fault and they could show some humility in this House and take responsibility for it. It would go a long way.

We have the lowest projected GDP per capita growth of any advanced economy. This is not just in the G7, but of any advanced economy. The time to add taxes to the mix is not right now. It is actually never, when it comes to this tax that does not work.

Two years ago, the Leader of the Opposition, when he sat here as the member for Carleton, warned that if a government had unchecked and unrestrained out-of-control spending, it would lead to higher inflation and higher interest rates. The cost of government would drive up the cost of living, and that is exactly what we have seen happen.

The Liberals told us the only way to save ourselves on the environmental front is a carbon tax, but, again, that does not match reality. It turns out, once again, that our trust was misplaced in a Liberal government that said it would not raise the carbon tax. It has now raised the carbon tax, and it is about to triple it.

All one needs to do to verify the claim is just look around. Do we not have the highest inflation in 40 years? Do we not have the highest interest rates in a generation? Is home ownership not out of reach for Canadians? Are people not paying more for the cost of energy to heat their homes, to drive their cars and to buy their food? We know the answer, and it seems the Liberals know it too.

We bring this up every single day in the House. We quote testimony from experts and testimony from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, whom the Liberals appointed. We bring stories of the people who are hurting in this country, and the Liberals laugh it off or call it fake.

The response from the government is another program, another inflationary spending measure, a plan to triple the carbon tax, more platitudes and empty words and a few Instagram posts. Then they pat themselves on the back and clap for each other.

The Liberals can talk about the billions of dollars they have spent, and they can talk about it all they want, but that comes from the taxpayer. Never has so much money been spent to bring so few results to so few people in this country. That is a fact.

More of the same ideas that got us here in the first place are just not good enough. We have a different approach. Instead of giving more power to the government, instead of the central planning that

we see from them, let us give more power to Canadians and let them spend more of their own money.

Let us put that money back into their pockets and help them live with dignity and help them survive. Let us help them pay to heat their homes, to drive their cars and to buy nutritious food for their families. Instead of raising taxes, leave workers with more money in their pockets, because they know how to spend their wages.

There is only one taxpayer in this country, and the Liberals ought to recognize that. The Liberals ought to show some humility, take some responsibility for the inflation crisis they have caused and not add yet another tax. Instead of throwing more money at the problem, let us invest in solutions that work. Let us reduce greenhouse gases. Let us get housing built. Let us build more transit.

In short, instead of telling Canadians that everything is fine and that they have never had it so good, let us have the government show some humility and take responsibility for the crisis that they have created.

• (1315)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member got my attention when she said that Canada has the worst GDP growth in developed countries. I had to quickly look up what the forecasts are for 2023. Canada is 1.5%, United States is 1.4%, France is 0.7%, Germany is 0.1% and England is -0.6%. It seems to me she has the facts backward.

Can the member correct that for the record?

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, I will actually correct the member. If he wants to open his own budget, on page 25 is the GDP growth per capita. We are the lowest in projected growth over the next 30 years, of not only the G7, but also every advanced economy. It is in the member's own budget, and he ought to read it.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I heard my colleague talk a lot about humility, particularly near the end of her speech.

If she recognizes that climate change is real and that we failed to take action for years, whether under the Conservative government or during the past eight years under the Liberal government, then is it not true that the first lesson in humility is admitting one's mistakes and trying to make amends?

Business of Supply

[English]

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the member if this were actually an environment plan, but it is a tax plan. It has not reduced any emissions. It has not hit any targets, which the government itself has ever set. Therefore, if we want to talk about an environmental plan, I am happy to do that with the member, but a carbon tax is not it.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the speech from the member today. I want to talk about some of the items that are top of the list of budget expenses in my riding of Port Moody—Coquitlam: housing and child care. I will talk specifically about housing.

Today, we are having a conversation about carbon tax, but really, relief on any carbon tax would affect very few people. However, relief on affordable housing is something huge. I wonder if the member would not mind sharing some of the solutions the Conservatives have brought to the table to fight the crisis of a lack of affordable housing, because we desperately need more affordable housing in this country.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite raises a very important issue, which frankly, has a lot to do with the economic crisis we are in. My hon. colleague should recognize that there are still 30-year-olds living in their parents' basements. We have a supply-side solution, and we have a plan to incentivize those who build housing to build more housing, which is something the government has not done.

• (1320)

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I received a call from a constituent this week, a woman in her mid-40s whose gas bill was over \$300 for the first time ever. She lives alone in her house. She says that, if her power bill is equivalent, she will not be able to afford her bills for the first time ever. She has never had a better paying job in her life, and her final thought to me was that she would have been better off staying in a relationship with her abusive husband because at least he paid the bills. This is because she cannot afford to live on her own anymore.

I wonder if my colleague has any thoughts about how the carbon tax disproportionately affects women and the people who are vulnerable in our society.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, like my hon. colleague, members hear stories of this from our own ridings when we go home. This affects, particularly and disproportionately, those in vulnerable or, frankly, tragic situations, as the member has brought up, as well as those in rural communities. It affects the middle class.

I have also asked constituents in my riding to send over their energy bills because I could not believe what I was seeing. They use less, yet they pay more, and we can fix a part of that today by voting for this motion.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise to speak to our opposition motion today because the carbon tax is asking all Canadians to pay more. It is asking seniors to pay more, young people to pay more, small business owners to pay more and certainly farmers to pay more, and I can say that farmers have paid more.

In fact, according to Statistics Canada, the 2022 crop year was the most expensive in Canadian history. On-farm expenses were more than \$11 billion, 12% higher than the previous year, which is the highest increase in history in Canadian farming. According to the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, or APAS, many of its members saw their input costs go up seven times. Much of that can be attributed to the Liberal-NDP carbon tax coalition and their carbon tax.

Mary Robinson, the chair of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and a potato farmer from P.E.I., was at the agriculture committee yesterday and said that this year's crop year could be even more expensive than what we saw previously.

Farm families cannot afford this. This jeopardizes their ability to remain economically viable. Farmers cannot afford fertilizer, fuel or feed, and they cannot afford to put crops in the ground. As a result of that, we are seeing many of those on family farms throw up their hands and walk away. Farmers just simply cannot be sustainable when they are selling at a loss. We are no longer competitive on the global market.

These should be red flags and alarm bells for the current Liberal government, and they should be forcing it to change course. In fact, it is not changing course, but tripling down on its failed carbon tax policy. It is going to be tripling that carbon tax when Canadians cannot afford to put food on the table.

My colleague earlier said that the Liberals will argue that the carbon tax is an environmental plan to ensure that farmers are environmentally sustainable. Ironically, they have not hit a single emissions target they have set, proving that the carbon tax is a fallacy. More importantly, farmers cannot remain environmentally sustainable if they are not economically sustainable. They will simply cease to exist.

According to the records we have seen, farmers are having a difficult time remaining sustainable. Unlike most other industries in Canada, Canadian farmers in agriculture pay the carbon tax over and over again. They pay it when they buy fertilizer, buy feed, haul cattle or move grain. They pay the carbon tax from the rail companies, the trucking companies and the gas companies, over and over again.

What makes the carbon tax attack on Canadian farmers the most frustrating is that they are being punished instead of applauded for the work they do. Canadian agriculture has reduced its carbon footprint and emissions by 50% over the last two decades. At the same time, they have increased their yields by 60%. What other industry on Planet Earth can make such a claim? Farmers have done this while, at the same time, reducing their inputs, improving soil health, reducing water input use and becoming much more efficient.

Business of Supply

Do members know why they have done this? They have not done it because they were punished with carbon taxes or because of government regulations and interference. They have done it because it is the right thing to do. They have done this on their own, by embracing technology and new innovation, and by embracing new practices such as 4R nutrient stewardship, zero till and precision agriculture. Again, they have done these things on their own because it is the right thing to do. It has improved their efficiency and production, but it was the right thing to do to protect the water, their soil and their animals.

Instead of being applauded for that, the Liberal government is punishing them. It is taxing them to produce food in the most sustainable way anywhere in the world. Not only is this punishing Canadian farmers, it is also punishing every single Canadian, because the carbon tax trickles through the supply chain.

• (1325)

We are seeing it from the farm gate to grocery store shelves, where tens of thousands of Canadians are struggling to be able to put food on the table, and the impact is very real. We see the cost of fruit and vegetables is up 13%. Bread and potatoes are up 15%, and pasta is up 30%. These are the essentials that Canadian families rely on every single day, but they are unable to afford those fundamental parts of their grocery bills because of a Liberal carbon tax that is only going to go higher and higher.

Again, the Liberals will argue that there is nothing to worry about here and that most Canadian families get more back than what they paid into the carbon tax. We need to end this revenue-neutral carbon tax myth right here, because we know, from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, that it is factually not true. In fact, we had the Grain Farmers of Ontario appear at the agriculture committee and say they are getting about 13% to 15% back of what they spend on the carbon tax. That is a long way from revenue-neutral. In fact, the CFIB just ratified those numbers by saying that the average farmer, right now, is spending about \$14,000 a year on the carbon tax. When it is increased on April 1, they will be paying \$45,000 a year on the carbon tax.

Interestingly, when the Grain Farmers of Ontario and the CFIB came out with these numbers, which show that the carbon tax is clearly punishing Canadian farmers and rural Canadians, no one in the Liberal government disputed those numbers. No one came out to say it was revenue-neutral and that this was not true. The reason they are not coming out to question those numbers is that they know they are true. The narrative the Liberals are putting out there is a fallacy. The carbon tax is not revenue-neutral.

In fact, I have the member for Winnipeg North saying that is not the case. I asked Finance Canada, as a matter of fact, how much, on average, a Canadian farmer gets back on the carbon tax. Its answer was \$800 a year, when they are paying \$45,000. Math is not my strong suit, but I am pretty sure that is a pretty wide gap, comparing what farmers are paying to what they are getting back in the carbon tax. Every single Canadian is paying for that in their grocery bills, and Canadian farmers are certainly bearing the brunt of that.

In fact, there is a farmer from the Winnipeg area, the member may be interested to know, and his name was Jochum. He was at the agriculture committee, and he said that the carbon tax is cur-

rently costing him about \$40,000 a year, and when the Liberal-NDP carbon tax coalition triples that carbon tax, he will be paying \$136,000 a year. A recent report came out and said that after the carbon tax is tripled, an average 5,000-acre farm will be paying \$150,000 a year in carbon taxes alone. Anybody in the House can come and tell me, especially if they have a rural riding, about any of their farmers who can absorb that kind of cost. There is not one.

This is putting the economic sustainability of Canadian agriculture at risk and our food security at risk. Taxing farmers who are trying to produce food, when there is no other alternative to the fuels they use on-farm, is nonsensical. It makes no sense, especially when the Parliamentary Budget Officer has certified the numbers we are talking about here. It is by no means revenue-neutral, and our agriculture minister is complicit on this. She is saddling Canadian farmers with the crippling carbon tax. She voted against our bill, Bill C-206, which would have exempted the carbon tax from on-farm fuels, such as natural gas and propane.

However, as Conservatives, we have not given up the fight. We have brought back a private member's bill, Bill C-234, which would again exempt the carbon tax from on-farm fuels, such as propane and natural gas. That would help farmers trying to heat and cool their barns and dry their grain. These are essential for Canadian farmers to remain competitive and viable.

It is time to end the attacks on Canadian agriculture. It is time to stop the Liberals from looking at Canadian farmers as part of the problem, because indeed and in fact, Canadian farmers are part of the solution, and the carbon tax has got to go.

• (1330)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has stated that eight out of 10 households have a net benefit and that they receive more money than they pay on the price on pollution or, as the member refers to it, the carbon tax.

When the Parliamentary Budget Officer makes that statement, is the member prepared to say that the Parliamentary Budget Officer is wrong? It seems that the Conservatives are trying to spread misinformation to give the impression that if they get rid of the price on pollution, there is going to be tax break for Canadians, and that just is not the case.

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, I do not know any parliamentarian who would say that getting rid of tax is not a tax break. If we get rid of the carbon tax, then, yes, it is a tax break, because Canadians would not be paying the tax.

Business of Supply

However, the numbers I quoted from Finance Canada, their own numbers from the Liberals own government department, said that the average Canadian farmer would get back about \$800 a year when they pay \$45,000 a year, on average. I can show the member bills from my constituents that are as high as \$30,000 a month for a poultry operation just to heat their barns. That is the average.

These are his own numbers from his own government that clearly show that the carbon tax is disproportionately punishing on rural Canadians and Canadian farmers. If the member wants to argue that, he should talk to his own officials.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. Obviously, I find this whole debate on the carbon tax a bit tiresome and I look forward to moving on to other things.

One of the other things we could talk about is what we can do to really encourage industries to go green. I am thinking of the mining industry in particular. How can we help the industry build green mines?

What we are seeing more and more of everywhere, but particularly on the international stage, is purchasing decisions based on carbon footprints. What can we do to really help our industries go green so that we can meet these objectives and remain attractive?

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, this is the frustration that I think many Canadian farmers are feeling. We have an elected member saying that he is finding this discussion on the carbon tax tiresome. I would ask him to talk to farmers across Canada who are doing everything they can to be green. They are using zero till and they are using precision agriculture and nutrient stewardship programs to be as efficient and as environmentally sustainable as they possibly can, yet they are getting no credit for that.

The question from the Bloc member shows that members are not paying any attention to the things that farmers are already doing without government intervention and without being punished with a crippling carbon tax. Let us applaud them for that.

• (1335)

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned about how difficult it is getting for individuals and families to make ends meet.

However, this is the thing. The Conservatives do not support a national child care plan. I put forward a bill for a guaranteed livable basic income, and they do not support that either. They voted against an excess profit tax on oil and gas companies that would have made big oil pay their fair share.

Since we are talking about a carbon tax, and the Conservatives are opposed to that, I am wondering if they are for making big oil companies pay instead of the cost being paid on the backs of people and families.

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, as Conservatives, we would want everyone to pay their fair share when it comes to taxes, but, again, it shows how no one wants to talk about this important issue. The member is talking about the cost of living and child care. She

has mentioned that her constituents are having trouble putting food on the table. This goes directly to that.

The carbon tax trickles down through the entire supply chain. We are seeing food inflation at a 40-year high and one of the key contributors to that is the Liberal carbon tax. If we get rid of the carbon tax, grocery prices will start to come down.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Kingston and the Islands.

It is a privilege today for me to stand to address this motion considering carbon pollution pricing. As hon. members in the House know, climate change is already having unprecedented effects on Canadians. We have seen the evidence all around us: in Quebec, extreme heat; in the west, floods and wildfires; in Atlantic Canada, extreme weather events such as hurricane Fiona. In fact, around the world, we would be hard pressed to find a time when extreme weather was not making devastating news in some part of the world.

The impacts from climate change are wide-ranging. They affect our homes, our cost of living, our health and our safety. It also impacts infrastructure and economic activity in communities across Canada. We know that the problem is carbon pollution.

The latest science warns that to avoid severe impacts of climate change, greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced significantly and urgently to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5°C.

When we talk about taking action on climate change, the issue is not about choosing between our economy and climate change. It is well understood that the two really do go hand in hand and that the long-term health of our people, our planet and our economy depends on us taking ambitious climate action. The cost of inaction is enormous.

As emphasized in a recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the cost includes more severe floods, forest fires, heat waves and droughts that cause environmental and economic damage. Weather-related disasters are costing Canadians more each year. It is rising from tens of millions of dollars to billions of dollars annually in Canada alone.

There are the benefits of action. I encourage members to look at the exponential market growth for clean technology all around the world. In fact, last year, global clean technology activity was anticipated to exceed \$2.5 trillion.

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It is no secret that we have had an extremely challenging couple of years. First, we had COVID-19, then a geopolitical and humanitarian crisis and now economies are struggling to adjust to the post-pandemic world. It is not an easy time, yet climate change is the crisis that will persist if we continue to not take action.

I would like to emphasize that carbon pricing has proven to be the most significant and effective tool to combat climate change.

In April 2021, the Government of Canada responded to the latest science by submitting a strengthened national emissions target of 40% to 45% below 2005 levels by 2030, in addition to its goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

In March 2022, we released the 2030 emissions reduction plan, outlining how Canada will meet our 2030 targets. The plan builds on a strong foundation, starting with Canada's first-ever national climate change plan in 2016 and then our strengthened plan released in 2020. The plan shows that we can build a cleaner economy, while making people's daily lives better.

Carbon pricing is central to all these plans. Why? Because it is widely recognized as the most efficient means to reduce carbon emissions and drive innovation and energy efficiency. It creates demand for low-carbon technology, goods and services. As the cost of polluting activities increases, individuals and businesses seek out cleaner alternatives.

We have heard from stakeholders across the country. They have told us that consistency and predictability are key to unlocking investments in the low-carbon economy.

We have heard from businesses and industries. They have shown us they are developing innovative technologies and approaches to reduce emissions. They have asked for clear incentives and supports to put those technologies into practice, including runway time for capital investments to show returns.

Carbon pricing creates those incentives without dictating any particular approach. It lets businesses decide how to best cut their emissions.

At the same time, we know Canadians, especially the most vulnerable, are facing an affordability challenge.

• (1340)

When it comes to the federal approach to carbon pricing, we have not only designed it to maintain the consistency demanded by industry and investors, we have also prioritized affordability for Canadians. The bottom line is that it is not enough to create a cleaner economy. We need to ensure Canadians can afford it.

It is true that pricing carbon pollution modestly increases fuel costs, but carbon pricing has never been about raising revenues. In fact, under our plan, most households do in fact end up with more money in their pockets than what they paid. Whenever the federal fuel charge proceeds are returned directly to households, eight out of 10 families get more back through climate action incentive payments than they pay in direct carbon costs, meaning this system is helping with the cost of living for a majority of Canadian families by offsetting their costs.

It is lower-income households that will benefit the most. High-income households tend to spend a lot more on fuel and energy, so they will face a net cost. However, the lowest-income Canadians come out the most ahead. These estimates take into account direct costs, like paying for more fuel, and also indirect costs, like paying a bit more for goods and services.

Families in rural and small communities are eligible to in fact receive 10% more than families in urban centres.

Households can use these funds however they want. They can use them to absorb the extra two cents per litre on gasoline if they choose. Any households can take action to reduce their energy use to come out even further ahead by going to something like zero-emission vehicles to reduce fuel consumption or federal purchase incentives that help to reduce the cost of heating.

The federal government is also supporting home energy retrofits in Canada, through the greener homes grant, to reduce energy used at home. They save money and cut pollution at the same time.

The Government of Canada has also committed to return the proceeds collected from federal output-based pricing system, or OBPS, to the jurisdictions of origin. Provinces and territories that have voluntarily adopted the OBPS can opt for a direct transfer of proceeds collected. The proceeds that are collected in other backstop jurisdictions will be returned through the OBPS proceeds fund aimed at supporting clean industrial technology and clean electricity proceeds.

Climate change is a serious challenge, and it does not go away with the decisions we make in the chamber. However, we can mitigate the impacts of climate change and we can reduce climate change in the future.

Analysis by the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate estimates that transitioning to a low-carbon economy will deliver a direct economic gain of \$26 trillion and generate 65 million new jobs.

Just as we are putting a price on pollution, we are also making historic investments in clean technology. We are investing in green infrastructure. We are driving growth, creating jobs and including \$9.1 billion in new investments to cut pollution and grow the economy as part of the 2030 emissions reduction plan.

Canadians have been clear about what they want: clean air and good jobs, a healthy environment and a strong economy. Our approach assures that Canadians are well placed to benefit from the opportunities created by the global transition that is under way. I am happy to say that our climate plan is working.

Evidence confirms that putting a price on carbon pollution works. It spurs clean growth, supports jobs and cuts pollution causing climate change. Pricing carbon pollution and returning the proceeds to Canadian families and businesses is an effective and affordable way to combat climate change, while supporting the sustainability of Canadian communities.

Canada has established itself as a champion of carbon pricing and now has international recognition as a leader and an innovator on carbon pricing. Significantly driving the force behind our success is that the Government of Canada cares about the well-being of our economy, our environment and all Canadians today and for many tomorrows. We will continue to put them first.

• (1345)

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my friend's speech, and all Liberal members' speeches. They talked about the PBO saying that more Canadians would get money back. There was a report that said this, but are any of the members of the government side aware of the second PBO report, which is the distributional analysis of federal pricing?

In that report, on pages 18 to 20, and I know it is 20 pages and a lot to read, it is exceptionally clear that most Canadians actually do not get more money back. It is like we get 80% on the mid-term, then fail the final and say that we achieved 80% in the course.

Have the Liberals read the second report and will they finally acknowledge that when we factor in all the costs throughout the economy that most Canadians lose on the carbon tax?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member across the way is trying to make the argument that doing nothing is the best option. However, what we have seen through successive Conservative governments is that doing nothing is not the best option. In fact, eight out of 10 Canadians benefit from the system we put in place, and the environment will benefit at the same time. Doing nothing is not an option.

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning, I attended a meeting with representatives of trade unions from across Quebec. They raised a number of issues. They asked us to introduce measures that should have been passed a long time ago, including anti-scab legislation, higher health transfers and concrete measures to ensure a fair transition.

In the context of this debate, can the member tell me what measures should be introduced to ensure not just an effective energy transition, but also permanent, good-paying jobs in the sector?

[English]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue for his intervention and for his previous interventions, as he is focusing on the industrial opportunity we have as a country. His riding is creating green aluminum, which is

Business of Supply

then used in electronic vehicles, and we have supply chain opportunities through the policies we are putting forward.

Absolutely, the member is correct that we have to transition into these new jobs to get ahead of them so that those jobs are not happening in other countries but happening in Quebec and in Canada.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my last question for the Conservatives, I called out their failure to tax the big oil companies. They share that with the current Liberal government. I am wondering why the Liberal government continues to let big oil off the hook while families are struggling. Instead of making big oil and gas pay, why are the Liberals making families and individuals pay what big corporations and big companies owe?

• (1350)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, what we are working on is the transition for businesses. That includes transitioning from the rebates we have been offering to oil and gas and accelerating them by two years so we can move faster and attract more international investment into Canadian industries, including oil and gas, which is still a very important industry for Canada that we cannot lose. We have to transition the jobs and transition the economy, and we have to provide greener opportunities within that industry.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is another day and another wasted Conservative opposition motion. I will note that this is the seventh time within the last year that the Conservatives have brought forward a motion that is either a carbon copy of this one or something very similar. I guess the Conservatives will not take no for an answer from the rest of the House, which continually votes against this.

The reason I find this to be so amazing is that every single Conservative sitting in this room right now, every single Conservative elected to the House of Commons in the last election and every single Conservative candidate who ran in the election in 2021 ran on pricing pollution. They all ran on it. It was key.

Business of Supply

It took the former leader of the opposition something like 500 days to come up with a plan on the environment, and all he did was copy what we have, although he tweaked it a little and made it more like an air miles program whereby people got reward points and could get environmentally friendly products. That was their plan. That is what they ran on. They all ran on pricing pollution. I hate to say it, Mr. Speaker, but so did you. Everybody ran on pricing pollution—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I want to remind folks that we are getting close to two o'clock and a lot of members are coming in to join us for question period, so the noise is going up a bit. There is a lot of noise in the chamber.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has about seven and a half minutes left.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives all ran on pricing pollution. Then they got elected to the opposition once again, immediately did a 180° and have brought in seven motions within the last year about pricing pollution. They are now clapping at their own flip-flop. I cannot make this stuff up. They are flip-flopping on their position. Maybe one of them can just get up and explain to this House why they ran on it and have now changed their minds. There could be a very legitimate reason for that. Maybe there is a legitimate reason for changing their minds, but they should enlighten the rest of the country by letting us know why they decided to flip-flop in such a way.

As a matter of fact, when they introduced this in the last election, the member for Calgary Centre said this about the price on pollution in their platform: “I think it's an evolution for parts of our party”. He admitted that the Conservative Party was finally evolving into hopefully accepting climate change as real, but also thinking that it was a good thing. That was the member for Calgary Centre, who will vote in favour of this motion and against pricing pollution, which is a complete flip-flop from what he first said.

The member for Durham, their leader at the time, said, “We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms.” Time after time, the Conservatives are coming forward in the House and completely confusing Canadians with their positions on this, given what they said during the election versus where they are now.

A lot has been said about the PBO and its recent report. I found it interesting that the member for Dufferin—Caledon, while asking a question of one of my colleagues, noted a follow-up report. He should know from the follow-up report, assuming he read it, that the PBO admitted that in the original report, there was no consideration of what the effects would be, economically and socially, in the event we did nothing to address climate change. The PBO therefore acknowledges that this was not a consideration in the initial report.

The member talked about cherry-picking information and using information in a certain way, but he is not even completely representing the report he is trying to use against the member who was speaking just before me. That is the irony of all this. The report the member referenced also mentioned that the PBO followed up and said that eight out of 10 Canadians would be better off under a pricing

mechanism that includes a rebate. Of course, the Conservatives never want to tell Canadians about that. They never want to bother telling Canadians that they will get the money back.

When we say eight out of 10 Canadians are going to get more money back than what they put in, I am sure I do not have to explain that they will certainly be those who need it the most. It is not extremely wealthy people who will be getting more back than they put in. Again, the Conservatives want to gloss over that fact because they do not see representing the truth on that point as easy to talk about and as palatable. If they want to talk about the parliamentary budget office report, they need to start talking about it in its entirety. They need to start realizing and accepting that the Parliamentary Budget Officer said eight out of 10 Canadians will get more back than what they put in.

I am left with a conclusion, which I have said many times in this House: How is this possible from the Conservatives? The Conservative Party touts itself as the steward of the economy, of good fiscal responsibility and of understanding how an economy works. How is it possible that a party like that cannot understand the basic, fundamental principle that if we put a price on something, it will change people's decisions and will change market behaviour? That is exactly what just about every economist in the world has said will be the result of pricing pollution. This is about making sure we are encouraging people to make the right decisions.

● (1355)

We do not even have to look that far to see the success. I have talked in the House many times before about how Quebec and Ontario were part of the cap-and-trade deal with California that was established around 2006. Quebec, Ontario and California got together and set up a cap-and-trade model. By the way, had Doug Ford not ripped it up when he got into the government, we would still have it in place and there would not be a price on pollution in Ontario.

What actually happened? When Doug Ford ripped that up and got out of the deal, he started removing electric vehicle chargers from GO stations. What has happened between then and now with the provinces of Ontario and Quebec? Quebec is light years ahead in terms of where they are in preparing for the future of electric vehicles and the future of increasing and building their electrical grid.

Unfortunately, because of Doug Ford's choices to completely move away from very important pieces of legislation like the one on cap and trade, we have ended up in a situation where Ontario is lagging behind. We were neck and neck with Quebec when that began and years into it. Unfortunately, we can already see the devastating effects of the decisions made by Doug Ford and his government once he was elected in Ontario.

I find it unfortunate that this is like *Groundhog Day*. Once again, here we are with the Conservatives and the exact same motion. We are all saying the exact same thing. We all know exactly how everybody is going to vote. This is going to end up just as it did the other six times. Hopefully, at some point, the message will get through to the Conservatives that this is a piece of policy the majority of Canadians are in favour of and that we will continue to use it.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

WEST ISLAND ITALIAN ASSOCIATION

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, I will be attending the annual Saint Valentine's Gala of Montreal's West Island Italian Association, a marquee event that is among the highlights of the West Island social and cultural calendar. This year's gala is particularly special. The association is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

[*Translation*]

Founded in 1992, the West Island Italian Association gives people of Italian origin the opportunity to gather on a regular basis to celebrate their beautiful language and wonderful culture.

[*English*]

I would like to pay tribute to Egidio Vincelli, now in his 16th year as president of the association, as well as to past presidents Marino Discepola, Femiria Nanni, Rocco La Giorgia and Victor Romani. Congratulations to the West Island Italian Association on three decades of fostering the friendships that make for a strong and vibrant community.

[*Member spoke in Italian*]

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberal changes to bail in 2018 were naive, ideological and just plain wrong. Police and courts are now required to ensure offenders are released at the earliest opportunity, rather than be detained. Canadians are paying the price, in some cases with their lives.

Violent crimes and gang-related homicides are way up, and that is the Liberal record. In the last 40 days alone, an OPP constable was killed near Hamilton, paramedics were shot at in Vancouver, a person was shot during a robbery in London, there was a random stabbing in Mississauga and a violent carjacking in Manitoba. That is just to name a very few. In each and every case, the offender was out on bail. This travesty has to stop.

Just yesterday, the Liberals and the NDP voted against the Conservative common-sense legislation that would correct this problem. Canadians need a Conservative government to fix the damage caused by eight years of repeated Liberal failures.

* * *

PAKISTAN

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is International Development Week. Last month, I had the opportunity to travel with IDRF to Pakistan, which is still reeling from the devastation caused by major flooding last summer, to see how it and other Canadian aid organizations are helping on the ground. The impact is still being felt by millions of people and there will be an ongoing need for international support for many years to come.

Statements by Members

During my trip, I saw the important work being done in many villages and flooded areas to bring food, water and shelter. I saw schools being created so the displaced children can continue their education. There is also a midwifery program that is giving women a profession and skills to earn an ongoing income.

To date, our government has committed \$58 million in funding for assistance in response to the floods and for longer-term recovery from the floods in Pakistan. I hope we will be a partner for the long term.

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[*Translation*]

MARCEL KRETZ

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec's gastronomy community is in mourning. Marcel Kretz, a monumental figure in that community, passed away on January 31 at the age of 91.

He was a member of the Order of Canada and the Ordre national du Québec whose expertise and talent paved the way for Normand Laprise, Martin Picard and Colombe St-Pierre.

Today I want to highlight the important role and influence he had in making Quebec a gastronomy capital of North America. He was born in Alsace and graduated from the Strasbourg school of hospitality, but he chose to settle in Val-David.

For 30 years, Marcel Kretz was the chef at La Sapinière, the first property in Canada to make the Relais et Châteaux list. He was also one of the founders of the École hôtelière des Laurentides, a school of hospitality in the Laurentians.

I am grateful to Marcel Kretz for making us so proud of our local cuisine.

We in the Bloc Québécois extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

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[*English*]

WORLD PULSES DAY

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, February 10 is World Pulses Day. It is an opportunity to thank the farmers, traders and processors who work hard to provide our country with the highest-quality pulses. Every day, our farmers wake up with a passion to provide us with delicious and nutritious beans, lentils and chickpeas. These world-class products are made here at home, with care and safety, in an environmentally friendly manner. When shipped abroad, they showcase the high-quality agriculture products that come from Canada.

Statements by Members

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

Pulses are an important part of our diet and an important pillar of our economy. The industry is an economic powerhouse in rural municipalities and contributes to our dynamic land use.

We are proud not only of the calibre of our pulse industry, but also of its environmental practices. We are a world leader in pulse production, largely thanks to the hard work of our farmers, merchants and processors.

I thank them and wish everyone a happy World Pulses Day.

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[*English*]**WINNIPEG PET RESCUE SHELTER**

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to celebrate the great work of the Winnipeg Pet Rescue Shelter. Before the House rose last year, I had the pleasure of joining the grand opening of its brand-new location on Portage Avenue in my riding. The work that Carla Martinelli-Irvine and her team do at this shelter is truly vital and heartwarming.

This organization has rescued more than 10,000 animals that find themselves without places to call home. The Pet Rescue Shelter takes these animals in, gives them medical treatment and ensures that they have places to stay before they eventually find their new homes. Most importantly, the Pet Rescue Shelter is Manitoba's first no-kill animal shelter. It understands that our furry friends should never be euthanized simply because they find themselves without owners.

I want to thank Carla and her entire team for the work that they do, and I wish them all continued success in helping Manitoba pets find their forever homes.

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EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, watching the news unfold, my heart aches for the people of Turkey and Syria. Devastating earthquakes have claimed the lives of over 7,000 people thus far. Thousands of buildings were downed in the first quake, and families are searching for their loved ones and trying to access medical care.

These terrible magnitude 7-plus earthquakes were felt as far away as Lebanon, Cypress and Egypt. The impact in northwestern Syria, where many are already displaced and living in camps, has been tragic.

This week is International Development Week, and now, more than ever, the people of this region need our support. I am grateful to the groups that are already stepping up to collect donations for the victims, including the Turkish Society of Nova Scotia. Now is the time for us to give whatever we are able to.

My thoughts and prayers are with our Syrian and Turkish friends and my constituents in Halifax West. Canada and Canadians will be there for them in this difficult time.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Vaughan residents are among the most entrepreneurial and generous in the country. It is an honour to be their voice and the voice of the thousands of hard-working families in the city of Vaughan, who are dedicated to building strong communities and creating a better future for their children.

For seven years the government has stood side by side with Vaughan families to put more money in their pockets and make life more affordable. We introduced the Canada child benefit and have now implemented a transformational early learning and child care program that is bringing \$10-a-day day care closer to reality every day.

To fight climate change, we put a price on pollution and created the climate action incentive. We also introduced the Canada dental benefit and are working to strengthen our public health care system.

These are real, tangible and long-lasting measures to help Vaughan families. Our government is laser-focused on making life more affordable for Canadians by fostering inclusive economic growth that sets up Vaughan families, and families from coast to coast to coast, for success.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, inflation is at a 40-year high. After eight years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, the average family is paying \$16,000 a year on groceries. After eight years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, one in five Canadians is skipping meals, is accessing charity services just to meet their basic needs, and is out of money. After eight years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, rents and mortgages have doubled. After eight years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, his insider friends have made off with billions of tax dollars while Canadians face an affordability crisis. After eight long years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians are out of money and the Liberal government is out of touch.

It is time to rein in the spending, fire the gatekeepers and put out this inflationary fire. It is time to get the Liberals out of the way so Conservatives, led by the member for Carleton, can clean up this mess and ensure Canadians can keep the heat on by taking the carbon tax off.

Statements by Members

• (1410)

EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have all been horrified to learn of the devastation and suffering caused by two powerful earthquakes that occurred in southeastern Turkey and northern Syria. As we witness the images emerging from the region, I know I speak on behalf of every member of the House when I say that we are truly shaken by the scale of the devastation, that we stand united in expressing our heartfelt condolences to all those who have lost their loved ones and that we offer our support to all Turks and Syrians during this difficult period.

The death toll from these earthquakes is currently estimated to have surpassed 6,000, and it is important for every person in this hard-hit region to know that we share their grief. Canada is monitoring and fully supports the efforts currently under way by UN agencies in the region, as well as the critical efforts of other humanitarian agencies on the ground.

I would encourage members of the House to meet with constituents from the Turkish and Syrian communities in their ridings to ensure we fully support their efforts and demands to alleviate the pain and suffering that has occurred.

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LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, Canada has lost respect and credibility abroad and is being dismissed and disregarded on the international stage. After eight years, our armed forces are facing a recruitment crisis that will take years to overcome. After eight years, our troops are still operating without the basic equipment they need to keep our country strong, safe and secure. After eight years, violent crime in Canada has risen by 32%. After eight years of spend, spend and complete debt mismanagement, the current government now wants to pile it on vulnerable Canadians by imposing a carbon tax.

A tax plan is not an environmental plan. Enough is enough. Canadians are in crisis mode and looking for disciplined, principled leadership. Canada's Conservatives will keep the heat on and take the tax off.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, do Canadians feel they are better off? Do Canadians think the costly NDP-Liberal coalition will look after them? Do Canadians believe that the Liberals have done what they promised? The answer is no. That is what 67% of Canadians feel: After eight long years of the Liberal government, everything in Canada is broken.

Who can blame them? Time and time again Canadians see rich, connected Liberals getting big government contracts while hard-working Canadians just get hit with more and more tax increases. The government wants to triple, triple, triple the tax on gas, groceries and home heating. After eight years, Canadians want change.

In the Conservative leader and his united team, they see a group that will turn hurt into hope. They see change coming.

A Conservative government will keep the heat on and take the tax off.

* * *

[*Translation*]**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK**

Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question I would like to put to the House. Can anyone in this place say that they have never experienced significant distress in their life or had suicidal thoughts?

This proves that suicide is everyone's business. In Canada, 12 lives are lost to suicide every day. This week is Suicide Prevention Week in Quebec, and this year's theme is "Prevention is Better than Death". This highlights the importance of prevention and encourages people to dare to talk about it.

I think that all of us in this place must do more. We can make small gestures, like calling someone who is going through a difficult time, and also promoting organizations in our ridings that are there to provide assistance and support, such as Suicide D etour in Maniwaki.

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• (1415)

[*English*]**ART SKIPSEY**

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sadly, Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island has bid farewell to its former mayor and freeman of the town, Art Skipsey, who passed away last month at the age of 96 following a life well lived. He was a man of integrity, vision, humour and strength, and we came to believe he would go on forever.

Art was born to settler parents in 1927 in the Alberni Valley, where he grew up with a love of the outdoors and the urge to teach, build with his hands and serve his community. He earned a degree in education at UBC and moved to Qualicum Beach to raise a family with Cora, the love of his life. They barged a house from Vancouver when a suitable home was hard to find. In 1975, Art began a two-year term as alderman; he then served as mayor from 1977 until 1990. He made too many voluntary contributions to the community to mention. Suffice it to say that many thought of Art as "Mr. Qualicum Beach".

We will miss Art. May he rest in peace.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we speak, rescue workers are still searching for survivors of yesterday's powerful earthquake in Turkey and Syria. The death toll is now over 7,000 and climbing. We are witnessing a race against time. It is a chilling story, a true catastrophe.

The earthquake comes on top of a very serious humanitarian situation. Syria has been ravaged by a civil war since 2011, and the Bloc Québécois wants to reiterate its solidarity with the Turkish and Syrian people.

We also want to point out the importance of investing in a humanitarian emergency division at the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, to enable the federal government to act quickly in the event of a crisis, without having to stop processing regular cases.

We want and need to be part of the solution, for the sake of humanitarianism, security and refugee protection, but most importantly, because lives depend on it.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, Canadians are out of money and cannot afford food, heating or housing. I spent the last month in my riding talking to friends and neighbours, and they all expressed the same sentiment: Life under the Liberal government has gotten too expensive.

Mary told me she is overwhelmed every time she goes to the grocery store. The cost of groceries has skyrocketed in the last year. She wonders how she is going to keep food on the table for her and her three children. After eight years of the Liberal government, she has had enough.

I spoke with John and Francis, a hard-working middle-class family who say their heat bill has doubled. They do not know where they will come up with the extra \$500 a month to put oil in their tank. They are out of money. They cannot afford the Liberal government any longer.

A Conservative government will keep the heat on and the tax off.

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WORLD CANCER DAY

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last Saturday was World Cancer Day, a time to spread awareness and take action against a disease that has touched each of us. I recently visited Dr. Sheila Singh, who I have no doubt will cure brain cancer, in her lab at McMaster University. I also attended an announcement at SickKids about our investment in pediatric cancer, which will be transformational for kids with cancer.

Some actions we can all take to prevent cancer include making healthy choices, such as living smoke free, being sun safe, moving more, sitting less, having a healthy body weight, limiting alcohol

and eating well. I know far too many who have been touched by cancer, and I am always inspired by their strength and resilience.

As Terry Fox said, “dreams are made possible if you try.” I dream of a world without cancer, and I will do all I can to make that dream come true.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

HEALTH

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister, health care in Canada is broken. He has accomplished the impossible. He managed to double our national debt, adding more inflationary debt than all prior prime ministers combined, without improving health care. In fact, it is worse than ever.

Today, the Prime Minister admitted that the system does not meet our expectations. Will he finally take responsibility so that we can fix what he broke?

● (1420)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us remember the facts. During the pandemic, we transferred an additional \$72 billion to the provinces, on top of the \$46 billion in investments.

What is more, the Prime Minister and the premiers of this country are meeting today to talk about building a health care system that will be sustainable for the next 10 years. That is how our Confederation works. It is a great day for Canada.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister, health care in Canada is broken. He has accomplished the impossible: He managed to double our national debt, adding more debt than all prior prime ministers combined, without improving health care. In fact, by his own admission, it is worse.

Now will the Prime Minister finally take responsibility for the problems in health care he has caused so that we can fix what he broke?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us remember the facts. During the worst pandemic in a century, the Government of Canada transferred \$72 billion to the provinces to make sure that we could get through the pandemic, on top of record investments of \$46 billion. Today, the Prime Minister and all the premiers of this country are meeting to build a health care system that would be sustainable for the future.

It is a great day for Canada and a great day for Canadians.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister, inflation is at a 40-year high.

Former Liberal finance minister Bill Morneau said that the Prime Minister spent too much. Another former Liberal finance minister, John Manley, said that this spending caused inflation. The current Governor of the Bank of Canada says that government spending is causing inflation and Mark Carney, the future Liberal leader, agrees.

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for the inflation he caused so we can fix what he has broken?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the leader of the official opposition because we are going to do just that and take responsibility for all the investments we have attracted to Canada.

I think that the Conservative leader has forgotten the investments in science and biopharma across the country. We attracted Moderna to Canada for the first time. I believe that the opposition leader is forgetting about the investments in the auto industry and green energy. We will continue to invest in Canada to create the jobs of today and tomorrow.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, his investments in pharmaceuticals? He gave \$170 million to a pharmaceutical operation that is shutting down; that is a prime example.

After eight years of the Prime Minister wasting our money, inflation is at a 40-year high. Now home heating bills have doubled. Seniors wonder how they are going to keep the heat on because this tax is going to be tripled, tripled and tripled under the NDP-Liberal coalition.

Will the Prime Minister finally take responsibility for the misery he has put on household heating bills, and will he accept that we are going to keep the heat on to take the tax off?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we invested to protect the health and safety of Canadians. Canadians watching today should just watch this guy again. Everyone in the country understood at the time that we needed to invest in all types of vaccines.

Today, we are in solution mode. We want to protect the jobs, manufacturing facility and IP of Medicago.

Canadians learned something from COVID. We have their backs. We will continue to invest in the Canadian economy.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that this government does not have their

back; the government has its hands in their back pockets. That is what is happening.

There is \$170 million dollars here for this wasted investment, \$54 million for the ArriveCAN scam and, of course, \$2 billion invested in a company that does not actually exist. Who is paying for it? Well, people are now seeing the bills on their home heating, which has doubled with higher gas prices and, of course, when our farmers and truckers are taxed with a carbon tax, they have to raise the price of the food that comes to our grocery stores.

Will the Liberals finally back down from this crazy carbon tax scheme? We are going to keep the heat on until they take the tax off.

• (1425)

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of hot air coming from the Leader of the Opposition, but we do not hear a lot of solutions.

On this side of the House, we are actually focused on making sure that Canadians have the support they need, whether that was at the height of the pandemic, when we made sure that Canadians could stay afloat, and guess what, that is what the Leader of the Opposition is against; whether it is now, when we are reducing child care fees by 50% across this country, and the Conservatives voted against funding child care; or whether it is the Canada child benefit, which is helping nine out of 10 Canadian families.

We are there for them. Conservatives are just not there for Canadians.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is dividing Canada's people. His anti-Islamophobia advisor is an example of that. He set out to divide Quebecers and Canadians by sanctioning Quebec bashing yet again. Another example is how he made his West Island MPs on the official languages committee attack the protection of the French language. He wants to drive a wedge between Quebecers by spreading misinformation about the Charter of the French Language. Prime ministers should not divide their people.

Will his government reprimand its federal MPs who say things that are not true and tell them enough is enough?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois's raison d'être is to divide. That is its goal.

This bill would enable workers to work in French, yet the Bloc is voting against it. This bill would guarantee services in French, yet the Bloc is voting against it. This bill would do more for French both inside and outside Quebec, yet the Bloc is voting against it.

Oral Questions

When it comes to defending the French language, the Bloc is speaking out of both sides of its mouth.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the dispute is not within the Bloc Québécois, it is within his caucus. He needs to wake up.

This morning, the Liberal member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said, “The smoke show led by some of my colleagues is shameful. The Island of Montreal does not have a monopoly on linguistic policy in Canada. Disinformation has no place in this debate.” It was someone from his caucus who said that. He is right.

Why does it take someone from Ontario to say that? Why have none of the Liberals from Quebec spoken out against this? Where are the Prime Minister and his Quebec lieutenant when their colleagues are literally wiping their feet on the Charter of the French Language?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. Minister of Official Languages.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are the first government to acknowledge the decline of French across the country, including in Quebec. That is why the federal government is assuming its responsibilities. We introduced a bill to create more robust legislation that has teeth and to ensure that we can do what is needed to protect and promote French across the country, including in Quebec.

Our government wants to do its part and I hope the bill will pass as soon as possible.

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[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at today's health summit, Canadians need the Prime Minister to champion public health care and stand against private, for-profit delivery. Privatization is not innovation. It drains workers from our public system, costs more and allows queue jumping for the rich. It will make the crisis worse. Real innovation is better support for health professionals, shorter wait times in our hospitals and access to care based on need.

Will the Prime Minister assure Canadians that additional public dollars will go to public health care?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our health system is experiencing significant challenges, and it is important that we work together to find the best solutions going forward. That is why, today, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health are sitting down with the premiers and the ministers of health from across this country.

Our government remains ready to work with provinces and territories to further discuss priorities, actions and results to improve the health services that Canadians rely on. That includes reducing backlogs and supporting our health care workers, enhancing access

to family health services, improving mental health and substance use services, helping Canadians age with dignity closer to home, and using health data and digital health more effectively.

We will always be there to support our universal public health care system.

• (1430)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I did not hear a word about standing up to privatization. I hope that the minister is going to be able to do better after today's talks.

[Translation]

When the Prime Minister was trying to win votes, he said he would do everything he could to defend our public health care system. Now he calls tactics like privatizing our health care “innovation”. Let me be clear. Privatization does not add workers to our public health care, it takes them away from the public system. We need investments to tackle the crisis and hire more health care workers.

Will the Prime Minister send a clear message today that federal health funding cannot be used to privatize our health care system?

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps my colleague did not hear me when I said that we will always stand up for our fundamental public universal health care. I will say it again: We will always stand up for our public universal health care.

[Translation]

Our government remains ready to work with the provinces and territories to further discuss priorities, actions and results to improve health services for all Canadians. That includes reducing backlogs, supporting our health care workers, enhancing access to family health services, improving mental health and substance use services, and the list goes on.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the current Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians are suffering more than ever. His out-of-control spending fuelled a 40-year high in inflation. Rents have doubled. Home heating has doubled. Even food inflation has gone up. He pile-drove Canadians further by taking more off their paycheques and is going to take even more and cause even more suffering when he triple, triple, triples his failed carbon tax scam.

Will the Prime Minister show some humility and take the tax off so that Canadians can keep the heat on?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative politicians are making a lot of misleading claims about the price on pollution. The facts are that 70% of gas price increase is due to crude oil prices going up, largely because of Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. Another 25% of the price is the result of provincial taxes and refining margins—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. We started off fairly well and now it seems to be going not so well. I am just going to ask everyone to listen to the questions and listen to the responses, so that we can all hear together.

The hon. minister, from the top, please.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault: Mr. Speaker, the Conservative politicians are making a lot of misleading claims about the price on pollution. The facts are that about 70% of gas price increase is due to crude oil prices going up, largely because of Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, and another 25% of the price is the result of provincial taxes and refining margins that have gone up by 113% in the last two years.

That means that 95% of the gas price has nothing to do with the price on pollution. The price on pollution puts more money back in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadians and it remains one of the best ways to fight climate change.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, maybe they should start taxing the hot air coming out of the minister's mouth.

Canadians are watching the hypocrisy of the Liberal government taking more under its failed carbon tax scam while emissions go up because it has missed every climate change target it has set. Liberal inflation is driving up food prices and this failed carbon tax is contributing to one in five Canadians skipping meals.

Will the Liberals finally show some humility and take off the tax so that Canadians can keep the heat on, or do they think there is no business case for struggling Canadians to eat and heat their homes?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, according to British Columbia's auditor general, on 2021 disaster costs, the atmospheric rivers in British Columbia cost the province \$5 billion in damages. That is more than the 19 previous years combined.

According to a study by MacEwan University, the total cost of the Fort McMurray forest fires is above \$10 billion, with \$4 billion of damage to homes and businesses and \$1.7 billion in loss of production to oil sands.

Climate change is real, no matter what the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lethbridge.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister's carbon tax, Canadians continue to struggle. They continue to struggle to be able to heat their homes, to be able to feed their families, to be able to commute to work. After eight years, things are not looking better.

Recently, a 70-year-old woman came into my office with her heating bill in her hand and tears down her face because she cannot afford it. She has turned her thermostat down to 17°C. It is -36°C outside.

My question is very simple: Why will the government not show a little compassion and take the tax off so that Canadians can keep the heat on?

• (1435)

Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all know times are tough for Canadians, but I want to remind the House of the 105 homes in my riding that do not need to be heated anymore because they were destroyed by hurricane Fiona; 105 families no longer have a home. If anyone wants to talk about why we need to address climate change, come visit the southwest coast of Newfoundland.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is the answer of a government that is entirely out of touch with the needs of Canadians and the pain they are truly feeling in this country right now.

Another constituent of mine came in and joked that to get from A to B in Canada, B now stands for “broke”. What he was talking about was the need to be able just to get to work and the skyrocketing cost that has ensued there, as well as the need to feed the family and heat the home. These costs have gone up because of the Prime Minister's carbon tax.

Once again, when will the Prime Minister finally wake up to the reality that is out there, that Canadians are truly experiencing pain, and when will the Prime Minister decide to keep the heat on by taking the tax off?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that Canadians are struggling, and that is why we continue to advance programs that put more money in their pockets.

I have spent seven years in this chamber watching the Conservatives use the families that might be in need as an excuse to do nothing on climate change because they do not see that climate change is costing families dearly. They should come to my community. They will see houses that have been swept into the ocean. They will see farms with silos that have been torn apart. They will see farmers who are out hundreds of thousands of dollars because of the impact of hurricane Fiona on their crops.

We have designed a program that puts more money in the pockets of eight out of 10 Canadian families and reduces pollution. I hope they get behind it instead of—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has been in office for eight years. However, after those eight years, it seems that the Prime Minister has learned nothing.

Interest rates are driving up the cost of mortgages. Young families are paying up to \$600 more a month for housing. The cost of groceries is going up every week. Everything costs more: heating, eating and housing. After eight years in government, the only solution the Prime Minister has come up with is to triple the carbon tax. Why does the Prime Minister want to line his own pockets at taxpayers' expense?

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, not only do the Conservatives never come up with solutions to help Canadians deal with the hardships they are facing because of higher interest rates, but they also have no solutions to help Canadians fight climate change and deal with its impacts.

That is irresponsible, but, more than that, it shows that the Conservatives are incompetent when it comes to helping Canadians face the challenges ahead of us.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this government, the effects of its incompetence on the daily lives of every Canadian family are plain to see. Fully 22% of Canadians do not have enough money to deal with the worst cost-of-living crisis in 40 years, and 28% of women cannot make ends meet.

When we talk about an incompetent government, this is what we are talking about. This is what Canadians are so concerned about.

According to the Liberals, everything is fine, and it is everyone else's fault that everything is broken in this country. Why do they insist on emptying Canadians' pockets with the carbon tax instead of helping them by cancelling it?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleagues on the other side, the Conservative Party, of a few facts.

First of all, carbon pricing was implemented in 2019. It has not been eight years; it has only been three years since this pricing was put in place. Second, it does not apply in Quebec, because the Quebec government's cap-and-trade system applies in Quebec. My colleague from Quebec is completely wrong on this issue. Third, we give more money back to eight out of 10 Canadians than we take in through carbon pricing.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, are you tired of the hustle and bustle of the Big Apple? Pollution, crime and city noise getting you down? You need the all-inclusive Roxham tour. Hop on a free bus to Plattsburgh, where a taxi will take you to fabulous Roxham Road. Once you are on the other side, take advantage of free housing, welfare, health care and

education for your kids. The all-inclusive Roxham tour is just waiting for you.

Is the Minister of Immigration not tired of being laughed at? When will he suspend the safe third country agreement?

● (1440)

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is no laughing matter. Debates in the House of Commons should be taken seriously.

Our government collaborated with the Province of Quebec. It participated in talks to modernize the agreement with the United States and come up with a permanent solution.

My friend is trying to pick a fight, but what I have to offer is a solution.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us be serious, then.

It is our moral duty to take in asylum seekers. It is a matter of human decency. If the life of a man or a woman is in danger in their country of origin, we need to answer their call for help.

However, the situation at Roxham Road verges on the absurd. Now the Americans are using this irregular point of entry to wash their hands of their own responsibilities and are inviting refugees to leave for Quebec for reasons that are, sometimes, anything but humanitarian.

When will the government suspend the safe third country agreement?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the solution my friend is proposing would only shift the problem elsewhere. There is no magic solution here.

Serious solutions are needed. Last week, I met with my Quebec counterpart to discuss both a solution and the federal government's role in supporting the Quebec government's efforts.

Meanwhile, our government is continuing its work to modernize the agreement with the United States.

[English]

This is a serious situation. We are going to continue to treat it seriously, no matter how big a joke the members of the Bloc seem to think it may be.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, unlike the immigration minister, I do not see talking about migrants as a problem. While New York is sending buses of people to Roxham Road, there are tragedies unfolding as well.

La Presse reported this morning that dozens of children are crossing at Roxham Road alone. These are children as young as 10 years old who are unaccompanied. This is no joke.

The government has known this for years. In 2018, it even added a team to deal with the children. Minors walking through the forest in the winter, risking their lives, is no joke. To let this happen is completely irresponsible.

What will it take for this government to find a safe way to welcome asylum seekers, including these children?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right in what he said, but I am puzzled by his first question. I know my colleague from the Bloc Québécois, and I have a great deal of respect for him. I know how seriously he takes all this, but it was inappropriate to make jokes with his first question.

Now is not the time for jokes, not when we are talking about children crossing alone, as well as men, women and children being uprooted and leaving their countries under extremely difficult conditions. Any time we are talking about migrants who are suffering is certainly not the time to make jokes. We must be there to support them.

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[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, Canadians are living in fear. Under his watch, violent crime is up 32%; gang-related homicide is up 92%; and in Toronto last year, 50% of all shooting deaths were committed by those already on bail. However, just yesterday, the Liberals voted against our Conservative motion to fix the bail system that they destroyed.

When will the Prime Minister admit that his flawed bail policies are jeopardizing the safety of all Canadians?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to feel safe and they deserve to be safe.

The laws on bail are clear. If somebody poses a threat to public safety, he or she should not be out on bail. I have undertaken with the provinces and territories to look at what we can do at the federal level with respect to bail. Our priority remains keeping Canadians safe. We will move with the provinces together on not just changing the law but also administering the bail system in a better way.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the laws on bail are clear? I think the minister meant to say that the laws on bail clearly are not working.

While the minister was in the classroom, I was in the courtroom running bail hearings. I have looked victims in the eye who were victimized by people who were on bail. The reality is that violent crime is up 32%. Thugs and gangsters with guns are running wild on our streets.

When will the minister, after eight years of Liberal inaction, end catch-and-release?

• (1445)

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the hon. mem-

Oral Questions

ber's previous service, but I would suggest he go back to the classroom.

As the hon. member will know, what Bill—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. I am not sure how much sugar was in everyone's lunch today, but I think there was an overdose. I want everybody to take a deep breath and calm down.

The hon. minister, please continue.

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member will surely know from his experience, what Bill C-75 did was codify Supreme Court of Canada jurisprudence and it tightened bail provisions by adding a reverse onus for intimate partner violence. There was already a reverse onus on prohibited weapons.

Notwithstanding that, we are willing to work with the provinces to see if there are additional measures we can take. Certainly, we will help the provinces in the administration of the bail—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not know that I can imagine a comment more out of touch than that which the Liberal minister just said. I will remind the minister that, like him, I also taught at a law school. Unlike him, I do not have to go back to school to see people on the streets who are victimized, to see the statistics of gangland homicides and to see police officers on our streets being killed by people who are on bail.

Will the minister stay out of touch or will he end the catch-and-release to keep victims safe after eight years of failed Liberal policies?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is yelling “eight, nine, 10, you are out” as if this is a sporting event. There is not a person in the chamber who has not been touched by violence. There is not a person in the chamber who does not care about the safety of our communities. There is not a person in the country who does not want to make us be successful in ensuring that every Canadian is safe and not victimized.

The idea that anybody in the chamber, let alone anybody in this government, does not care about victims is a deeply offensive concept and is totally unhelpful to the debate at hand.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister, Canada has become unrecognizable, but for all the wrong reasons. Writing on the subject of the Prime Minister's Bill C-5, columnist Joseph Facal of the Journal de Montréal wrote that “fanatical lunatics have taken over the asylum”.

He cited as an example the recent case of a 31-year-old woman who was found guilty of repeatedly beating her 11-year-old stepson and depriving him of food and urgent medical attention. She was sentenced to serve 15 months in the comfort of her home.

Why does the Prime Minister always defend criminals instead of helping victims?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no other government in Canada's history has provided as many resources as we have to help victims. Serious crimes deserve serious consequences. That is the spirit behind our amendments to the Criminal Code.

We stand with victims. We are overhauling the system so it is more flexible, welcoming and supportive for victims, and we will succeed.

* * *

● (1450)

[English]

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the devastation we have seen in Turkey and Syria is horrific. This earthquake comes after nearly 12 years of war and total suffering in Syria. Children are still being pulled from the rubble; it is heartbreaking.

Survivors will require an incredible amount of assistance urgently. The government's announcement this morning is a good start, but the scale of this crisis will require more. The Humanitarian Coalition has launched a joint appeal, as has the Red Cross, and I am certain that Canadians will contribute generously.

Will the government commit to a matching fund to amplify the generosity of Canadians?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our hearts go out to all those affected by the devastating earthquake. Our initial response of \$10 million is a start. We are conducting a needs assessment to look at more. Yes, we are looking at a matching fund as well.

I was just speaking with the head of UN OCHA regarding our response and we are looking at all avenues of support. We will have more to say on this.

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MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this Friday marks two years since the tugboat *Ingenika* sank near Kitimat, killing Troy Pearson and Charlie Cragg.

Yesterday, the owner of that boat was charged with eight counts of negligence. However, holding a single company accountable is not enough to protect the mariners who work up and down the B.C. coast. For years workers have been calling for stronger regulations, for mandatory inspections and for proper enforcement.

Two years, two workers dead, and yet the minister has not strengthened a single safety measure. Why?

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his ongoing advocacy on behalf of this issue. He and I have talked about it on numerous occasions. I want to keep reassuring him that Transport Canada is working with him and other stakeholders on identifying other opportunities for improving our regulations. Safety is paramount. There is an ongoing review of these regulations, but we are committed to having the highest level of safety in Canada.

* * *

LABOUR

Mrs. Rechie Valdez (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has supported Canadian workers with significant investments to defend and expand their rights, implementing legislation such as 10 days of paid sick leave for employees under federal jurisdiction and soon a ban on replacement workers.

Unlike the Conservatives, who have relentlessly attacked unions, their members and Canadian workers through their years in government, we protect Canadians' rights by repealing their anti-worker laws and putting the interests of Canadians first in everything we do.

Could the Minister of Labour update the House on what last week's ratification of the convention on the prevention of harassment and violence in the workplace means for Canadian workers and their right to a safe and respectful workplace?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Mississauga—Streetsville is a hard worker.

We want to end workplace violence and harassment in Canada and around the world. That is the aim of the International Labour Organization Convention 190. I am proud to say that last week that convention was ratified by Canada.

We believe in the workers in our country. We stand up for the workers of our country. We put into force paid sick leave. We have introduced legislation to ban replacement workers. In fact, one of the first things we did was repeal two of the most anti-worker, union-bashing bills our country had ever seen, both Conservative bills.

I am proud to say that this government is leading the fight for—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton Mill Woods.

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CARBON PRICING

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Mill Woods, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal government, Canadians are struggling to afford the most basic necessities: groceries to feed their families, to pay their rent and mortgages, and, of course, to heat their homes to stay warm this winter.

Mandeep Kaur in my riding says that she has to get a second job just to pay the bills. Now the Prime Minister is going to make everything even more expensive by tripling the carbon tax.

On this side of the House, we are going to stand and fight for Canadians like Mandeep Kaur. We will ensure that the Liberals turn off the carbon tax so Canadians can continue to heat their homes.

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the Conservative record on taxes. Our government cut taxes on middle-class Canadians twice and the Conservatives voted against. We cut taxes on the hardest-working class Canadians three times and the Conservatives voted against. We reduced taxes on small businesses and, true to form, the Conservatives voted against.

The record in the House on who supports Canadians with reducing taxes is clear: It is us. The Conservatives keep opposing; we keep delivering.

● (1455)

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Mill Woods, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that instead of standing up for Canadians, the Liberals continue to defend their failed policies. The fact is that throughout the carbon tax, they have not met any environmental standard or target that they set themselves.

The Bank of Canada governor admitted that the Prime Minister's carbon tax actually contributed to the inflation crisis that we are in right now. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that households will pay more in carbon tax than they will get back in rebates.

The Liberals continue to push these failed policies about the carbon tax, which does not even work, while they fight with us. We are going to continue to fight until they turn off that carbon tax so Canadians can—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I guess the question many Canadians are wrestling with is which Conservatives they should believe. Is it the Conservatives who, during the last election campaign, said they believed in climate change, and they believed in

Oral Questions

climate change so much they would put in place a price on pollution, or the Conservatives today who say they do not believe in either climate change or doing anything about it, let alone putting a price on pollution?

That is the question many Canadians are struggling with.

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal government, Canadians can no longer afford to eat, to heat and to house themselves. We can take, for example, Phyllis, who lives just outside of Springhill, Nova Scotia. She turns the heat on in her trailer in the morning. She spends most of her day in bed with her clothes on to stay warm, and she gives herself a bit of heat in the evening before turning in for the night. Conservatives will continue to keep the heat on and take the tax off.

When will the Liberal government stop blaming everyone else, take some responsibility and axe the destructive carbon tax?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member represents communities that are very much similar in kind to the ones that are in my backyard, and the reality is that the policies we have introduced over the last seven years in government are making a meaningful difference. We can look at the Canada child benefit, which puts more money in the pockets of nine out of 10 Canadian families. We changed that program, so we would stop sending cheques to millionaires, as the Conservatives had. We can look at the middle class tax cut. We raised taxes on the wealthiest 1% and cut them for the middle class. We increased the guaranteed income supplement. We continue to improve the Canada pension plan.

Every step of the way, we are focused on low- and middle-income families to better support them. Every step of the way the Conservatives voted against them, and I am happy to take that message to the polls next time.

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely fascinating, because my office receives hundreds of emails, phone calls and letters outlining the extreme difficulties people are having with their finances because of the Liberal government's terrible carbon tax and its terrible inflationist policies. They are the worst in 40 years. Even the premier of Nova Scotia, Tim Houston, has put forward a comprehensive plan to reduce emissions and actually save Nova Scotians money, where that minister lives. How can he vote against such craziness? This makes no sense.

When will the Liberal government allow Canadians to keep the heat on and axe the tax?

Oral Questions

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it baffles the House that the Conservatives continue to undermine the fact that climate change is real. It baffles the House and all Canadians that Conservatives continue to vote against measures that are actually supporting Canadians. Time and time again, when we have put forward measures that are helping low- and middle-income Canadians, the Conservatives have voted against them. Not only do they have no plan, but they obstruct, deny, deflect and make it harder for Canadians to get the supports they need.

We are going to be there. Conservatives—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Thérèse-De Blainville.

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[Translation]

LABOUR

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, hundreds of Canadian Labour Congress workers are on Parliament Hill today. Among them are the United Steelworkers members employed by Océan Remorquage in Sorel-Tracy. They are here because the federal government supports the use of scabs in their labour dispute. Even today, Quebec workers are still being replaced by scabs who are paid three times their wages because the federal government is 50 years behind the times.

The minister has held his consultations. There are no more excuses for failing to take action. Will he immediately introduce an anti-scab bill?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my mandate letter, I committed to further restrict the use of replacement workers. We held consultations, and the bill that the government will introduce in the House by the end of the year will reflect the results of those consultations.

• (1500)

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): What is the minister waiting for, Mr. Speaker?

Quebec has had anti-scab legislation since 1977. This government is 50 years behind the times. It is consulting, thinking and putting things off. As a result, the Océan Remorquage labour dispute is still dragging on because of the use of replacement workers. Real workers with real needs are here today because the minister's inaction is harming their families and the free right to collective bargaining.

What is he waiting for to introduce—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour.

[English]

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a ban on replacement workers would be the most significant progress that we have seen for workers in this country. It is something that unions and labour leaders, for years, have been asking for. We on this side of the House will make sure that we get it right.

Far from inaction, we have just finished thorough consultations with employers and with labour unions, and on this side of the

House, on such an important piece of legislation that has been asked for by labour for decades, we will get it right.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal government, business is skyrocketing at the high-priced consulting firm McKinsey & Company. The government has given McKinsey & Company over \$100 million in contracts, including \$1.4 million from the Canada Infrastructure Bank, an organization that is chalk full of former McKinsey strategists.

Why is the government so hell-bent on giving \$100 million to close Liberal insider friends while average Canadians are just struggling to get by?

Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I explained to the government operations committee yesterday, there has been absolutely no political interference in the award of contracts to McKinsey. We are, of course, looking very carefully to ensure that all processes, rules and policies have been followed by the department, by PSPC. I know that my colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, will also be examining the policies in that department as well.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in other words, the government's approach to the Liberal-McKinsey scandal is to ask the minister to investigate herself. However, we found out yesterday at the government operations committee that she lacks a basic understanding of the record and experience of this company, including its relationship with Purdue Pharma.

Conservatives have said Liberals investigating themselves is not good enough, which is why we need an independent investigation by Canada's Auditor General, an Auditor General, by the way, who has been disparaged by the Minister of National Revenue.

With so many Canadians struggling, will the government support our call today for an independent investigation by the Auditor General into why over \$100 million of contracts went to—

The Speaker: The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this issue, the official opposition has cast all kinds of aspersions that have already been demonstrated to not be true, saying relationships exist that do not exist and, furthermore, holding out that these decisions are made by the government when they know that they are made by the independent, non-partisan public service.

Oral Questions

Canada is known around the world for the quality of the contracts that we engage in. We have incredibly rigorous processes that govern these. The reality is that contracts allow government to expand its services without it permanently expanding the number of employees. It is an intelligent way to use resources.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, inflation is through the roof. Housing costs have doubled; families will pay \$1,065 more for food this year, and 1.5 million Canadians are visiting food banks. That is where eight years of the Prime Minister's government has gotten us.

What is his government doing? It is giving over \$100 million in contracts to a single firm, ignoring all the expertise of the public service.

Can the Prime Minister clearly explain how this spending will help Canadians?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is hard to listen to Conservatives who say they want to help Canadians when, at every opportunity, they vote against measures that will help Canadians.

On this side of the House, we are committed to helping Canadians because we understand that the cost of living is high. That is exactly why we are taking action.

If the Conservatives were sincere in their desire to help Canadians, they could do something very simple, and that is vote with us to help them.

* * *

● (1505)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians are entitled to a healthy environment and safe communities.

Chemicals have grown increasingly prevalent in our daily lives and our economy since the last time the Canadian Environmental Protection Act was reformed.

Canadians want environmental protection legislation that addresses 21st-century problems with 21st-century science.

Would the Minister of Environment and Climate Change tell us why it is important to pass Bill S-5?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank parliamentarians for their hard work on this bill. Ensuring we have the right tools to protect human and environmental health is a key element of our government's plan.

For the first time ever in Canadian law, Bill S-5 recognizes the right to a healthy environment for all Canadians across the country. This is a big step forward for both health and the environment.

[*English*]

HEALTH

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister's incompetence, Canadians are out of money. Now we learn of more Liberal ineptitude.

Medicago closed its doors after receiving more than \$173 million of Canadian taxpayer money to develop vaccines. The Liberals pre-purchased \$600 million of these vaccines that have yet to be produced or delivered. This week government officials said that Canadians are on the hook to pay for these vaccines.

Why is the Prime Minister paying millions of dollars of taxpayer money to a foreign company for vaccines we did not receive?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I respect the member a lot. He is my critic. However, this is not the time for recrimination. This is the time for solutions. That is exactly what we are doing on this side of the House.

Yesterday, I spoke with the CEO of Mitsubishi Chemical in Japan. We all understand, in the House, what we should care about is preserving jobs, preserving the plant in Quebec City and making sure we keep the technology. That is exactly what we are doing. We are going to fight for the workers, because we know this is a technology that could save lives in the future.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, the cupboards are bare.

While Canadians struggle to feed their families and pay their mortgages, the Liberals continue to invest in friends and ghost companies, including \$120 million in contracts to Liberal insiders at McKinsey, and that number just keeps rising. Incredibly, experts say their so-called services were not even needed. However, wait, there is more. There was \$2 billion from the finance minister to invest in a company that does not even exist.

When will the Prime Minister take accountability, stop this waste and get results for taxpayers?

Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I iterated previously in the House, the work that we engage in and the decisions that are made to engage in those contracts are an independent process. They are run by the public service. They allow the public service to expand their impact without permanently expanding the number of employees.

Oral Questions

That public service has been there for Canadians through an incredibly difficult time in the pandemic to make sure that we deliver critical services to Canadians. What these contracts allowed the public service to do was to expand their impact without permanently expanding the number of employees.

There are many wild accusations made by the other side. Already, many of them have been disproved. They have the opportunity in committee to be able to explore these issues and whatever other conspiracies they wish—

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

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been trying, since 2017, to make this Prime Minister understand that he needs to renegotiate the safe third country agreement with the Americans to resolve the situation at Roxham Road. Instead of dealing with the issue, he is letting it deteriorate.

Now we have learned that New York City is giving out free bus tickets to send migrants north, and they are crossing right at Roxham Road into Canada.

Why will the Prime Minister not admit his mistake and why will he not close Roxham Road so that we can help the people who are waiting to legally enter the country and whose applications are mired in red tape at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada?

• (1510)

[English]

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that we are taking the issue very seriously, and we are working to verify the claims that were reported in the Post just a few days ago.

The reality is that a long-term solution is being negotiated with the United States through the modernization of the safe third country agreement. We are working very closely with our provincial counterparts in the meantime to ensure, as they work to support some of the vulnerable people who have made their way into communities, that their basic needs are being met.

Speaking of their needs being met, I would point out to the hon. member that it is one of his colleagues on that side of the House who refused service to a vulnerable person on the basis that they sought asylum in Canada in an irregular way. We need to treat these issues with compassion at all moments, and we will continue to do so on this side of the House.

* * *

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since yesterday we have had such devastating news from Syria and Turkey. As we have heard in the House today and across

the country, our thoughts and hearts are with everyone affected by these major earthquakes and who have sustained such unendurable loss.

In this difficult time, countries around the world are mobilizing to provide urgent support following this great catastrophe. Could the Minister of International Development tell all Canadians more about what our government is doing to support those people affected by these earthquakes?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government stands ready to support those affected by these devastating earthquakes.

This is why today I authorized an initial emergency humanitarian response of \$10 million to support the people of Turkey and Syria. This is in addition to the \$50 million in funding that we provided for disaster response in Syria, and our international partners on the ground have already initiated emergency response activities. We are also conducting need assessments because we will be doing more.

* * *

HOUSING

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, indigenous peoples are overrepresented in the homeless population. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said that it would require \$27.5 billion to close this housing gap. The Liberals' allocation of \$300 million over five years is a drop in the bucket. While the NDP forced the Liberals to roll this out over two years for urgent need, more needs to be done.

The National Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Coalition is calling on the government to commit \$6 billion in budget 2023. The NDP fully supports this. Will the Liberals make this commitment to help end the housing crisis for indigenous peoples?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are fully committed to working with indigenous people to co-develop an urban, rural and northern indigenous housing strategy. Through budget 2022, we are investing over \$4 billion in indigenous housing through co-developing processes, including for the urban, rural and northern indigenous housing strategy. Some of that work is already under way. More than 41% of all the units delivered under the rapid housing initiative are going up in indigenous communities, not only because the need is there, but also because indigenous communities are stepping up and leveraging federal dollars to build rapid housing for their communities.

SENIORS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, too many seniors in Canada are in serious poverty. Last week, I moved a motion to apply equal OAS payments to all seniors, regardless of age. Sadly, the government voted against it.

My office was contacted by a senior who is now making a human rights complaint against Service Canada. Why? It is because this government is participating in discrimination based on age.

When will the minister finally admit that she is allowing some seniors to fall below the poverty line and lifting others? She needs to do it. It is time.

Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the challenges seniors are facing. That is precisely why we have been there for them every single step of the way. That is why we doubled the GST credit for six months. That is why we have increased the guaranteed income supplement, which has helped over 900,000 seniors and has lifted 45,000 seniors out of poverty. That is exactly why we increased the old age security by 10% last year, and that is why we are, of course, enhancing the CPP.

On this side of the House, we are going to continue to support all Canadians, including seniors.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Mickey Amery, Minister of Children's Services for the Province of Alberta.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1515)

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

The House resumed from February 6 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 fifth report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

[Translation]

Call in the members.

• (1525)

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

Routine Proceedings

(Division No. 252)

YEAS

Members

Aboultarif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	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	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dong	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Fergus	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gallant
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Gray	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hallan	Hanley

Business of Supply

Hardie	Hepfner
Hoback	Holland
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Jeneroux
Johns	Jowhari
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khera	Kitchen
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lawrence
Lebouthillier	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire
Maloney	Martel
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean	McLeod
McPherson	Melillo
Mendès	Medicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Morrissey
Motz	Murray
Muys	Naqvi
Nater	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	O'Regan
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Poilievre	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rood
Ruff	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Sorbara
Soroka	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudds	Tassi

Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Uppal	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Van Popta	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Vis	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weiler
Wilkinson	Williams
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zimmer	Zuberi— 320

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Champagne	Housefather
Kmieć	Lemire
McKay	Savard-Tremblay— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[English]

I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded division, Government Orders will be extended by 11 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAX

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying prior to the start of question period, it is unfortunate that we continue to see the same motion coming from the Conservative Party. It is pretty clear how the rest of the House, every other non-Conservative member, feels about this issue.

This is extremely problematic, in my view. All 338 Conservative candidates and every Conservative member who was elected in the 2021 election ran on a platform of pricing pollution. The Leader of the Opposition, the member for Carleton, ran on pricing pollution. Now, suddenly, the Conservatives have done a complete 180° and are trying to suggest that it is not the way forward.

Business of Supply

I could understand if they changed their minds. One of them could stand up and say, “Yes, we changed our minds; this is our new plan”, but none of them will do that. They are completely ignoring this, and they will not explain why they are taking a different position now. More importantly, after 150 days of his leadership, we are anxiously waiting to hear the alternative plan to be presented by the Leader of the Opposition to Canadians should the unfortunate scenario occur that he be elected as prime minister.

In any event, I hope we will finally see the end of these frivolous motions that keep coming forward from the Conservatives. We are now on the seventh one. Hopefully, the next time they have an opposition day, they will find something that better contributes to genuine solutions and compromise to make the lives of Canadians better.

• (1530)

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member and all members of the government waxed poetically about how wonderful the carbon tax is and how it is saving the planet. If it is so effective and so fantastic, why has the government never met a single emissions-reduction target despite bringing in the carbon tax? Why have carbon emissions gone up under the Liberals every single year they have been in government except in the year of the pandemic, when everything was shut down?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I have answered this question several times in the past. When the member was asking a question prior to question period, he specifically brought up the PBO's report, and I referenced his question on that later on. If they are looking at how one element of something will impact the economy and society without considering all the other variables and inputs that go into it, they can draw pretty much any conclusion they want.

When I look at things holistically, either I can take up the anecdotal comments from the Conservative Party about pricing pollution or I can listen to the 99% of economists throughout the globe who say that putting a price on something will change and incentivize behaviour and habits in the marketplace. Forgive me if I do not listen to the Conservatives' rhetoric on this. I would rather listen to the experts.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I want to start by noting that the member for Kingston and the Islands was the only member of the governing party who supported an opposition motion calling for the end of subsidies to the oil and gas sector just a few months ago, which included the false climate solution of carbon capture and storage. His voice on this is one of the most credible in the House. I wonder if he can share more about the importance of ending all subsidies to the oil and gas sector.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate the compliment from the member for Kitchener Centre.

We do have the luxury of being able to voice our individual opinions on this side of the House, so in my personal opinion, I do not support subsidizing the fossil fuel industry. I do not think it is a thing that governments throughout Canada or developed countries throughout the world should be participating in. There is more than enough profit to go around in the fossil fuel industry, and I personally do not support it. I exercised that belief through the vote the

member referenced, but I also respect the fact that other people have different opinions on this. I will continue, both internally and externally, to voice my opinions and my concerns on various issues.

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member likes to talk about promises made and broken promises, of which there have been numerous on the Liberal side. However, one that I keep referencing and hearing about is the Liberal promise to never, cross their hearts and hope to die, increase the carbon tax beyond \$50 a tonne. Every single Liberal ran on that promise and the Liberals have voted to increase the carbon tax to \$170 a tonne. Why the double-talk?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I hope the member appreciates that I will directly answer his question. I will not try to avoid answering it, as the Conservatives do every time I ask a question about changing their position on their platform.

At the time, I thought that was the right solution and now I do not. I realized that pricing something actually impacts choice in the marketplace, and I have changed my mind on it.

Do members see how easy that was? When someone changes their mind on something, as the Conservatives clearly did since the last election, it is okay to get up and talk about it and explain to people that they once had one position on something and now have a different position on it.

I would encourage the Conservatives to recognize my ability to do that, and I would encourage them to do the same thing as it relates to their platform commitment in the last election to put a price on pollution.

• (1535)

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Madam Speaker, if we want to talk about some numbers, I will start with this number: 415%. The Orangeville Food Bank, which is in my riding of Dufferin—Caledon, has just put out information saying that the number of seniors accessing the food bank in Orangeville has gone up 415%. That is the result of eight years of the Liberal government.

The Liberals will say that we should stop talking about how expensive things are and stop talking about how difficult things are for Canadians; everything is great. Well, everything is not great after eight years of the Liberal government. Forty-five per cent of Canadians are within \$200 of not being able to make ends meet. That is another inconvenient number for the government, but it is also the result of eight years of the current Liberal government.

Then we get to the question of why we are here. Why do so many seniors have to go to the food bank? Why are so many households within \$200 of not being able to make ends meet? It is because life has gotten so much more expensive under the Liberal government. Why has that happened? I will today look at one thing. I will talk about the carbon tax.

Business of Supply

The carbon tax is the mother of taxes because it is put on everything. We have heard today many Conservative members talk about the effect the carbon tax has on agriculture. My riding is a proud agricultural producer. It is the number one driver of economic activity, and guess what. The carbon tax is punishing farmers.

The government will say erroneously that eight out of 10 Canadians will get more money back from the carbon tax than they pay in. I will deal with that a little later in this speech, because it is quite frankly not true. In the context of farming and agriculture, there are farmers who get carbon tax bills for drying grain and doing other things on the farm that add up to somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year. What is their rebate? It is \$800.

They are not getting more money back than they pay into the carbon tax. Farmers from coast to coast to coast are being absolutely crushed by the Liberal carbon tax. We could say that it is their problem, but let us think about what that actually means. When a carbon tax of \$40,000 is put on an agricultural producer, they have to pass on the cost of it. They cannot just absorb it and go bankrupt. What does that mean? It means that when families go to the grocery store, everything is more expensive, and it is a lot more expensive.

Maybe when there is a 415% increase in the number of seniors going to the food bank, there might be a connection. Food is getting much more expensive because of the carbon tax, and seniors are going to a food bank. Forty-five per cent of Canadians are within \$200 of not being to make ends meet. Why is that? It is because everything is more expensive. Their food is more expensive because producers are paying this gigantic carbon tax.

It does not end there. Yes, producers are paying the carbon tax, but the carbon tax is also put on the vehicles that get driven.

I neglected to say that I am splitting my time with the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

When we are taking a crop by truck from a farm to where it will ultimately be consumed, it is going to be subject to a carbon tax. At the grocery store where that food is, someone will have to heat the grocery store. The heating is subject to the carbon tax, so the store increases prices. All along the line and all along the food chain, everyone is charging more. What does that mean? It means the farmer charges more, the transport company charges more and the grocery store charges more. It also means everyone is paying much more for the basic necessity of eating.

● (1540)

When one talks about heating one's home, it is the same thing. Many constituents come to me and say, "Look at this bill. Look at the carbon tax on my bill. I cannot afford it."

The government tells them to stop. It says that it is giving them some money, so they are going to be better off. Of course, I will get back to that.

They are not better off. If they were better off, 45% of Canadians would not be within \$200 of failing to make ends meet. If the carbon tax is so wonderful, as the government says, and if it pours so much money back into the pockets of Canadians, why do we have statistics like this?

The rhetoric does not actually meet with reality.

Let us talk about the effect of the carbon tax on trade. I will go back to agricultural products. Canada is a proud exporting nation. Over 60% of our GDP is from exports. Agriculture is a huge part of that.

When we make our farmers incur \$30,000 or \$40,000 in carbon tax, guess what? Their agricultural products are more expensive. It is harder for them to access foreign markets.

What does that mean? Less profit comes back to Canadian farmers. Then, they cannot invest in new machinery, new equipment and everything else.

The carbon tax is a tax on life. It is making life unaffordable for Canadians across the entire economic spectrum.

Only a Liberal government would say that it is going to take dollars through the carbon tax and give back dimes and that we should be grateful, that we are better off. That is the message to Canadians every single day, that they should be so lucky.

If the carbon tax were actually doing something, one might be able to justify the senior going to the food bank or the family with the thermostat down to 17°C in the winter. One could say that it was actually doing something, but guess what? It is actually not.

Under the Liberal government, carbon emissions have gone up every year. It will say, no, they went down in 2020. Yes they did go down during the pandemic, when the economy was shut down. If that is the plan, the government should be honest with Canadians. If it wants emissions to go down by 9% and it is therefore going to have the economy contract by 5%, just stand up and let Canadians know so that they can decide how they want to vote in the next election.

It is causing enormous pain in this country. It is causing inflation.

Even the Bank of Canada has admitted that the carbon tax is inflationary. We have an inflation problem in the country, but they will keep saying that we are against the carbon tax, that we do not care about the environment and that we do not care about climate change.

Actually, they are the ones who do not seem to care, because the carbon tax is doing nothing to reduce Canadian carbon emissions. On that very simple formula of whether it reduces emissions, the unequivocal answer is no, it does not. It is an absolute failure.

Business of Supply

Let us turn to the final piece of the puzzle. They will say that eight out of 10 Canadians are better off. They get more money as a result of the carbon tax than they pay into it.

There was a report that said that. However, then the PBO did another report called “A Distributional Analysis of Federal Carbon Pricing under A Healthy Environment and A Healthy Economy”. It showed that when we factor in the effects of the carbon tax across the economy, which I was just talking about, it makes everything more expensive and leads to unemployment. Most Canadian families lose.

It is like saying that I have an A in science because I got an A on the mid-term and an F on the final. That is effectively what they are saying.

The first report is irrelevant because the PBO dug deeper. I know it is hard. I mean, it is 20 pages, so they might not have the intestinal fortitude to read it. Pages 18 to 20 make it abundantly clear that the carbon tax is hurting Canadians.

Why will they not scrap it?

• (1545)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, decades ago, Alberta was one of the first governments in North America to implement the principles of a price on pollution. We had individuals like Stephen Harper who supports the principles of a price on pollution. We have 338 Conservative candidates in the last federal election who campaigned on the principles of a price on pollution.

A brand new, shiny leader, who is losing his shine awfully quickly, took ownership of the Conservative Party. Now they have taken a major twist that has turned into a flip-flop.

Why and how does the Conservative Party today justify rejecting the principles of a price on pollution when every other administration throughout the world seems to be adopting it?

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the carbon tax is punitive. That is why we want to scrap it. People living in a rural area, heating their homes with propane and driving long distances to work are getting absolutely demolished by the carbon tax, and the Liberals will wax on, saying, “So what?”

The carbon tax is designed to hurt rural Canadians, and it does. That is why we want to scrap it. It is an awful carbon tax. The Liberals should be embarrassed to keep propping it up. They should be taking responsibility for what they are doing to Canadian families and the affordability crisis. The carbon tax is one thing they could do to fix it, but they are so stubborn and ideological that they will not.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres denounced the corporate greed of oil and gas companies, saying they are making outrageous profits on the backs of the poor. ExxonMobil amassed a \$74-billion net profit.

Why are the Conservatives not proposing a tax on these enormously excessive profits?

[*English*]

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the member seems to not understand that oil and gas companies pay enormous amounts of taxes and they fund social programs and other things across the country.

Is the member saying that when they have a good year we should tax them more? Is he saying that in a bad year the government should be paying those companies some money?

If those companies have a good year, they pay a lot of taxes. If they have a bad year, they do not. That is how the system works. If he does not like it, maybe he should come up with a better system.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, if this is really about tax fairness, why do the Conservatives not agree to tax the ultrarich, like Loblaw's, which has profited millions while Canadians are struggling to pay for groceries?

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, all companies in our country pay taxes. When they have good years, they pay a lot of taxes. When they do not have good years, they pay very little taxes. That is how the system is absolutely designed. All companies should pay their fair share of taxes. If companies are engaging in profiteering, that should be examined. However, the tax system is pretty clear: If one makes money, one pays taxes.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have an invoice in front of me from an aerial applicator for agricultural spraying services, which is good for the environment because it reduces compaction of the soil, allowing for higher yields. The bill is for \$84,000 of which \$7,000 is the carbon tax. It is making life unaffordable at every step of the supply chain.

Would my colleague from Dufferin—Caledon comment on how charges like this make such a significant difference?

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the member is right. Those are exactly the same charges that farmers in my riding pay for drying grain. Maybe the Liberal members do not understand that they have to dry grain. They pay enormous carbon taxes as a result of doing that. What happens then? The price of grain goes up. On whatever crop was being used, the price is going to go up.

Business of Supply

The carbon tax makes everything more expensive, and farmers do not get more money back than they pay in. The result is higher prices at the grocery store, families going to food banks and families being within \$200 of not being able to make ends meet. The Liberals should really give Canadians a break and cut the carbon tax.

• (1550)

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in this important debate on environmental and fiscal issues.

Climate change is real. Humans contributed to climate change, so humans must contribute to reducing pollution around the globe. When I say humans, I am referring to everyone. I am referring to citizens, entrepreneurs, businesses, governments, states. I am referring to everyone. We must pitch in to reduce the environmental footprint of our actions in order to reduce pollution.

The path the government has taken to address the problem of pollution and reduce pollution is taxation. The Liberals love to say that they are putting a price on pollution. In real terms, it is called the Liberal carbon tax.

The minister was very proud to say earlier that this tax has only been in place since 2019. It has been around for almost four years, nearly half their time in power. That is not to mention that, starting in 2016, the government clearly stated that it was going to impose the Liberal carbon tax.

It is time to take stock. What is the actual, concrete result of this Liberal carbon tax? Has pollution been reduced? The answer is no.

[English]

This is why we do not like the Liberal carbon tax and want to put it aside. This is why we have a concrete plan to address the climate change challenges that we have to face and to be sure that we will have real results for all Canadians. Unfortunately, the Liberal carbon tax is not delivering less pollution.

[Translation]

It is not me saying that. It is the entire planet acknowledging it. Let us start at home. The Governor of the Bank of Canada has clearly stated that the implementation of the carbon tax, which will start to triple in April, has a direct impact on inflation. Everyone knows that the number one economic challenge for every Canadian family right now is inflation. The Governor of the Bank of Canada says that the Liberal carbon tax drives inflation higher. Canadians need that like they need a hole in the head.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer concluded in a study that Canadian families get back less than they pay in. The Liberal strategy was to say that they were putting a Liberal tax on carbon, but that they would give Canadians and families a rebate so they would come out even. That sounds great in principle. It sounds great in the classroom. It sounds great to spout high-minded principles and virtue signal. However, the reality, as confirmed by the Parliamentary Budget Officer, is that families are paying more than they are getting back from the government.

We know that, as of April 1, the government will begin tripling the carbon tax. That will have a direct impact on fuel, transportation, food prices and heating.

[English]

I talked about the whole world recognizing what the Liberal government is doing. Let us see the facts. A report based on a study by the United Nations was tabled at COP27.

[Translation]

In November and December, the entire planet gathered in Egypt for COP27. It is an odd place if ever there was one to talk about climate change, but it is not up to us to choose the location. It is up to the UN.

A report was tabled in the first few days on the track record of the planet as a whole, on the efforts being made to combat pollution and climate change. This report assessed 63 countries. I have that document here. The first study that was done provides a clear picture of how countries performed when it comes to dealing with climate change.

Canada, under this Liberal government, ranks 58th. We did not come up with this, the UN did. A panel of experts was created to analyze the 63 most developed nations in the world. Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries. These are people who have been constantly telling us for seven years now that “Canada is back”. They say that Canada is doing great, that we are making extraordinary efforts, that we have ambitious targets, that we are good for the environment.

I would remind the House that Canada ranks 58 out of 63 countries. The Liberals have always been sanctimonious.

• (1555)

That is what I had to say about tackling climate change.

Concerning greenhouse gas emissions, Canada, under the current Liberal government, ranks 57th out of 63 countries. That is not as bad, since it has moved up by one spot. That is what Canada is like with the Liberal carbon tax.

Concerning renewable energy, Canada ranks 52nd out of 63 countries. There are 51 countries that are more effective than this sanctimonious government.

Finally, if we look at the evaluation of energy use, Canada, under this sanctimonious Liberal government, ranks 63rd out of 63 countries.

It is not the Conservatives saying so, it is the United Nations in a report tabled at COP27. The document concludes that, when it comes to climate change, Canada, under this sanctimonious Liberal government that created the Liberal carbon tax, ranks 58th out of 63 countries.

Business of Supply

[English]

“Canada is back” said the Prime Minister when he was elected. Canada is way back eight years later; that is the truth.

[Translation]

Those are the UN's rankings.

Let me also remind the House that those folks over there got elected by saying that Canada was going to be a world leader in the fight against climate change.

I remember one particular moment very clearly. The member for Papineau had not been Prime Minister for three months when he went to a conference in Toronto to lecture everyone. He said that, yes, for sure, Canada is back and that what matters is not just what is under our feet, but what is between our ears.

He was proud to say those words, as though when we were in government, we did not care what people had between their ears. How arrogant.

In fact, it is more than arrogant considering that, after eight years of a Liberal government, Liberal Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries in the fight against climate change. None of the targets it set were met. Pollution was not reduced, despite the Paris Agreement. They said that the previous Conservative government's track record on the environment was abysmal, even though greenhouse gas emissions in the energy sector were reduced by 2.2% during the eight years of our government. The Paris Agreement could have changed the world. What did the entire planet do in Paris in 2015? It used the exact same targets set by the Canadian Conservative government, to the decimal point.

What did this government do with that target? It did nothing, zero.

Out of about 200 countries, barely a dozen or so met the Paris target. Where does the Liberal Canada of this sanctimonious government rank?

[English]

It is missing in action. It is not among those who achieved the goal of the Paris Agreement. This is typical Liberal virtue signalling. What are the results?

[Translation]

That is why we see the Liberal decision to impose a tax as a tax plan, not a pollution reduction plan.

In addition, the Liberals plan to impose their vision and their numbers on all the provinces, including on us, on Quebec. Quebec decided to join a carbon exchange. This proves that the federal government did not have to get involved, because the provinces could have done it if they wanted to.

Prices were set, but the federal government decided it had the power to impose its own carbon price on the provinces whose system is different from the federal system.

We will see in April, six months from now, a year from now, once the Liberal government has tripled the carbon tax, how the provinces respond. What will happen when the government in-

creases the carbon tax? The provinces will be stuck with it and will not have the right to say a word about it. We will see what the Liberal government does with that.

Our approach has always been clear. We want to use technology, not taxes, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Everyone, all Canadians, individuals, businesses and governments, we all have to work together to reduce greenhouse gases using fiscal incentives, not punitive taxes. We also have to green-light green energy to make it more readily available to Canadians.

What our leader said when he became the leader of the Conservative Party and the official opposition was absolutely right. He said:

• (1600)

[English]

“Green light to green projects”. This is where we stand. We have a policy to help people, not to tax them.

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I enjoy working with the hon. member on the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

The hon. member mentioned the UN, and he will recall the UN Kyoto climate accord, which the Conservatives cancelled. They not only did not meet their targets; they cancelled their targets. They cut \$350 million from the environment and climate change budget. There was not an environmental program they met that they did not want to cancel. They did absolutely nothing for 10 long years. I am wondering if the hon. member could share with us if he is proud of the Conservative record and maybe hit the high points of the Conservative climate plan. I would be curious.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I am sure the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent can answer the question. He does not need any help.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, yes, I have had the great pleasure of working with my colleague on this committee. Yesterday morning, I had to express my point of view defending their policy. We have great communication with that and I enjoy it. It is a warm-up before we come in. In a few years, we will be in this position and we will appreciate the collaboration with the opposition at that time.

Speaking of Kyoto, can the minister identify how many countries achieved the Kyoto agreement? There are not many. Maybe some countries liked the Paris Agreement, but again, the Liberals failed to achieve the target for the Paris Agreement.

[Translation]

I intend to table in the House the 2023 COP27 report, which concludes that Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries in addressing climate change. It is the UN document. I am certain everyone will be willing to let me table it.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table the document?

Some hon. members: No.

Business of Supply

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

I like you, sir. I like what you have to say, and you are a good Quebecker. I do not understand—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the hon. member to address the Chair, not the member directly.

The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Madam Speaker, I get too emotional.

As I said, I really like the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent. I appreciate what he has to say, and I think he is a good Quebecker. I kind of understand the Conservative ideology, and I respect it, but I do not really buy into it.

My colleague referred to the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I would like to know if he agrees with what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said, that 80% of households are now receiving more money back in rebates than they are paying into the carbon tax. This includes both low- and medium-income households.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, I like my colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles a lot too. I am certainly very proud to be a Quebecker, and I am also very proud to be a Canadian. He forgot that part. I am also convinced that there is a little Conservative in every good Quebecker. It depends on what we are talking about, of course. When it comes to the management of public funds, we pretty much agree.

The hon. member raised a very important point. Our institutions are called upon to assess the impact of each policy. Sometimes the results are good. Sometimes they are not. We have to look at the reality of certain regions. I am not talking specifically about Quebec, because Quebec has its own carbon exchange system. This is proof that the provinces can be self-sufficient in this respect. The National Assembly demonstrated this in 2011-12, if memory serves, under Premier Jean Charest.

Quebec decided to implement its own system, which is something the provinces could do, but the federal government decided to meddle and impose its own pricing system. In the places where the Liberal carbon tax applies, the Parliamentary Budget Officer found that 60% of people were not receiving as much money as they were paying for the Liberal carbon tax.

• (1605)

[English]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for what I think is a really important moment for Conservatives, and I hope they are listening. They are acknowledging the fact that climate change is real. That is a good place to start.

In this place, I seek a consensus, I hope, on issues that are affecting everyday Canadians, and one of them is the environment. The other is the cost of living. There seems to be a red herring when we are talking about the carbon tax because we can in fact do both: We

can ensure that we do good by Canadians by making sure we put a price on carbon and returning some of that to the Canadians who need it the most. However, it is not a silver bullet. I agree with the member that the government is failing our environment. It is failing, hands down. It is not a silver bullet and the Liberals are treating it as such.

On the other hand, we have the cost-of-living crisis, and New Democrats fought in this House and tabled an amendment to make sure that we would tax excess profits and have windfall tax on corporations. Why did the member vote against it?

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, it is important that every company pay its fair share. We will continue to fiercely criticize those who refuse to pay their fair share by evading taxes, which is totally unacceptable in our democracy.

[English]

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will say at the outset that I will be splitting my time with the member for St. Catharines.

Canadians are hurting. That is obvious. We see it every day on the news, and we hear about it in the House. While employment is strong, and this is not an insignificant positive, inflation is at its worst in 40 years. We have always had inflation. Every year there is inflation. Two per cent is inflation, but this inflation is obviously the worst we have seen in 40 years. That is a fact that is indisputable. We also have the first war in Europe in 78 years, and we have the most volatile climate ever.

I will start my speech with a quote, if I may. It is a quote from a Canadian farmer by the name of David Coburn, who is helping put food on the tables of families across this great country. This is from a CBC article from November, just a couple of months ago. Mr. Coburn said, “This is going to drive inflation... All of our food goes on our truck at some point in time so this is not gonna help the inflationary figures.”

What was Mr. Coburn talking about? He was talking about the price of diesel, the fuel that keeps the global economy moving. Here again, I quote from the article from the CBC website, which says:

Drivers may wince when the price of gasoline goes up, or decide not to drive if they can. But the trains, trucks, boats, and barges that keep the economy moving run on diesel — and they don't have that option.

The article, from back in November, goes on to say:

The average retail price of diesel in Canada has topped \$2.40 a litre at various points this month, a previously unimaginable level that has many businesses scrambling to keep up.

There are many reasons why it is happening, but the impact boils down to one basic thing: it's driving up the price of everything, and making inflation worse.

What has been driving up the price of diesel? We know that shutdowns of refineries for maintenance have an impact on supply and the price of diesel in a market that is driven by demand and supply. For example, the Irving Oil refinery in Saint John saw a shutdown for maintenance recently in the fall, taking 300,000 barrels a day of supply off the market. Refinery shutdowns for maintenance happen all the time, but when they happen in a very tight market, then we can see very wide swings in the price of diesel and the price of gasoline because barrels that might otherwise be available to meet local needs are just not there. In this case, in November, in New Brunswick, and therefore in Canada, barrels that might otherwise be available to meet local needs were being diverted to the other side of the ocean.

Again, I quote from the article, which is quoting a gentleman by the name of Patrick De Haan, a Chicago-based analyst with a website called GasBuddy.com. He says:

Europe is trying to move away from Russian oil products like diesel fuel, and as a result of that, much of the product that could be imported into the Northeast or eastern coast of Canada, as well as the Northeastern U.S. is being pulled over there.

• (1610)

Europe was essentially building stockpiles for the winter ahead, and that meant that, when the Irving Refinery shut down for maintenance, the market was very tight, and the price went up drastically.

Another factor that has increased demand for oil and gas is the rebound in airplane travel. I will quote another analyst, Paul Pasco, who is with a firm called Kalibrate. He says in the article, “air travel getting back to pre-COVID levels isn't helping either.” He then said, “Diesel, kerosene or jet fuel, they're basically all the exact same part of the barrel, they're all what's known as the distillate barrels”. Therefore, we have lots of factors that are contributing, or have been contributing, to the very high price of diesel.

The opposition will have us believe that all of these huge forces at play internationally are not really what is causing prices to go up. They contend that it is the price on carbon, but all experts will say, and I will quote a professor of economics at the University of Calgary, that the overwhelming dominant reason why prices are higher now compared to a couple of months ago is there are factors other than the price on carbon.

Professor Trevor Tombe said that the federal carbon price adds 11¢ to the cost of each litre of gasoline, and added that the notion that the carbon tax is what is behind high gas prices is a misconception. He said, “While, you know, 11 cents a litre is a meaningful level overall, they don't drive the recent increases that we're seeing.... It's really about global oil prices, and that's really driven by things far beyond the government of Canada's control.”

I do not know what they are talking about on the other side. I do not know what their researchers are telling them or why they are telling them what they are telling them, but they are invoking all the wrong factors to explain what is going on in the economy, and that is quite concerning for a party that claims it wants to govern the country. If Conservatives do not understand basic economics, how could they make big decisions?

Business of Supply

We know that the Leader of the Opposition holds Milton Friedman in very high esteem. One could say that he worships at the altar of Milton Friedman, and we know that he carries around under his arm a copy of Milton Friedman's *A Monetary History of the United States*. Let us see what Milton Friedman would say about this whole issue.

The University of Chicago school of economics, where Milton Friedman was the top economist for many years, held a forum a few years ago called, “What Would Milton Friedman Do About Climate Change?” Former U.S. representative Bob Inglis, a Republican from South Carolina, opened the discussion by playing a 1979 clip of Milton Friedman appearing on *The Phil Donahue Show*. Phil Donahue asked Milton Friedman, “Is there a case for the government to do something about pollution?” Friedman replied, “Yes, there's a case for the government to do something. There's always a case for the government to do something about it.”

He was basically saying that the market had broken down and was not operating efficiently, so something had to be done. What did he mean by saying the market was not operating efficiently? He said, referring to the cost of pollution:

those costs are real, and they're not being reflected in the costs of that electricity or the tank of gas. Emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere does allow you to produce electricity more cheaply, but there's a whole other set of people who are being punished or penalized. It's a poor idea of economics.

I do not know if the Leader of the Opposition read that quote by Mr. Friedman. He went on to say:

What we need is an adjustment mechanism that will enable us to adapt to what happens as it develops. Everybody in this room knows there is such a system, namely the price mechanism. If we have a problem today, in the air, with pollution, it is solely in my opinion because that system has not been allowed to work.

Then someone else—

• (1615)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member's time is up, but I am sure he will be able to continue during questions and comments.

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am glad the member quoted Milton Friedman. Of course, that member, being a member of the Liberal Party, is a great disciple of John Maynard Keynes, who used to promote spending as a way out of governments' problems and spending as a way of getting an economy back on track. Unfortunately, it is spending that has gotten our economy off track and into an inflationary spiral.

Will that member not admit that the spending his government undertook in Canada has driven inflation to 40-year highs and has caused the current unaffordability crisis in Canada? Will he now, at least, admit that?

Business of Supply

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, the policies the government implemented over the last two years did not cause the price of food to go up. They put food on the table for Canadians.

John Maynard Keynes's words of wisdom still ring true today in times of crisis. John Maynard Keynes said that the economy will adjust over the long term. An economy will always adjust if there is massive unemployment, as unemployment will be absorbed over the long term, but he said, "In the long run, we are all dead". That is a quote from John Maynard Keynes, and it means we should not wait for the long term. If there is a crisis today, we should take the measures that are going to alleviate the crisis and alleviate human suffering today.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to remind my colleague that ExxonMobil raked in \$74 billion in profits. That is an outrage, yet the government is not lifting a finger to get any of that \$74 billion back.

That is the problem. The carbon tax is not a problem for individuals, it is a problem for businesses. Small- and medium-sized businesses are being penalized, compared to large corporations that are prospering and benefiting from carbon tax exemptions and programs.

How can he justify that? I would ask my very dear colleague to explain how that is justified.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, it is true that profits in a given sector go up and down. What should we do? Should we change the tax rate every month to reflect changes in corporate revenues and profits? No, that is not the way to run an economy.

I agree that oil companies' profits have increased a lot. However, it is important to encourage these companies to invest in technologies that will reduce their greenhouse gas emissions so that we can produce oil in the greenest way possible, because we will always need to produce oil for various products.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, New Democrats support putting a price on pollution, but the Liberals' carbon pricing system lets big polluters off the hook. Under their output-based pricing system, Canada's biggest polluters pay the lowest carbon tax rate.

These loopholes mean that oil and gas companies only pay a tiny fraction of the cost of their pollution. Of their emissions, 80% to 90% are exempt. For instance, Suncor only pays about one-fourteenth of the full carbon price, and we on this side think loopholes need to be closed so that the oil and gas sector pays what it owes.

Does my hon. colleague not agree that these loopholes need to be closed so that the oil and gas industry pay their fair share? Does he think it is also time for hard caps to be introduced on the oil and gas sector so that we can make sure we meet the carbon emission targets we have committed to internationally?

• (1620)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I read just yesterday that Canada is the only oil-producing nation that is bringing in a cap system on methane, which is a very powerful greenhouse gas.

It is 30 times more powerful and damaging than carbon dioxide. As such, we are at the forefront, and we are putting in a cap. We are looking at doing so on methane. It is a challenge because we need to have the technology available that can really pinpoint where the methane is being released, and that is through satellite technology and so forth. There is still a lot of work to do in that area.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Public Services and Procurement; the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Climate Change; the hon. member for Vancouver East, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is interesting that we are debating this motion on February 7. I think it would have been more interesting to debate this motion on February 2, which is Groundhog Day. We are at it again and again and again with the Conservative Party, which denies, denies, denies climate change and its impacts.

It will come as no surprise to the members opposite that our government and the members on this side will not support the motion. I want to say why. This is a signature policy for members of the Liberal Party. We ran on it in the last federal election not too long ago.

We were given a clear mandate by Canadians to implement a price on pollution across the country. This is something that we have been consistent on since 2015; the other parties in the House have been consistent on it as well. It is a bedrock principle, a price on pollution, for cutting the greenhouse gases that are causing climate change and incentivizing a switch to cleaner ways of doing business.

Over the past years, Canadians have seen the Conservative Party sorely confused about this. The last Conservative leader embraced the principle. While we disagreed with the specifics of his policy proposal, he understood that he needed a plan to address climate change so that he and his party could be taken seriously by Canadians.

They voted on it. They ran on it. Every Conservative member in the House ran on it, including the hon. member for Carleton, who is now the Leader of the Opposition.

Business of Supply

Over the years, Conservatives across Canada have voiced their support for robust pricing systems. It makes sense. Price something that is bad. Price pollution. It is a market-based policy. If they would prefer a heavy, regulatory approach, I can understand. If so, the members could get up and say that want to regulate this policy rather than having a market-based solution. That would be surprising coming from the Conservative Party, but that is the alternative. They are silent on that. They have not thought it through.

Carbon pricing works by putting a cost on the one thing we do not want, and that is pollution. I hope that we can agree that we do not want pollution, although I am not sure we can.

Carbon pricing adds value to the things that we do want: clean air, affordable clean energy and well-paying jobs. It adheres to basic Conservative principles about policy-making. It is a policy that any Conservative who wants to be taken seriously on environmental action should embrace, and for a brief time, they did embrace it.

Let us look across the pond to the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom. Recently, at COP27, the UN conference on climate change in Egypt, we rolled out a challenge to countries around the world to put a price on pollution. The Conservative Party of the United Kingdom understands the market-based value of doing so, and we welcomed the United Kingdom's commitment to meeting the challenge.

• (1625)

It is interesting to see members on the other side of the House cosplaying Margaret Thatcher on everything except the one thing she spoke often about, which was the dangers of carbon dioxide. This was years and years before many people were raising the alarm bells on it.

Indeed, worldwide, since Canada launched our pollution pricing challenge in 2020, about 20% of greenhouse gases generated across the globe have been covered by a pricing system. That is because it is recognized as the most cost-effective and efficient system to support the climate action outcomes we need. On this side of the aisle and on part of the other side, as there is only one opposition party opposed to this now, although they have flip-flopped, we are proud of the system in place in every province and territory across the country.

The matter was already taken to the Supreme Court by Conservative premiers, and the Supreme Court ruled on the pricing pollution system. The decision said, “[T]he evidence reflects a consensus, both in Canada and internationally, that carbon pricing is integral to reducing GHG emissions.”

In provinces that are operating under the federal backstop system, all of the revenue is returned to the province of origin, with the climate action incentive payments putting more money into pockets than what is paid for eight out of 10 people. They will receive more. Let me repeat that: All revenues are returned to the province of origin. This is not a revenue-generating scheme for the Government of Canada, although we would not know that by listening to members on the other side. I am surprised they want to keep that a secret and do not want to tell that to Canadians. It is surprising.

In the past year, an average family of four received a rebate in Ontario of \$745. It was \$832 in Manitoba, over \$1,100 in Saskatchewan and \$1,079 in Alberta. That went back into their pockets. Those amounts will increase as the price on pollution increases. This is where Canadians should be left confused by the Conservatives on the issue. Clearly, under their new leader, they have chosen to sacrifice any semblance of credibility on environmental action and have taken to simplistic bumper sticker sloganeering, which is a favourite policy of the member for Carleton.

The Conservatives choose to tell Canadians only half the story, which, again, should not be surprising. They never seem to mention rebates. They also never mention that Canadians in federal backstop provinces receive their climate action incentive rebates at the start of every quarter, which could go toward home heating costs or grocery costs. They never mention that in a rural area, they get an extra 10% on the rebate. They never mention that for farming and fishing, there are exemptions on diesel.

Why are the Conservatives only telling half the story? Are they worried that if they told the whole story Canadians would not be behind them? That is quite possible. I would invite members of the opposition to take a different approach.

I would invite members to see what we can do as a government to support Canadians on affordable energy, over and on top of the climate action incentive rebates. That includes the half a billion dollars the government has put in place to help people switch from oil to heat pumps. We know people are struggling. We know the cost of living is challenging. However, climate change is contributing to that.

I have sat here today and listened to hon. members talk about increased food prices. What do drought and flooding do to that? What do hurricanes that impact farms across Atlantic Canada do to the cost of food? Why are hon. members of the Conservative Party not mentioning that? Why are they silent? If they are only telling half the story, maybe we should question the hon. members on what they are proposing. Maybe they are scared about what Canadians would think if they heard the whole story.

Taking action on climate change supports affordability for people coping with the high cost of living right now. This is in addition to all the supports to Canadians we introduced for rental, dental and tax relief, which the Conservative Party voted against. It is big talk from the other side on supporting Canadians, but when the votes happen, they are nowhere to be seen and are voting against.

Business of Supply

On this side of the aisle, we are helping Canadians switch from the roller coaster of oil and gas prices to a far more affordable and reliable made-in-Canada electricity for their homes and transportation. It is good for the climate and it is good for people's cost of living. It is good policy.

What the debate really boils down to is whether the party opposite believes in climate change. I am not sure they do. We never hear the Leader of the Opposition utter the words. He stood in the House today, and for 10 minutes, during a debate about pricing pollution, he did not mention climate change. It is an existential threat to this country and the people living in it, and the Leader of the Opposition is silent. His members are silent. They do not believe in it. They do not believe in the science behind it and it is absolutely shameful. Even though just a few months earlier every single one of them ran on—

Mr. Clifford Small: All the dinosaurs are going to die.

● (1630)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame that he will have an opportunity to ask a question when it is the appropriate time, should he decide to do so. It is not appropriate for him to be yelling across the way while the hon. member is doing his speech.

I also want to remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that while I am speaking, he should not be trying to speak across the way either.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member from Newfoundland is upset because he has witnessed the devastation of climate change in his home province and he remains silent. He remains silent when his constituents are suffering. He remains silent and it is shameful. He and his entire party need to step up.

What we will see, if we make pollution free, is more pollution, stronger storms, higher temperatures, more drought, more flooding, more atmospheric rivers, more fires and more floods. It is costing Canadians billions of dollars for each one of these storms. We used to say these were 100-year storms, but they are happening every year.

The members of the Conservative Party can act like ostriches and stick their heads in the sand, but on this side of the House, we believe in the science, we believe in climate change and we are going to move forward on environmental action for Canadians.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, I just heard my hon. colleague reference atmospheric rivers. I wonder if he could let the House know if we can dam those atmospheric rivers and make hydro power. That would be a wonderful thing to do to get some emissions down.

We always get one thing from ministers in the Liberal government when we question them about the carbon tax: They try to shame us into thinking the carbon tax is going to stop storms that start in Africa from reaching Atlantic Canada. Does the member think the second-largest country in the world, which produces less

than 2% of the world's emissions, is going to stop hurricanes from happening by bringing in a carbon tax?

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, we can tell what the Conservative Party believes in by the hon. member's opening statement. He was making a joke about atmospheric rivers and a storm that cost the people of British Columbia billions of dollars, that impacted farms and that increased prices on food. It cut off British Columbians from the rest of the country, through the Trans-Canada Highway, and he is making a joke about that.

It is evident in their policy that the Conservatives and the hon. member do not believe in climate change. He is not serious about it, even though he witnessed a 100-year storm, one of the worst storms to ever hit Atlantic Canada. He witnessed it and looked into his constituents' eyes, and here he says, "I do not care."

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is so disheartening.

The fight against climate change is important. It is one of the major challenges of our time. Canada, as a G7 country, must deal with this problem.

The party on the right has no plan. It could not care less and is incapable of presenting any ideas that would suggest that it wants to fight this problem. Meanwhile, the party in government has a plan, but that plan is not working.

Canada is the worst country in the G20 when it comes to average greenhouse gas emissions. It is the worst country in the G20 and the only G7 country whose emissions have increased since 2015, since the Liberals took office.

The Liberals can bombard us with quotes about how green and sustainable they are and how they are doing business, but the Liberal plan is not working. The planet is burning, and Canada has no plan to deal with it.

● (1635)

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, I first want to comment on the interesting fact that when the Leader of the Opposition gave his speech, he said everything in English and for some reason did not say any of it in French. Maybe there is a message he is hiding from the people of Quebec.

Ultimately, there is no government in this world that has done more on climate change in the last seven years than our government. We have a \$100-billion plan to address climate change, which includes a price on pollution. We are working with the provinces and municipalities. We are serious on this issue and Canadians believed us, because they put us here for the third time in a row.

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, I had the pleasure of meeting with the Canadian Labour Congress today, which told me its workers are experiencing challenges because of the rising cost of inflation and wages not increasing. Meanwhile, we know of businesses like Imperial Oil, which is making huge profits. It made \$2.4 billion in the last quarter, which was a sixfold increase compared to the same quarter last year.

I wonder if the hon. member can explain why the Liberals will not put a windfall profits tax on big oil and gas companies.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her clear passion for workers and unionized workers, which I share, coming from a blue-collar union town in St. Catharines.

The hon. member mentioned the cost of living and how it is impacting workers across the country. However, there is silence from the other side on climate change and its impacts, such as droughts and now floods in California; floods across the Prairies; wildfires in Alberta; atmospheric rivers, which the hon. member for Newfoundland joked about; and the hurricane that hit Atlantic Canada, which all significantly increase the cost of food and directly increase the cost of living. If parties are not going to be serious about climate change, both in this country and in other countries, we are going to see more pollution, a higher cost of living and a higher cost of food.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, “I am sick and tired of people talking about the cold winter”. These are the famous words used by the member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl in response to a previous Conservative motion to have the carbon tax removed from home heating fuel. Here I stand again on behalf of the great people of Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, and in fact all the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and Atlantic Canada, to proudly support yet another Conservative motion to axe the carbon tax.

The cult-like Liberal plan to triple, triple, triple the carbon tax on Canadians is a recipe for disaster, yet my fellow Newfoundland and Labrador MPs who sit on the other side of this House continue to push that agenda. Everyone knows the carbon tax is intrinsically inflationary. Carbon tax drives up the price consumers pay for things produced and delivered using fuel. This includes, well, everything.

According to the chair of the Atlantic Canadian premiers, energy poverty in Atlantic Canada is nearly 40%, the highest in the country. Newfoundland and Labrador's Liberal premier, Andrew Furey, begged the Prime Minister not to put carbon tax on home heating fuel. It will drive up heating costs by over 20% when it kicks in on July 1. Premier Furey, a close friend of the Prime Minister, said in early September that ending the current carbon tax exemption on heating fuel would place “undue economic burdens on the people of this province.”

The four Atlantic premiers wrote to the federal environment minister around the same time to request an exemption on the January 1 deadline to end the home heating fuel carbon tax exemption. They were flatly turned down by the Liberal government, whose intent to tax the right to heat one's home reflects its cult-like beliefs that taxing the essentials of life will lower carbon emissions. Its NDP coalition partners are partial to the same cult-like beliefs.

Business of Supply

When asked about this in question period, Liberal ministers try to shame us into thinking that somehow a Canadian carbon tax will magically shield us from hurricanes that start off the coast of Africa. Atlantic Canadians do not buy it. The Liberal carbon tax is thus far a complete failure.

Since the government took office in 2015, our emissions have increased, along with the carbon tax, with the exception of 2020, when they dropped, probably because the Prime Minister and his World Economic Forum buddies parked their private jets.

The leader of this carbon tax regime, the Prime Minister, brags that Canadians receive more in rebates than they pay in carbon tax. He should stop misleading Canadians while he contradicts the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the PBO, who said in March that carbon tax will deliver a net financial loss to most households. The Prime Minister should listen to experts like the PBO, but what can we expect from a guy who said that the budget will balance itself?

The failure of carbon pricing in Canada is in stark contrast to the success Americans have had in reducing their emissions. They did not bend to climate activists, but instead used technology and did things like converting coal plants to natural gas. The people of my province do not have the option of converting to natural gas, so they will need to continue for the most part with diesel heating fuel. I will say more about natural gas a little later on.

When implemented, the carbon tax, combined with HST and heating fuel, will be more than 14¢ per litre. According to Premier Furey, this constitutes a 20% increase on the cost to heat a home. This is with carbon pricing at just \$50 per tonne. This is set to rise to \$170 per tonne by 2030. That will drive up the carbon tax on that same litre of fuel to about 55¢ per litre with the HST included. This is nothing short of a disaster created by Liberal government members, whose least concern is the real lives of Atlantic Canadians. It is a complete slap in the face to the very people who have put so much faith in them since 2015.

I hear from nervous constituents all the time, constituents already stretched to the breaking point by out-of-control inflation. Winter is here. Atlantic Canadians are choosing between food on the table and a warm home. Recently, the environment minister bragged about his new program to switch homeowners from heating with fuel to heating by heat pumps, a plan that can help, at best, 3% of homeowners.

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• (1640)

Where does this leave people like Corey from Gander? Last year, Corey spent \$4,000 on oil to heat his home. The Liberal carbon tax will add \$700 to his annual heating bill. Corey considers himself middle-class, but with this inflationary tax increase, he is worried about paying his bills.

Felicia from Pikes Arm told me that she spent \$6,000 in only 10 months last year to heat her home. The carbon tax on just 10 months of fuel will cost Felicia over \$1,000 extra if the Prime Minister does not back down on his tax-hiking plan.

Felicia and Corey do not need a carbon tax to force them to adjust their thermostat. The price of oil has doubled in the last year. The people of Atlantic Canada cannot take more of this inflationary tax pressure on their lives. Real people with real bills to pay are really fed up. They are much more intelligent than the Prime Minister and his climate change cult make them out to be. They know that this is a tax-and-spend climate plan, and it is not going to work.

The Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador knows it is not working and says that it is completely unnecessary, with the price of oil where it is and where it is projected to go. According to most experts, oil is forecasted to be, on average, about \$92 per barrel this year and will rise to \$125 per barrel by 2025. With these prices where they are and where they are going, there is already enough pressure on consumers to cut their consumption.

According to the CBC, which, by the look of it, is abandoning its carbon tax love affair, Nova Scotians alone will pay \$1 billion extra on home heating fuel by 2030. That is quite the tax grab. Can members just imagine \$1 billion, and no guarantee that a tangible tonne of carbon emission reduction will take place? The one thing that is guaranteed is that money in people's jeans will be reduced by this inflationary tax pressure.

If the Prime Minister was serious about cutting emissions, he would be supporting countries around the world like Germany and pushing to supply them with natural gas. However, what did he say when the German chancellor came begging? He said that there is no economic case for shipping natural gas from Newfoundland and Labrador to Europe.

The island of Newfoundland is 4,000 kilometres from Europe. Meanwhile, in the U.S., LNG plants all through Texas are shipping liquefied natural gas with the value of \$1 billion a day to Europe. The Gulf of Mexico is twice as far from Europe as Newfoundland is. Argentina, in a partnership with Petronas, is building a \$10-billion LNG facility to export natural gas. The only place further from Europe than Argentina is the South Pole. However, our wise Prime Minister says that the island of Newfoundland is too far from Europe to make economic sense to take on such a project. Meanwhile, Germany has had to convert its natural gas plants back to burning coal, which doubles the emissions it produces.

Instead of helping our allies, harvesting the trillions of cubic feet of natural gas on the Grand Banks and boosting the prosperity of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, the Liberal government promotes air pollution in Europe and energy poverty in Atlantic Canada.

To wind down, the carbon tax drives inflation. There is one country in the G7 that has managed its inflation, but it does not have a carbon tax and its inflation rate sits just above 2%. That country is Japan.

So, the verdict is out. The carbon tax is inflationary and does nothing to cut emissions. That is why I am proud to support our current Conservative motion to axe the carbon tax, and I hope that my colleagues on the other side of the House, especially those from Newfoundland and Labrador and the Maritimes, stand with their constituents when they stand to vote on this Conservative axe-the-tax motion.

• (1645)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a number of questions for the hon. member, like why are the people of Newfoundland not burning Newfoundland natural gas? Why are they sticking with oil?

Second, why have we not heard anything from the Conservatives about the fact that big oil is jacking up the price, and its profits, while big oil countries like Saudi Arabia and Russia get together to limit production so the price for everybody goes up? I say, the sooner we get these bandits out of our pockets, the better for everybody. What does the member have to say about that?

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank my colleague, the hon. member from British Columbia, a fellow member of the FOPO committee. I always like to work with him.

Since 2015, there has been an attack on the oil and gas industry in Canada by the hon. member's party. I am sure he is ashamed of it. We have oil and gas to produce here that could bring down inflation.

We need to produce more of what money buys, including oil. That would take on these dictators all over the world. If we were to compete with them in their own market, that would be how we bring them to their knees and help our own people at the same time.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Madam Speaker, I salute my colleague and thank him for his impassioned speech. He is also known to be very passionate at the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, of which we are both members. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with him.

I understand the position of my colleague, who is distraught by the carbon tax and seems to be obsessed with it. I would like him to comment on the Bay du Nord exploration project.

The poor got poorer and the already rich oil companies got even richer during the pandemic, and now oil exploration will be allowed in Bay du Nord.

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[English]

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, even though Newfoundland and Labrador right now is not a have province, we are still paying into the equalization formula here.

Bay du Nord is going to produce the cleanest oil in the world. It is going to allow Newfoundland and Labrador to give some equalization payments to Quebec so it can help the poor. It is a great privilege for a small province such as Newfoundland and Labrador, with a population of just over 500,000, to be able to produce our oil, get royalties from it and be prosperous, while reducing dollars for dictators and helping the people of Quebec enjoy some of the royalties we get from our oil.

• (1650)

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, in the last election, the Conservatives had a plan for climate change. This was the plan: They were going to charge Canadians who purchased fossil fuels a tax. It gets better. They were going to take that tax, put it in a special savings account and only allow Canadians to spend it on certain things, such as electric bicycles, solar panels and such. It seems like an odd policy for a party that, first of all, is struggling to decide whether to take the issue of climate change seriously and, second, espouses to be the party of freedom.

My question is not whether the member believes that this is a priority for Canada. My question is whether he understands the gravity of the situation that we face when it comes to global climate change. Does the member understand the issue?

Mr. Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, I would just like to say that my hon. colleague from Tobique—Mactaquac is going to take over after me here shortly.

Yes, I understand. What we propose to do is this: We are going to use the technology to capture the carbon and reinject it. We do not think that cutting a quarter of a per cent of the world's carbon, produced by the largest country in the world, is going to save British Columbia from atmospheric rivers.

Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today to speak to this.

There is an ancient saying that has been with us, has withstood the test of time, and has been tested time and time again and found to be true. Leaders should follow this advice, and it is that we should all be quick to listen and slow to speak. Oftentimes, it would seem in this House we maybe put the reverse in action and are maybe quick to speak and slow to listen, but Canadians are speaking. They are speaking loudly and clearly. I think they are all wondering whether we are listening.

It seems that right now the direction the current government is taking is out of touch with the needs of ordinary Canadians, who are frustrated, growing ever more anxious and wondering how they are going to make ends meet. As time keeps marching on, the bills keep rising, their taxes keep rising, the cost of living keeps soaring, interest rates are rising and inflationary pressures are abounding, Canadians are wondering whether those who represent them are listening to their cries and hearing what they are saying.

I rise today to say that here on this side of the House we are hearing what they are saying and we are going to take action. That is why we proposed this bill to axe the carbon tax and make life more affordable for everyday Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Too many Canadians are feeling absolutely disconnected from those who represent them. The current government is tremendous in the art of virtue signalling and verbosity, and is excellent at throwing out grandiose phrases about how it is going to turn back the tides and heal the planet, and that somehow if we tax it enough it will go away. However, when we get beyond the “tax solves all things” approach, we get down to the realities of where most Canadians are living, and that is how they keep the heat on, how they fill up their cars and how they keep groceries in the cupboard. Seniors are thinking they cannot take any more pressure on their bottom line when their income is fixed and their costs keep soaring. The question many Canadians have is whether the government hears them and whether it will respond.

The government has a tremendous opportunity to take that classic absolutely amazing first step by supporting this bill and saying, because of the duress Canadians are under, the pressure they are feeling and the overwhelming soaring costs they are facing, it is time to axe the carbon tax and put an arrest on it so Canadians can start heating their homes without feeling that undue pressure they are feeling at this time.

The Liberal government's plan to triple the carbon tax is not an environment plan; it is a tax plan. It is designed to bail out a government that has overspent and lived beyond its means, yet the Liberals send out the grandiose phrase that they are going to stop hurricanes and cause all kinds of wonderful things to happen, if people only pay more taxes. It is not reality. It is, in fact, very expensive virtue signalling.

What Canadians need to know is who is listening to their practical needs in this time of economic crisis for their households. Grocery bills are going up, gas is going up and home heating is going up, yet we get up and talk about how we are going to increase the tax until we feel better on the inside about what is happening internationally.

I think Canadians want practical solutions. They want a government that responds to their needs, and right now they are in need. They need a government that responds to that need, and we are here to make sure their voices are heard and represented. That is why we brought forward this motion in response to their cry. The reality is that this plan to triple the carbon tax will only increase the cost of gas, groceries and home heating for citizens all across the nation.

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Rural Canadians are disproportionately affected by these taxes. I represent an area that is filled with small towns. They are rural communities, where people have to drive to work. They have to drive to get their kids to sports. It is not a matter of luxury. They cannot jump on transit; there is no transit. They have to drive in order to live and function. There are producers and farmers in my area, whom I hear from, and their input costs are soaring. People are wondering why grocery bills are going up. It is not the farmers' faults. It is overtaxation and the burdens and cumbersome regulations that have bogged down the best of Canadian society.

I think what I hear from the farmers, producers and harvesters across the region is to let the farmers farm, let the producers produce, let the growers grow, let them get back to work, so they can do what they love to do, and to stop being on their backs.

• (1655)

If members hear what I am hearing, Canadians are saying that enough is enough. We can be responsible environmental stewards, which is a priority for this side of the House, and it can be done through technology and innovation, not taxation. We can do it by getting innovative. We even have proof from a neighbouring jurisdiction.

While we were virtue signalling and signing accords all over the place, our carbon emissions were going up. We ranked 57th out of 60 nations at tackling climate change emissions, yet the jurisdiction closest to us cut its greenhouse gas emissions while expanding its energy sector, which is amazing. How did that happen? It was transitioning from coal to natural gas and utilizing that. Canada has an abundance of that type of supply. We have nuclear innovations, all kinds of hydroelectric power and some amazing innovations. We can be a pro-environment and pro-sustainable planet and develop our resources out of the best environmental regulations and regimes on the planet. It is a good-news story.

Let us stand up for Canadian energy and Canadian resources. Instead of punishing those who produce our wealth, let us help them up. They are not looking for a handout, but for someone to say that the current government understands what they are doing. We can pull the country out of the economic malaise if we enable our private sector to do what it does best: innovate, produce and get to work.

We hear so much about this, and I would tell members that the carbon tax has got to be probably the most extremely expensive and ineffective virtue signal for environmentalism in the history of the planet. It has cost Canadians more and produced no results. We heard testimony at the natural resources committee from the environment commissioner of Canada who was asked if there is a metric that can tell us how much carbon has been taken out of Canada's environment as a result of the carbon tax, which has been in place for over a decade in some jurisdictions in this country, including British Columbia. The answer was that we have no such metric as of yet. Therefore, the landmark signature piece of environmental legislation from the current government does not even have a metric that can tell Canadians how much carbon has been reduced as a result of its implementation. If we were to ask them, I would say that Canadians, and those in my region in particular, would tell the government there is no evidence of its effectiveness, other than its

diminishing effect on their pocketbooks, and would ask it to scrap the tax and get rid of it.

Our country has the fifth-largest supply of farmland and we continue to hinder farmers from doing what they do. We never give them credit for the carbon sequestration happening with respect to our agricultural lands. We do not give our energy producers credit for using innovation to make energy cleaner. We never talk about the amazing stuff that is happening in Saskatchewan with respect to carbon sequestration and carbon capture. We have an amazing story to tell, but instead the government brings out another tax and then says it is going to triple it. That is the last thing Canadians want to hear. It is not effective.

What would be effective is if the government responded to the cries of Canadians from coast to coast who are hurting and whose pocketbooks are dwindling by saying that it hears the opposition, that it is a good idea, and that it is honest enough to admit that this approach is not working so it will scrap the tax and give Canadians a break. That would be amazing news and a tremendous sign of unity in this House.

I fully expect that Canadians will be voting for us to axe the tax. It would be an amazing accomplishment for all Canadians. I am sure they would cheer it. It would have a great effect.

I would ask members to reflect on this expression. I have to wind down and conclude. Pardon me for getting excited, but this is an area of passion. There is an old saying in leadership circles that goes, "Many are those who curse the wind, but real leaders adjust the sails." We have been cursing the winds, the changes in climate and all of the stuff that is happening, and somehow we have convinced ourselves that if we tax it it will go away. I would say, rather than cursing and taxing the wind, how about we adjust the sails and say we should adapt. Let us help the world's environment by getting more Canadian-produced clean energy and food on the markets and help the planet become greener and cleaner. We will all do better. Join us in axing this tax.

• (1700)

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his passion on this particular topic, but he does not have a lot of facts. I wonder if the hon. member knows that last year's price on pollution went up by 2.2¢. Does the member know that 95% of the increase in the cost of gas was because of inflation caused by international events and various margins in the various provinces, and that eight out of 10 families get more money back than they pay at the pump?

If the hon. member has heard the cries of affordability of Canadians, why did that side of the House vote against rental support, dental support and the Canada child benefit, which has lifted 400,000 people out of poverty? They voted against seniors, who he talked about. We increased the OAS by 10%, and he voted against it.

Why does the hon. member not adjust his sails?

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Madam Speaker, one thing is for sure. In all the time that I have been in office in the region that I represent, I have never had one citizen knock on my door, call me or send me an email to say that, whatever I do, I should raise people's taxes so they can feel better about the environment. I have never had one constituent say that, if we double, triple or quadruple the carbon tax, that person would feel so much better.

However, I have had numerous constituents reach out to my office, some in tears, saying they went into the grocery this week and they do not know how they can afford to keep going with prices soaring the way they are. They would love for me to go home this weekend and say we just axed the carbon tax. They would be so happy to hear that response. I hope the Liberals will help these people.

• (1705)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Madam Speaker, we have just witnessed an amazing show put on by the party next to us. I worked a long time in the arts, so I could really appreciate the show put on by our colleague and his fellow members.

However, a show is superficial. What I really want to know is how my colleague thinks he can control the damage caused by hurricanes and control the rise in illnesses caused by pollution, using nothing more than a carbon tax reduction.

Will it be enough, given the total cost of climate change to society?

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to my colleague from Quebec's question.

[*English*]

I will simply say this, and the answer is very clear. It is in technology and innovation. I believe Canadians have the best environmental practices for extraction of energy and utilization of energy, as well as for farm production and growing our food, of anywhere in the world and in comparable jurisdictions. We have a great news story, and the more we can replace dictator oil, and the more we can replace oil from regimes that do not have near the environmental regulations that Canada does, the bigger the favour we are doing for the world's environment.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague and I agree on one thing, and that is that people are most definitely struggling right now. I can be on board with us identifying and moving forward with practical solutions, such as those the member was speaking of.

I am wondering if the member could explain why, when only certain provinces would benefit from this motion, he would not support us removing GST from all home heating, so we could look at, as he says, cutting a break for those who are struggling most.

Mr. Richard Bragdon: Madam Speaker, the removal of the tax would benefit all Canadians from coast to coast because every Canadian is affected by the carbon tax. Every time they go to the grocery store, the sticker shock from what they are seeing on

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the grocery shelves is in part a result of the carbon tax, because everything that is trucked, shipped and hauled is affected by the carbon tax, in every province and every jurisdiction in this country.

We need to take this measure and cut the tax so people can keep the heat on in their homes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, if everyone agrees, I will share my time with the member for Perth—Wellington

What we are hearing right now is rather frustrating and sad. It kind of makes a person want to bang their head against the wall or slit their wrists in despair. As I said earlier, there is a major worldwide crisis right now, the climate crisis. It is huge and it is important, and we talk about it every day.

Not long ago, the entire world met in Egypt to try to find solutions. According to what the UN chief told the entire globe, we need to do something and quickly. The situation is urgent. We need to take action. The major countries need to take action and make changes to the system so that we can change course. People are going to die. They are going to be forced into poverty. There are going to be natural disasters, floods and hurricanes, and they will happen more and more often. The UN chief is not the only one saying that. That is what is being said by thousands and thousands of scientists who write detailed reports that we can read. These things are most definitely going to happen.

We now know that, 50 years ago, scientists were already predicting what is happening today. We know because we are living it right now.

Canada is a G7 country. The party that is in government says it has a plan. Every day, during oral question period, the Liberals stand up and declare that they are going to do this and that. They talk about targets they are going to meet and they say that this or that is going to happen. However, that is not working.

The plan by my friends across the way has never worked. Earlier, I presented the numbers showing that nothing the Liberals have done is working. Canada is the worst per capita greenhouse gas emitter in the G20. Despite all the fine speeches, all the interventions, all the reports, all the scientists and studies in committee, Canada produces more greenhouse gas emissions per capita than any other G20 economy. Canada is the only G7 country whose emissions have increased since 2015.

What happened in 2015? Coincidentally, the Liberals came to power in 2015. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change is Mr. Équiterre, Mr. Environment. He is a star of the environmental left who told himself that he would make his stand in a G7 country, take action and effect change from the inside. However, the situation is only getting worse.

The Liberals constantly repeat that they are taking action, but they are not getting results. Today, my Conservative friends, who are not pleased with this action that is leading nowhere, have announced that they will do even less. They propose to get rid of it all, to do nothing and to never intervene.

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I have never gotten a clear answer to a question that I have asked my Conservative friends many times: What will they do? This is not the first time that they have introduced such a motion. It is groundhog day with the Conservatives, who constantly propose cancelling the carbon tax. They always talk about the plan to triple, triple, triple the carbon tax. We cannot take it anymore, they have to stop.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Denis Trudel: Seriously, you keep repeating yourselves. This is not easy for us. It is hard on the brain. Hearing the same things over and over again will drive anyone a little crazy. We have been hearing members say “triple, triple, triple” for six months now. At some point, enough is enough.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Denis Trudel: This is not theatrical production, and I cannot respond to members who call out to me. In theory, this is a speech—

• (1710)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Madam Speaker, I understand you were speaking with someone else, but there are members of the Conservative Party talking to my colleague while he is making his speech.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Yes, but the hon. member answered.

I ask everyone in the House to respect the person who has the floor and not to argue during that time. Those who want to have discussions should leave.

Mr. Denis Trudel: Madam Speaker, so, I was trying to engage in constructive dialogue with my Conservative friends. I was saying that, no matter how many opposition days we spend talking about getting rid of the carbon tax, we will never come up with anything resembling a solution.

Earlier, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent, whom I like very much, was asked a question. What would the Conservatives do? What is their plan? We know they want to axe the carbon tax, but what would they do instead? This is a major emergency situation.

We all know this country switches back and forth between two governing parties. We spend 10 or 15 years with the red party, then 10 or 15 years with the blue party. Sooner or later, the blue party will be back in power. In the meantime, the orange party plays a supporting role over there. That is how the Canadian system works. Sooner or later, the blue party will be back in power with no plan, no idea what to do about the greatest crisis of our time.

As I said earlier, this is both sad and disheartening. It is enough to make anyone want to bash their head against a wall. No wonder people in Quebec want to leave this country. No wonder we have 32 seats here. The red party and the blue party would love to get their hands on our seats in Quebec, but they are not taking action.

They are not taking meaningful action on issues that are important to Quebeckers. A large majority of Quebeckers agree with me. People come to my office, people from organizations like Mothers Step In and La Planète s'invite in Longueuil. I meet young people and mothers in my riding who are worried about the future of humanity. They come to see me. They say we have to do something. They ask me to take action, to tell Parliament that we must take action. That is what I am doing. They have mandated me to do so. I am here to tell the so-called decision-makers in the government and the official opposition that they must take action. Something must be done. It is truly appalling that they have no plan to deal with the biggest challenge of our time.

The Bloc Québécois has solutions. We have asked the government what needs to be done. First, Canada needs to stop investing in fossil fuels. That is absolutely essential. My Conservative friends are always saying that we need to invest in fossil fuels. It is unbelievable that the Liberals outdo even the Conservatives when it comes to supporting oil companies. I am not joking. The Liberals are so useless that there are environmentalists out there who miss the Conservatives. We are talking about an annual investment of \$8.5 billion in fossil fuels.

How much social housing could be built for \$8.5 billion? How much housing could be built to help people who need it? There is a major housing crisis in Quebec and in Canada. I do not know how many times I have talked about this in the House.

The Liberals promised they would stop investing in fossil fuels in 2023. I remember asking them about that on December 11. I brought up their promise that investments would drop to zero in 2023, which was 20 days away at that point. It was time to start thinking about it. Now it is 2023, and I have heard nothing about stopping investments. This is one of the first measures that must be implemented. This money must be invested in renewable energy. We need to make a radical shift. Quebec is ready to do that. We have Hydro-Québec. When the company is not being spied on by China, it makes very good electric batteries. They are working on electric motors. We need to put our money there.

What could we do if we put the \$8.5 billion we send to Exxon-Mobil into other things? That company made \$75 billion in profits last year. Those poor people. Seriously though, we must take this money and invest it in the energies of the future. That is what we need to do.

• (1715)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, listening to the member from the Bloc, one would think that all we need to do is click our heels and the transition would be complete and there would be no more fossil fuels being used in Canada.

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The member needs to recognize that there is a transition period. There have been some investments. We work very closely, for example, with the NDP provincial government in British Columbia on the LNG. It is about the principle of putting a price on pollution, as governments around the world have recognized the true value of that. It appears that the Conservative Party today has made it very clear that it opposes that principle.

I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts in terms of the principle of the price on pollution and the benefits to society.

• (1720)

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel: Madam Speaker, the carbon tax is a very good measure. However, it needs to be increased far more drastically than it has been so far.

I think the UN was recommending that the tax be set at \$200 per tonne now. Based on what we are hearing, it will be about \$170 per tonne in 2030. That is much too late. It is two minutes past midnight right now. It is no longer one minute to midnight. We must do something drastic.

My colleague's intervention makes me think of what my Conservative colleagues have been saying all day. They want to have it both ways. We have passed that point. It is after midnight.

[English]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, at a time when the planet has to reduce its carbon emissions, oil companies are making record profits. Canadian oil and gas companies are forecasted to make a record-breaking \$147 billion in 2022 alone.

I want to read a short quote from UN Secretary-General António Guterres. He said the fossil fuel industry is “feasting on...subsidies and windfall profits while households' budgets shrink and our planet burns.” He said that we need to hold the industry and its enablers to account. He said, “I am calling on all developed economies to tax the windfall profits of fossil fuel companies.”

New Democrats believe we should be doing that. I wonder if my hon. colleague agrees.

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel: Madam Speaker, I completely agree. I mentioned it in my speech. As I am not an expert, I cannot say how much we should tax those companies. We can see their profits are indecent.

Those industries are still making bloated profits from what is happening in the world at this time. We must take this money and invest it for our children. The future of the planet is at stake. There is money there. It is indecent. We must invest it for the future.

[English]

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, my riding is one of the strongest mining regions in Atlantic Canada. I have a copper mine very close to where I grew up. Right now it is struggling to stay open because of

the carbon tax. Every megawatt of wind energy that is generated needs 1,500 kilograms of copper to produce wind energy.

I know my hon. colleague from *la belle province* represents, for sure, lots of mines in his area. Mines are being developed to produce minerals for the green economy. Does he think that those mining companies should be subjected to a carbon tax when they are in fact producing things to produce green energy?

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel: Madam Speaker, that is not really my area of expertise, but I do know that the Bloc Québécois proposed a transitional period for oil industry workers.

What we are saying is that, one way or another, fossil fuel production will have to cease. However, we know the industry creates a lot of jobs, and we know that matters. These are moms and dads who work in an industry, who have jobs, kids, hobbies, a house and bills to pay, just like everyone else.

We are concerned about this, and we are ready to sit down for some level-headed negotiations to figure out how to make this transition, which needs to happen now, as painless as possible for these people.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Perth—Wellington, unfortunately, has only two minutes before we end the proceedings.

The hon. member for Perth—Wellington.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will make full use of the full 120 seconds that I am granted to contribute to this debate.

The reason we are here today is because after eight years of the current Liberal government, Canadians are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. Therefore, we are here today with a very simple motion. It is a motion that so many Canadians would appreciate; that is to axe the carbon tax. We believe in keeping the heat on by taking the tax off.

This motion is about the people of this country who work hard each and every day to provide for their families. This motion is about the farmers and farm families who go out every day and produce the food that, quite literally, feeds our country and feeds the world. This motion is about the small business owner who goes to work every morning and works hard to provide the services and the goods that will make our country operate. That same small business owner goes home each night and sits around the family kitchen table, adds up the expenses and figures out how to make payroll for the next week and figures out how to make their small business survive. Often, these businesses have been in the family for decades and for generations, and now they are at risk of closing because their expenses keep going up because of the decisions made by the current Liberal government.

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This motion is clear: Let us take the carbon tax off; let us stop the inflationary effect that the carbon tax is having on Canadians and let us make sure the farmers, the families, the parents and small business owners are allowed to get ahead.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 5:26 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forth with every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*English*]

The question is on the motion. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): 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. John Nater: Madam Speaker, we request a recorded division.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, February 8, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to call it 5:41 at this time so we could begin private members' hour.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is there consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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[*English*]

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed from November 16, 2022, consideration of the motion that Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Chad Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity that the member for Montcalm has provided me to reaffirm the government's support for Canada's supply management system and for the bill before us. We know that our dairy, poultry and egg producers want to keep the system strong and sustainable well into the future, and so do we.

Canada's supply management system is a model of stability. It provides a fair price for farmers, stability for processors and high-quality products for consumers, and has done so for over 50 years. Supply management is a pillar of rural prosperity. It sustains farming families and rural communities.

The great contribution of supply-managed sectors to our economy is undeniable. In 2021, the dairy, poultry and egg sectors generated almost \$13 billion in farm gate sales and accounted for over 100,000 direct jobs in production and processing activities. In this context, supply-managed sectors have played a significant role in making Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry a leader in sustainable food production and processing with high economic growth potential.

For these reasons, the government has consistently reaffirmed its unwavering support for Canada's supply management system, including in the context of international trade agreements.

During the negotiations of the new NAFTA, the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA, Canada faced significant pressure to dismantle the supply management system. I cannot stress enough how hard we had to resist. However, we succeeded, and all three pillars of the supply management system remain firmly in place: production controls, pricing mechanisms and import controls. Looking into the future, we will continue to preserve, protect and defend all three pillars of Canada's supply management system.

For this reason, in line with the spirit of the bill, the government has publicly committed that we will not provide any new market access for supply-managed products in future trade agreements. This policy has been clearly and publicly stated by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. Bill C-282 would make this commitment even stronger.

We have made this commitment and we will keep it. In fact, we demonstrated this most recently during the negotiation of the Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement, which did not include any new access for cheese or other supply-managed products.

Furthermore, the government believes that ensuring greater involvement of the public, stakeholders and parliamentarians in Canada's trade agenda strengthens the defence and promotion of our broader economic interests, including supply-managed sectors. As such, we have increased transparency in the conduct of trade negotiations and have enhanced reporting obligations to Parliament for new trade agreements.

In November 2020, we updated the policy on the tabling of treaties in Parliament to provide additional opportunities for members of Parliament to review the objectives and economic merits of new trade agreements. Furthermore, in 2018, this government committed to fully and fairly compensate producers and processors of supply-managed commodities, including dairy, poultry and egg farmers, impacted by recent trade agreements.

Our government will continue to preserve, protect and defend our supply management system in the context of any challenge by our trading partners. We are confident that Canada is fully compliant in the implementation of its trade obligations, and we will vigorously defend our interests.

To close, let me reiterate the government's unequivocal commitment to maintain supply management as a pillar of strong and sustainable rural prosperity into the future. Bill C-282 is aligned with our commitment, and for this reason, we support it. The government is fully committed to defending the integrity of supply management while also continuing to pursue the ambitious trade agenda on which economic recovery depends.

• (1730)

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the first question I have when looking at this bill is, “Why did we end up here?” Why did we end up with a member who has to put forward legislation that would embed in legislation no further negotiation of access to supply-managed industries in Canada?

The answer is that, after eight years of a Liberal government, the supply-managed sector in this country believes they have been failed and they are in need of additional protection. The Liberal government, in successive trade agreements, has continued to negotiate additional access to supply-managed industries here in Canada, and the industries have had enough. They have lost faith in the government.

They are asking if someone could please put forward legislation that would protect them into the future. I one hundred per cent understand why they feel that way, because in trade deal after trade deal, more and more of their industry gets negotiated away by the Liberal government, which will stand up to say that it respects supply management and its pillars, but will then sign trade deals that do the exact opposite. A member in this Parliament has said, “Enough is enough,” and they have introduced this legislation.

In Dufferin—Caledon, the number one driver of economic activity is the agricultural sector, and we have incredible dairy and poultry farms in my riding. I have had the pleasure of visiting and touring those farms on many occasions. Those farmers work extraordinarily hard to deliver the incredibly high-quality products into the Canadian market.

Their biggest fear is what the government is going to do next to make their lives more difficult, whether it is tripling the carbon tax or the various other ways it makes farming more difficult. They are concerned. Farmers have reached out to me to say that they want this legislation to be supported so that they would know that, when the Liberal government negotiates a new trade deal, they would not find themselves giving up more and more market access, which makes it more and more difficult for them to run their farms.

That is why we are here. It is another failure of the Liberal government to stand up for Canadians. In this case, it is Canadian farmers.

From this side, I think this bill deserves to be studied. It should go to committee, so we could hear what the implications are of enacting something like this in statute. I know there are some in the agricultural sector who would say that they are not thrilled with

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this. I think we should hear from everyone. Let us hear what they all have to say to decide whether or not this is something that, as a Parliament, we should put forward.

I want to come back to this being a pretty sad day to be here, when an industry in this country feels like the government does not have its back going into trade agreements and wants to stop the government from having the ability to even negotiate any further access. They have completely lost faith in the government.

I have the same view as those in the dairy sector and all the supply-managed sectors. I have lost faith in the government as well. I look forward to this bill proceeding to committee, where it could be studied in great detail.

• (1735)

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure and a privilege to stand in the House and speak to supply management. At one time, I had the honour of being the official opposition critic for international trade, so I remember well this issue and how deeply it engages so many people who live in this country.

I also recognize the threats that supply management has been under for a long time. This bill, Bill C-282, an act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act with regard to supply management, is introduced by my colleague from Montcalm, whom I have the pleasure of serving with on the health committee. I want to congratulate him for this bill, because I think it is a very important and necessary piece of legislation that, unfortunately, is required because supply management has been under threat by successive Liberal and Conservative governments, which have continued to push trade deals that increasingly carve away at one of the key pillars of supply management.

This bill would forbid the minister from promising to make larger percentages or amounts of imported dairy products, poultry or eggs, which are supply-managed products in this country, eligible for lowered or waived tariffs. In other words, it would forbid the minister to reduce tariffs applied to these goods when more than are eligible for lowered or waived tariffs are imported.

It is unfortunate that we even have to do this, because I have stood in the House for a number of years when successive Liberal and Conservative governments have passionately risen and stated their undying commitment to supply management and their commitment to the farmers in their ridings that they would never encroach upon this very well-thought-out and important system, and then have turned around and negotiated trade deals that increasingly give other countries increased quotas to come into our country.

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Why is that a problem? I am going to start by explaining just a little bit what supply management is. It is a system that started in the 1970s and that was meant to provide farmers in key industries in this country with the ability to have a stable income and to know how much supply would be provided in any given year. This is the real strength of the system. It is a system that rests on three key pillars.

It was brought in because those farmers were suffering through very wild price fluctuations, especially on commodities: One year they might do very well, but the next year they would face ruin. Many farms experienced great difficulty in planning for the future. We know that if one wants to stay competitive and maybe even have an edge in agriculture, investments in technology and machinery are absolutely critical. Supply management provides that certainty, so that farmers can make those investments with the firm knowledge that they will be able to recoup their investment and sell their goods for a fair price.

The three pillars of supply management are production control, pricing mechanisms and import control. It has been referred to as a three-legged stool. Of course, we all know that if we affect one leg of a three-legged stool, then the whole seating structure is at risk. What has been happening in the trade deals, negotiated and signed by successive Conservative and Liberal governments, is that they have focused on the import control leg of the pillars and they continue to allow more and more goods to be imported into Canada in those supply-managed sectors, which of course threatens the entire system.

What this bill would do is remove the ability of the trade minister, when negotiating a trade deal, to put those supply-managed commodities on the table and to trade off, as it were, supply-managed sector goods for other trade benefits.

This happened in the TPP. It happened in CUSMA. It happened in CETA. Those agreements did allow, first the European Union, then the TPP countries and now the United States and Mexico, to make ever-increasing inroads into being able to get more of their goods into Canada. I will try to put that into perspective, to see why it could be so destabilizing.

● (1740)

It is my understanding that the entire production of milk in Wisconsin would be enough to serve the entire Canadian market. One can only think about those very large corporate farms in the northern United States that, if they were able to have untrammelled access to the Canadian market, would be able to flood Canada with products on an economy of scale that would make it impossible for Canadian farmers to compete.

The other factor that is critically important is that supply-managed sectors also give us the ability to make made-in-Canada regulations around the production of our food. For instance, there are certain growth hormones, certain ways of production and certain chemicals that are permitted in other countries that Canada would not want to have in our food system.

At the end of the day, Canadians, when given a choice, would like to source their food from local producers. Canadians want to know that they are supporting their neighbours, their small towns

and rural Canada, and that we are helping those farmers and those farm families to make a decent living. We want to know that our food is produced in humane, high quality, safe and healthy manners. This means that Canada should have control over our domestic food production. Again, most Canadians support that and I know that the vast majority of farmers in supply-managed industries also support that.

I want to just touch briefly on a couple of myths. There is this myth that this artificially increases the price of these goods and the Canadian consumer is somehow being exploited or taken advantage of by the supply-managed sector. Nothing could be further from the truth because what supply management does is provide stable prices. I know that right now in this country we have a crisis in the price of food, but in regular times, generally when someone goes to the store to buy a litre of milk or a dozen eggs over the last 20, 30 or 40 years, they know that they are going to be faced with a stable price. In non-supply-managed countries, they may have extraordinarily cheap eggs and milk one year and then if there is bad production in the next year due to bad weather, blight or disease, the prices of those goods skyrocket. Therefore, what supply management does for consumers in this country is provide a stable source of high-quality, supply-managed goods, including poultry, eggs and milk, at stable prices. That ensures that everybody has access to these excellent products at all times.

I know that I speak for my New Democrat colleagues when I say that we are firm, committed and passionate believers in the supply-managed sector. We know it is a system that works well for rural Canada, for farmers and for consumers. To use the old metaphor, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

We also know that the forces that are constantly wanting to cut this away are not forces that care about Canadian farmers, small-town communities, rural Canada or consumers in Canada. Rather, they represent large agribusiness, usually multinational agribusiness, or right-wing economic ideologues who are just pursuing a free-market frenzy philosophy without any regard for the actual impact that this will have on our community and our country.

Therefore, we are very proud to support this bill to committee. We look forward to listening to the evidence and testimony. I want to again congratulate my colleague from Montcalm for this excellent bill. We look forward to working together to strengthen the supply-managed sector in this country so that Canadian farmers and Canadian consumers have access to high-quality products at all times.

● (1745)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to represent Shefford, a riding that is located in the region known as Quebec's pantry. We are proud of our farmers. Agritourism is at the heart of my riding's economy. I love going around to all the public markets and talking to local farmers.

Naturally, the subject of Bill C-282, supply management, is vital to many of them. During the last election campaign, I promised the Union des producteurs agricoles de la Haute-Yamaska that I would fight tooth and nail for supply management and introduce a bill. I also made the same promise during a press conference with the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, the riding next to mine.

It is therefore with great humility and tremendous respect for the work of the first dynamic trio who recently went to bat for the vital issue of supply management that I rise to speak on this subject. I am talking about my dear colleagues from Berthier—Maskinongé, Montcalm and Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

I will begin my speech by talking about the importance of supply management. Then, I will remind the House of the Bloc's historic role on this issue and close with the words of some farmers from my riding.

First, the bill amends the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act to include the protection of the supply management system as part of the minister's responsibilities. It adds supply management to the list of directives the minister must take into account when conducting business outside Canada, including in international trade.

Once this bill comes into force in its entirety, the minister responsible for international trade will have to stand up for supply-managed farmers in front of our trade partners. The minister will henceforth have the mandate to negotiate agreements without creating breaches in the system, as it did during the signing of the three most important international trade agreements of the past decade.

The bill has become necessary, not least because of the serious breaches that previous governments, both Liberal and Conservative, opened up and negotiated in the last international trade agreements. These breaches in the supply management mechanism prevent the system from working effectively by attacking the integrity of its basic principles, namely pricing control, production control and border control.

In Canada, only the markets for dairy, table eggs, hatching eggs, and poultry, meaning chicken and turkey, are under supply management. This is a system that was put in place in the 1970s. It ensures that we produce just enough to meet domestic demand while avoiding overproduction and waste. It also ensures price stability.

Prices are controlled by setting a price floor and a price ceiling so that each link in the chain gets its fair share. That includes the consumer, who can be sure of getting a very high-quality, ethically farmed local product. Another aspect is border control, which includes very high tariffs and import quotas, preventing foreign products or by-products from invading our market. Because the market is largely closed to imports and there are price controls in place, producers do not end up in a never-ending race to lower production costs.

The current government is taking a number of worrisome actions that compromise the ability of Canada—and especially Quebec, which has a different agricultural reality—to choose the type of agriculture it wants to develop. In fact, the recent free trade agreements, particularly the one with the United States and Mexico,

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CUSMA, will have catastrophic consequences for certain products and processors under supply management.

Border control is the pillar most weakened by the international agreements. However, given that supply management has never come under fire from the World Trade Organization, or WTO, Canada has every right to protect its markets so long as it complies with the degree of openness established by the WTO.

If international agreements and the WTO give Canada the right to protect its markets, why have there been concessions? It is because Canada cannot cope with pressure from trading partners during negotiations. It is as simple as that. It succumbs to lobby groups and arguments made by other countries that want access to an as-yet untapped market at all costs.

Despite the new aid programs, which were a long time coming, it is abundantly clear that no compensation can possibly make up for the permanent damage caused by concessions in agreements with Europe, the Pacific Rim nations, the United States and Mexico. Accordingly, the Conservatives' argument about how compensation was promised under the Harper Conservatives during the opening rounds of the first two agreements is false.

Second, I want to stress the following point: The Bloc Québécois has always defended supply management in Ottawa. This is the second time that this bill has been tabled and, if not for the unnecessary election that the Prime Minister called in August 2021, Bill C-216 might have made it to the Senate by now.

By contrast, the House had to adopt four motions unanimously to ask the federal government to fully protect supply management. However, the Liberal and Conservative governments presumably did not feel bound by this commitment when they signed the last three free trade agreements. In fact, because of the concessions that were made, these agreements were catastrophic for agricultural producers and processors under supply management, who are now wondering about their future.

● (1750)

Supply management is a model that is envied around the world, especially in jurisdictions that have abolished it. In Quebec, agriculture is practised on smaller farms where there is a much greater concern for quality and respect for the environment. While Quebec's quality-centred agriculture sector is flourishing, with an ever-increasing variety of local products and organic farming, Ottawa is taking the opposite approach by encouraging more industrial agriculture.

Until the Quebec government is present at international negotiations and until it gets to act as the sole architect of agricultural policies, there is a serious risk that Ottawa will align the federal government with the needs of western Canada. The Bloc Québécois simply wants the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party to keep the promise they have made more than once to stop making concessions at the expense of supply-managed producers. That is all.

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It was Stephen Harper's Conservatives who got the ball rolling in 2008. Supply management first started crumbling with the Canada-Europe free trade agreement negotiations, because the Canadian government started putting supply management on the table, something it had never dared to do in the past. Since then, there has been one breach after another.

Supply management has always been a key issue to the Bloc Québécois. During the entire time that the Bloc Québécois had a strong presence in the House, which I remember well, as I was an assistant then, the government signed free trade agreements with 16 countries and fully protected the supply management system.

During the federal election that followed the creation of the WTO, in other words the June 1997 election, defending the supply management system was already one of our election priorities. That was quite a few years ago. The Bloc Québécois was the first party to move a motion in the House calling for the pillars of the supply management system to be fully maintained. The House will recall that the motion was adopted unanimously by all parties. What is more, for practically every major negotiation, the National Assembly of Quebec has unanimously adopted a motion calling on the federal government to protect supply management. We are the defenders of supply management, the voice of supply-managed farmers.

Third, I want to share the words of farmers back home. Nancy Fournier, a farmer from Saint-Alphonse-de-Granby who is a member of the board of directors of the Haute-Yamaska branch of the UPA and part of the next generation of Quebec farmers, told us that she is proud of our efforts and our support for agriculture.

Denis Beaudry, a farmer from Saint-Alphonse-de-Granby, said the following: "The bill is very relevant because we are fed up with supply management being used as a bargaining chip in treaty negotiations. From a more local perspective, the riding of Shefford is home to many supply-managed businesses, so when supply management is mishandled, the agricultural community suffers. I look forward to seeing whether the other parties will support the bill. The government said that it would no longer compromise on supply management. We will see."

Valéry Martin, a communications advisor at UPA de l'Estrie, said the following: "Supply management provides stability and helps maintain the country's food self-sufficiency. Supply-managed farms are everywhere, keeping our communities strong. There are not many sectors that can provide this kind of predictability, food security and superior quality products without direct subsidies."

I want to say one last thing. Without supply management, there would not be many people left in Abitibi, Saguenay, Lac-Saint-Jean or the Gaspé, because it helps ensure that there are family farms all across our beautiful Quebec nation. If there is one economic sector that is key to how our land is used in Quebec, it is the agricultural industry. The statistics speak for themselves. With \$9.1 billion in sales generated by just over 42,000 farmers on 29,000 farms, Quebec agriculture is essential, important, vital.

Agriculture is going through a very difficult period, however. We are at a crossroads, where we will have to choose between following the trend of more open markets and protecting domestic mar-

kets in order to promote human-scale agriculture. We will need strong agricultural policies that will help local farmers make a living providing top-quality agricultural products to consumers.

Consumers are also placing increasing demands on farmers. Farmers are being asked to produce better-quality food that is more diverse at a lower price. They are also being asked to protect the environment and use Quebec's land to benefit all of society. As incredible as it may seem, despite the meagre support they receive, farmers are doing a brilliant job of rising to this challenge, despite the pandemic, the labour shortage, the disastrous consequences of the free trade agreements, the war in Ukraine and the inflation crisis.

We must respond to the requests of this sector that feeds us, that sustains us. Tomorrow, let us put partisanship aside and vote in favour of Bill C-282. We must take action.

• (1755)

The Deputy Speaker: Since no one else wishes to speak, we will go to the hon. member for Montcalm for his right of reply.

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, here in the Bloc Québécois, we work as a team. Protecting and promoting supply management matters to all of us, not just the member for Montcalm, as does the outcome of tomorrow's vote.

Supply management has been a priority for me since I first came to the House in 2015, and, as the sponsor of Bill C-282, I have to say that, for my friend and colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé, protecting supply management has truly become an obsession. That obsession can be satisfied only once Bill C-282 comes into force. To make that happen, we are going to need the tenacity and skill of our colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, because if Bill C-282 makes it through the crucial vote tomorrow, it will then go to the Standing Committee on International Trade, of which our colleague is a member. I also have to say that it has the unconditional support of every member of the Bloc caucus, who stand not only with me, but with supply-managed producers.

As this debate at second reading comes to a close, I see that the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford and his party will support my bill. Last week, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food held a press conference to announce that the Liberals are supporting Bill C-282 at every stage. It is not clear where the Conservatives stand. They will sleep on it, but let us not take anything for granted, even though Bill C-282 is identical to Bill C-216, which, in case it needs to be repeated, received the support of a majority of members before the last unnecessary election.

I travelled around some of Quebec's major agricultural regions with my colleagues, the member for Berthier—Maskinongé and the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. We met a farming community that is more mobilized than ever and determined to defend and promote supply management. We also met Quebeckers who care deeply about the advantages of this agricultural model. Indeed, supply management has proven its worth, especially during the pandemic, in terms of self-sufficiency and food security, and consumers are finding that they have access to an adequate supply of high-quality food at competitive prices. They actually want to bring farmers closer to their plates. They want farms with a human dimension, not mega-farms that are fuelled by overproduction and the waste of food and resources.

Farmers in the United States actually want to return to supply management, because their model, based on overproduction, favours only mega-producers and makes human-scale farms disappear. This often means that quality disappears, as well. Consumers can see the beneficial effects of supply management on sustainable agriculture, on land use and on regional economies.

Our producers deserve to no longer feel threatened every time a free trade agreement is negotiated. They want predictability, they want to be able to imagine the future, to be able to ensure succession and to preserve their quality standards. The time has come to take action. All countries protect sectors of their economy that they consider to be essential before sitting down at the free trade table. In the United States, that is the case for cotton and sugar.

After several motions were unanimously adopted by the House of Commons, successive Conservative and Liberal governments did not keep their promises and, on three occasions, made long-term and irreparable breaches. Only one law will prevent this from happening again. My mother used to say that it is never too late to do the right thing. If we truly respect those who work to feed us, we must walk the talk and vote for Bill C-282.

● (1800)

Therefore, I invite all Conservative parliamentarians who have yet to be convinced to vote for Bill C-282 so not one more government will take it upon itself to sacrifice, on the altar of free trade, supply management, our agricultural model and the men and women who feed us.

The Deputy Speaker: 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.

Mr. Luc Thériault: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made Thursday, June 23, 2022, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, February 8, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

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ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am speaking tonight about the opioid crisis and the organizations responsible for causing the opioid crisis.

It is now a matter of public record that Purdue Pharma, a pharmaceutical company, developed oxycontin, mislabelled it, misbranded it and actively promoted it in such a way that fuelled and, I think, in many respects, caused the opioid crisis that has killed so many people and devastated so many families here in Canada and around the world. In response to these actions by Purdue Pharma there have been various lawsuits, especially in the United States, that have sought to hold Purdue accountable.

Notably, in the timeline of Purdue's actions and subsequent measures to hold it accountable, Purdue was found guilty of criminal misbranding their product in a way that downplayed risks and contributed to the opioid crisis. It was found guilty in 2007.

The company, McKinsey & Company, that we have been speaking about in this House, did work for Purdue Pharma for a period of about 15 years and that spanned from 2004 until about 2019. In other words, most of the work done by McKinsey & Company for Purdue Pharma happened after Purdue had already been found guilty of criminal misbranding.

When McKinsey was brought on, part of its mandate was to figure out how to address, in the face of escalating criticism over Purdue's actions, concerns about the tapering off of opioid sales. McKinsey approached this in a totally amoral way, coming back with recommendations that showed no regard for those suffering from addiction, no regard for the impact on communities and families, but instead looked exclusively at how to increase, or in their words, turbocharge, the sale of opioids.

Some of the recommendations that McKinsey brought to Purdue Pharma on how to do that are truly horrifying in their disregard for human life and well-being. McKinsey had proposed, for example, that bonuses could be paid out to pharmacists in instances where there were overdoses. McKinsey also proposed that, in order to get around checks that were being put in place in traditional pharmacies to try to control over-prescription and address addiction issues, Purdue could try to circumvent those controls by having a mail-in system whereby people could access opioids through the mail. Those were the kinds of proposals that McKinsey was bringing to Purdue Pharma.

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For about two-thirds of that 15-year period that McKinsey was working for Purdue Pharma, Dominic Barton was the managing director. He claimed at committee to have absolutely no knowledge of what was going on during this time. The fact of the matter is that he was the managing director of this company that for 15 years was doing work for Purdue Pharma, advising them on how to turbocharge opioid sales, showing no concern, no regard whatsoever for the impact that this was having on human life and on families and communities throughout North America and around the world.

As a result of the advice provided by McKinsey, McKinsey had to pay a settlement in the hundreds of millions of dollars in the United States. Meanwhile, the government has a clear, close relationship with McKinsey and Dominic Barton.

I asked the government this question that I would like to ask again tonight. Did the Prime Minister or members of his cabinet ever discuss opioid policy with Dominic Barton or the senior leadership of McKinsey?

• (1805)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will give the member full credit: He is like a dog with a bone on this particular issue. However, he is very selective in what he tells us. He tries to give a false impression that the Government of Canada and the Prime Minister have a wonderful cozy relationship with Dominic Barton or McKinsey & Company.

Yesterday, the member decided to have a three-hour debate inside the chamber on this issue, and what we found out is that there was a cozy and comfortable relationship between Dominic Barton and Jim Flaherty. I will remind the member opposite that Jim Flaherty is not a Liberal. He is a Conservative. In fact, he was the minister of finance for the Conservative Party. That is where the cozy and comfy relationship was.

The member talks about McKinsey & Company. I should remind him that not only has the government had contracts with McKinsey & Company, but so did the Stephen Harper government. The member has the tenacity to try to say that the opioid crisis we are facing today, which is a very serious issue that provinces, municipalities and Ottawa are trying to deal with, is somehow directly tied to McKinsey & Company, as if to say maybe it would not have happened if the company did not get contracts, or as if to blame Ottawa for this so-called special relationship. How ridiculous is that?

It is sad and somewhat shameless that the Conservative Party would try indirectly, using contracts that have been issued by a professional civil service, the very same civil service that worked on and issued contracts under Stephen Harper, to blame civil servants for not doing their homework before awarding contracts to McKinsey & Company. That is Conservative politics. It is truly amazing.

We need to recognize that circumstances in all situations should be looked at. If the member was concerned and had these concerns years ago, and I suspect he did not, maybe instead of trying to grandstand yesterday and prevent the government from being able to debate legislation that talked about foreign investments in Canada, he could have focused his attention on the standing committee that deals with procurement. He could have raised the con-

cerns he is raising today, but maybe not the conspiracies. I would suggest that the member take off the tinfoil hat, sit down with the standing committee and talk about ways to improve upon the system, as opposed to attacking the civil service and as opposed to character assassination of the Government of Canada.

If we really want to look into the mischievous mind that the Conservatives on the other side have, we should look at Jim Flaherty, as I pointed out at the beginning. I would be interested in hearing the member's comments on Jim Flaherty and maybe how Jim Flaherty might have had some influence with someone like Dominic Barton. Maybe he should be brought into the conspiracy. Maybe Stephen Harper should be brought into the conspiracy too, because his government also issued contracts. The member should apply his tinfoil hat to those two thoughts.

• (1810)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to speak more about the over \$100 million in contracts that the government gave to McKinsey & Company. However, my question tonight is specifically on behalf of the families that have been devastated as a result of the opioid crisis and is about the role McKinsey played.

The member wants us to believe that it is a tinfoil hat conspiracy to suggest that McKinsey played a role in fuelling the opioid crisis. McKinsey had to pay a settlement of over half a billion dollars because of its role in supercharging the opioid crisis. The member surely cannot be so fundamentally ignorant about the history of that crisis or about the massive settlement the company has had to pay in the United States to spread that nonsense here in the House of Commons.

The reality is that McKinsey provided detailed advice to Purdue Pharma on how to supercharge the opioid crisis. It did so at the same time that Dominic Barton, who was leading McKinsey, was advising the Prime Minister's growth council.

This is a very simple question that the Liberals have refused to answer, so I will ask it again. Were there conversations about opioid policy between the Government of Canada through the Prime Minister and those working at McKinsey, yes or no?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am talking about how the member and the Conservative Party of Canada are taking advantage of the opioid crisis, which is killing people from coast to coast to coast. It is a sad circumstance that has been devastating to the families and friends of people who have endured overdoses, and they are turning it into a political issue. They are not necessarily blaming McKinsey & Company, but rather, they are trying to make a connection between the Government of Canada and the Prime Minister to that company and Dominic Barton. That is what the Conservatives are trying to do with the situation of the opioid crisis. I say that is shameful.

If the member and the Conservative Party are genuine and really want to contribute to the debate on these type of contracts, they would be better off to raise the issue in the standing committee to see if we could change the regulations so that future contracts put out by the civil service —

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise virtually in the House tonight to pursue a question I initially asked in question period. I asked it on November 14, 2022, just as COP27, the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, was under way in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt.

The Secretary General of the United Nations opened that conference saying that the world is “on a highway to climate hell, foot still on the accelerator.” That is the situation we are in today, and the question I put to the minister was whether the Prime Minister had chosen to stay away from Sharm el-Sheikh and COP27 knowing that we are one of those countries with the foot on the accelerator.

I want to concentrate more, in the time I have this evening, on the response I received from the hon. parliamentary secretary. His response was that we are doing wonderful things in Canada, that our foot is not on the accelerator, and that we can ignore what we are doing in expanding fossil fuel infrastructure with the shameful decision to buy the Kinder Morgan pipeline, spending public money on a project that violates indigenous rights, threatens the ecosystems of the 800 crossings of watercourses between Alberta and Burnaby, and threatens the ecosystems of the Salish Sea with a spill that would not be of crude oil but, even more impossible to clean up, diluted bitumen. We can set that all aside and ignore it because of all the wonderful things the government is doing.

The hon. parliamentary secretary pointed to \$100 billion in climate spending and a \$9-billion emissions reduction plan. Let us be honest about this. Let us stop pretending that spending billions of dollars will protect our children and grandchildren from an unlivable world. When the UN Secretary General spoke of climate hell, he was not being hyperbolic. It is the reality of the science we are looking at, and it is deeply distressing. In fact, looking at it soberly, it is terrifying.

One of the things we know is that the IPCC report from last spring, April 4, 2022, spoke of the opportunity we have to hold to the Paris commitments of a 1.5°C global average temperature increase, and as far below 2°C as possible. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change made it clear that both of those goals, both of those avoidances of the worst, will not be possible unless global emissions of greenhouse gases hit their peak and then drop rapidly before 2025. We are at 2023, and we have less than 24 months to ensure that global emissions hit their highest-ever level and drop rapidly from there.

The Government of Canada continues to pretend that by spending money on electric cars and consumer heat pumps, which is a good thing to do, it can distract the Canadian public with the fact that it is spending \$8 billion on more subsidies through something called carbon capture and storage, which, all around the world, has already been shown to be highly expensive and highly ineffective. We are also spending hundreds of millions of dollars on nuclear technology, which is not a solution to the climate crisis.

We are putting money, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, into what we now own, a pipeline that we are all shareholders in, the Trans Mountain pipeline, for a horrible total of \$21 bil-

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lion. In other words, the government is spending more on putting the foot on the accelerator on the highway to climate hell than we are in avoiding that disaster.

● (1815)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, building on the outcomes of COP26, Canada's engagement in the lead-up to and at COP27 was an opportunity to highlight our government's ambitious domestic climate actions, including by sharing best practices and lessons learned, as well as advocate for ambitious and concrete action by all, particularly major emitters.

Our government was pleased to set up Canada's first national pavilion at COP27, providing an opportunity to showcase Canadian climate action, amplify global efforts, support the developing countries and support the Egyptian presidency priorities. Canada continues to work with all parties to make the UNFCCC process as effective as possible with a focus on implementation.

It is undeniable that the impacts of a changing climate pose a serious and significant threat not only to our health but also to the Canadian economy. I agree with the hon. member that Canada and, indeed, all of the world's nations need to step up efforts to decarbonize our economies in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

That is why, since coming to power, our government has taken bold and decisive action by introducing strong environmental legislation and by putting in place regulations that will cap emissions and set Canada on a path to becoming net-zero by 2050.

My hon. colleague knows that our government has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% to 45% below 2005 levels by the year 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050. We introduced the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act to help us deliver on these commitments.

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Most recently, we released the 2030 emissions reduction plan. This plan includes \$9.1 billion in new investments and provides a framework for meeting our 2030 emissions reduction target. During the last federal election, we pledged to step up our efforts to reduce Canada's reliance on more carbon-intensive sources of energy by accelerating our G20 commitment to eliminate fossil fuels, from 2025 to 2023. We have also invested over \$120 billion in climate action and environmental protection that will bring forward results throughout the Canadian economy.

The environmental measures we have brought forward are intended to provide a cleaner and healthier environment for our children and grandchildren while promoting a strong economy that works for Canadians and their families.

From a consumer point of view, I will quickly add that we talk about things such as the banning of single-use plastic items, the planting of literally hundreds of millions of trees, and the types of things that Canadians can actually step up and also contribute to. There are the bigger, macro issues that the government is dealing with, and there are also those issues where Canadians have demonstrated a wonderful willingness to participate in making our planet a greener and better place to be.

• (1820)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, when the parliamentary secretary and so many Liberals before him use words like “bold and decisive” to describe the Liberal climate action, they probably believe it, but just for honesty's sake, let us take out “bold and decisive” and put in what it is, “incremental”. These are incremental things, like Christmas baubles on the Christmas tree, but they do nothing to ensure that our kids will have a livable world.

I do not envy my friends, such as the hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change or the Prime Minister, but they have run out of time for wiggle room and run out of time for procrastination. I have been working on this issue since 1986, and governments before them have used up all that time.

We are now in a crisis, and the contest is between what is politically feasible and what is scientifically necessary. We are still playing with our children's future by betting on doing too little and leaving it until too late.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize that the impacts of climate change continue to intensify, as witnessed most recently through the destructive force of hurricane Fiona, which devastated a number of areas throughout Atlantic Canada. It is evident that we must adapt, and adapt quickly, to our ever-changing environment. That is why our government is working on finalizing Canada's first national adaptation strategy with its partners. Our government recognizes that we need to do more to help prevent and protect our citizens against climate change.

I look forward to continuing to work with my hon. colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands to achieve our mutual objectives. I think that, at the end of the day, we are moving very much in a progressive fashion forward on our environment, and I do appreciate the many contributions that the leader of the Green Party has put forward.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, under the Liberal government's watch, thousands of innocent refugees and migrants are being locked up in prisons, treated like criminals, simply for seeking safety and a better life in Canada.

On November 14, 2022, I asked the government whether it would stop incarcerating migrants and asylum seekers in provincial jails, as has been called for by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. In response to my question, the parliamentary secretary said that, “immigration detention is a measure of last resort.” That is the same message the Minister of Public Safety's office told CBC, indicating that, “the government continues to seek alternatives”.

The government's record tells the true story. Every year between 2016 and 2020, under the Liberals, the number of immigration detainees increased, and 8,825 people were detained between April 2019 and March 2020 alone. The minister's stock answers are no comfort to the thousands of people who come to Canada seeking safety, yet end up being locked away, including 136 children who were housed in detention during the same period.

Canada is also among the only countries in the global north without a legal limit on the length of time people can be in immigration detention. In other words, Canada locks them up and throws away the key. This is wrong. Since 2016, 300 people were detained for more than a year. One man was detained for 11 years, and 17 people have died in immigration detention since 2000, most of them in provincial jails.

Alberta recently became the last province to announce that it is severing its agreement with the CBSA to end the practice of detaining immigrants in provincial jails. The province joined Manitoba and Nova Scotia, led by British Columbia, which are all cancelling their contracts, but the federal government seems to be missing in action and needs to take leadership by ending immigration detention, full stop.

A 2021 report by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch documents serious human rights violations experienced by immigration detainees in Canada, particularly those with psychosocial disabilities. Immigration detainees are often subjected to solitary confinement, shackled and held with violent offenders, fearing for their safety. Researchers also found that Black detainees appear to be incarcerated longer and are more likely to be detained in provincial jails, while people with mental health conditions disproportionately receive coercive treatment. In fact, CBSA officials told researchers that people with mental health conditions may be detained in provincial jails to manage them in light of their behaviour.

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The negative effects of incarceration can be severe and may impact former immigration detainees for years after they are released. Recent media reports have revealed the horrific conditions experienced in immigration detention. Abdirahman Warssama came to Canada from Somalia and was locked up in a maximum security prison for five years and seven months, even though he was not considered dangerous. During his time in prison, he was beaten and experienced 199 lockdowns during a single year. During these lockdowns, detainees are locked in their cells, sometimes for several days, without access to showers, a phone or the ability to go outside. Another man who escaped war in his home country was locked up in an immigration holding centre in Laval for months, despite having no criminal history.

This is wrong. This needs to stop.

• (1825)

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the member for Vancouver East for her ongoing advocacy on this issue.

Canada has a robust and fair refugee system. Immigration detention is a measure of last resort, and I am committed to working with the minister, CBSA, stakeholders across the country and the hon. member to expand alternatives to detention.

Over the past year, I had numerous discussions with the hon. Lloyd Axworthy and the hon. Allan Rock and Hanna Gros from Human Rights Watch. Their advocacy and advice on immigration detention has been invaluable, and I know this is an issue the minister is seized with.

We made significant progress in implementing alternatives to detention and in reducing our use of detention, but we know there is more work to do. Under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, individuals can only be detained when grounds for detention exist and after all alternatives to detention have been considered.

While detention always defaults to an immigration holding centre, in regions where there is no centre the CBSA relies on the use of provincial correctional facilities to house high-risk detainees. I visited the immigration detention in Milton several years ago and spoke to several of those who were being held there. It is one of the reasons I am committed to working with those who want to see change in the system. I also met with Matthew House staff. They offer an outstanding program to support those facing deportation and house them in community.

Detention in provincial correctional facilities is only used sparingly. As of November 17, 2022, 138 immigration detainees were housed in a provincial correctional facility, 189 were housed in an immigration holding centre and 11,233 were enrolled in an alternative to detention.

The government is committed to further decreasing the use of provincial correctional facilities. That is why we invested in new and upgraded immigration holding centres, including one in Surrey in 2020 and one in Montreal in 2022. With these investments, we have been able to reduce our reliance on provincial correctional facilities and provide better services to those being detained.

The government is committed to treating all detainees in a dignified and humane way.

One important condition in all our agreements with provinces is that they authorize the Canadian Red Cross to visit correctional facilities. This is to monitor and report on the conditions of detention and treatment of detainees to ensure they are treated fairly according to domestic legislation and international obligations. As the member opposite is aware, the Red Cross' findings and the CBSA action plans are available on the CBSA website.

The CBSA continues to work to create a better and fairer immigration detention system, one that treats all persons with compassion and dignity while upholding public safety and the integrity of our immigration system.

The government is committed to protecting the safety of Canadians while upholding the rights of detainees.

• (1830)

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, it is simply wrong to have immigration detention for people who pose no security risk to Canadians or have no serious criminality issues. There is no reason for that.

In the case I mentioned earlier, CBSA's own document, which was obtained by the CBC, said that he posed no risk. He posed zero risk to Canadians. As a result of the detention, he lost his job, he lost his apartment and he lost his belongings.

In other countries like the European Union, detention has had a maximum length of six months since 2008. Argentina does not use immigration detention at all. Other countries have recognized that people have not committed a crime and should not be locked up indefinitely, yet Canada continues to do this. CBSA continues to incarcerate migrants and destroy people's lives. It remains the only major law enforcement agency without independent civilian oversight.

This is so wrong. Enough of this gross human rights violation, enough of saying that we are doing something and then not doing enough. Let us end immigration detentions for those who do not have serious criminality issues or are not a threat to public safety.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, I remain committed to listening to the voices of stakeholders calling for reform.

Under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, individuals can only be detained when grounds for detention exist and after all alternatives to detention have been considered.

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I commit to the member opposite I will continue to advocate within government and in this place to call for an expansion of the eligibility for alternatives to detention and to invest in programs that support the mental health of all migrants and refugee claimants.

While we have made improvements, we also recognize there is more work to do. Our government remains committed to ensuring

all detainees are treated in a consistent, dignified and humane way that is in line with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:33 p.m.)

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