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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem. The singing of *O Canada* will be done by the pages today.

[*Pages sang the national anthem*]

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: If only the pages could do that every Wednesday, it would be great. I thank all the pages.

I do want to quickly thank them for all of their hard work. I know we have only a few weeks left with them. There is a big gang of them here, and I just want to thank each and every one of them for their participation in the program and for the great work they have done during this season.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

ST. AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC SCHOOL STEM FINALISTS

Mr. Paul Chiang (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great honour that I highlight the excellence of the students, faculty and staff of St. Augustine Catholic School. Their hard work and commitment to combatting climate change has earned them a qualification as one of the five final schools in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow contest.

The team proposed a Canada-made contrail project model, which focuses on flight paths and jet fuel in order to inhibit the industry's impact on climate change. Their outstanding efforts, which are devoted to promoting sustainable airline practices, bring pride to Markham.

I congratulate these young minds for their innovation, as it serves as an inspiration to all of Canada in the fight against climate change. It brings me great joy to recognize their exceptional achievement as they are stepping into the final stage of this competition. I congratulate St. Augustine Catholic school for bringing Markham a bright and promising future.

NATIONAL ROOFING WEEK

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week is National Roofing Week, and I would like to thank the folks at the Canadian Roofing Contractors Association for their hard work and dedication to their craft. We always want to make sure that roofers and other tradespeople are acknowledged and celebrated for their contributions to our country.

Roofers do not just replace and repair roofs; their work protects our homes, our workplaces and our families with cutting-edge technology, which many of us could learn more about. This roofing week, we want to raise awareness about the importance of this proudly Red Seal trade, which is also an essential part of the larger building trades sector. The roofing industry provides well-paying jobs for thousands of Canadian families and contributes billions to our economy.

From harsh winters to hot summers, roofers make sure that we are protected in all types of weather conditions. Roofers do not just seek applause or medals; their reward lies in the satisfaction of a job well done. I want to thank the folks in the roofing industry and in the larger building trades sector for the work they do. I assure them that Conservatives will always have their back.

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UNKNOWN NEWFOUNDLAND SOLDIER

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honour the return of the unknown Newfoundland soldier, who bravely fought in the First World War from 1914 to 1918. This hero is finally home and will be laid to rest on July 1 at the base of the National War Memorial in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

This is a solemn occasion for all of us, as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and as Canadians, to come together to pay tribute to the sacrifice and to remember the courage of all who served. During a recent trip to France, it was an honour to stand where they once stood, to read their stories and to pray at their graves, many with markers known only to God. We remember Labrador's son John Shiwak, who fought there in 1915, and many others from our great province who fought with bravery and valour.

Statements by Members

The repatriation is a testament to the struggle and sacrifice endured by these brave individuals and to the significant role that Newfoundland played in the Great War. I want to recognize the veterans and advocates who made it possible, including Berkley Lawrence, Frank Sullivan, Gerald Budden and all others for their dedicated work.

The unknown soldier is home in Newfoundland, representing all of those from our province who fought in the Great War. We will remember them. We will honour them.

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● (1410)

*[Translation]***MEMBER FOR BEAUPORT—CÔTE-DE-BEAUPRÉ—ÎLE D'ORLÉANS—CHARLEVOIX**

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to tell the House about the award received by my colleague, the member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix.

This year, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission presented her with a water warrior award for being a parliamentarian whose work and advocacy has contributed to the health of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

The title suits her perfectly. This MP and artist was born in Islex-Coudres on the St. Lawrence River. Her grandfather was the captain of a ship on that same waterway, and she named her first album of songs *Sortir de l'eau*, or out of the water. The fact that a commission that is jointly administered by the Canadian and U.S. federal governments decided to honour a member of the Bloc Québécois speaks volumes about her commitment and about the quality of her interventions in committee. In any case, this will serve as an excellent reference for her when Quebec joins this commission as a member state.

Congratulations to our colleague, our water warrior.

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*[English]***ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH**

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Italian Canadians' positive contributions to our country are apparent from coast to coast to coast, and more so in my riding of Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel.

[Translation]

Whether in our small businesses or in multinationals that have set up shop here, Italian talent and know-how shine throughout our community and our country. As the daughter of Italian-Canadian parents, I am very proud to celebrate Italian Heritage Month.

Now is the time to recognize and celebrate the rich legacy that our parents and grandparents left for us with their hard work and love for this country that has become theirs and that so many Canadians have come to know and appreciate.

[English]

From innovation to business, art, music and cuisine, our family traditions endure through us and continue to contribute each day to Canada's great cultural mosaic.

[Member spoke in Italian]

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GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today it is my great pleasure to rise and congratulate the graduating class of 2024. Congratulations to the graduates on reaching this very important milestone in their lives.

From the beginning of kindergarten to the end of grade 12, they have grown into adults who are ready to take on the many opportunities and challenges that they will face going forward. The skills that graduates have learned and developed throughout their education will set them up to excel in whatever career path they choose to pursue. Their teachers, coaches, classmates and friends have all added to the strong individuals they have become. School is not just about academics but is also about the all-important life lessons and experiences graduates have gained while navigating their first 18 years.

Congratulations to the graduating classes of 2024 in Regina—Lewvan schools: Sheldon-Williams Collegiate, Luther College, Riffel high school, Winston Knoll Collegiate and Martin Collegiate. We look forward to seeing how they, as future leaders, will contribute to our great province and our country.

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MAHARAJA JASSA SINGH RAMGARHIA

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday at the Gurdwara Sahib Brookside Canadian Ramgarhia Society in Surrey—Newton, I attended the 301st birthday celebration of Maharaja Jassa Singh Ramgarhia.

In the 18th century under the banner of the Dal Khalsa, which was a confederacy of Sikh military units, Maharaja Jassa Singh Ramgarhia was a distinguished military strategist who left a lasting mark on Sikh history. His leadership was characterized by strategic brilliance and a strong commitment to defending Sikh interests.

I want to thank Gurdwara Sahib Brookside Canadian Ramgarhia Society president, Balbir Singh Chana; public relations person and past president, Surinder Singh Jabal; and all its members for their unwavering dedication to building a better, more inclusive community for all.

PORTUGUESE HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been 71 years since a group of Portuguese immigrants arrived on a boat named *Saturnia*, docking at Pier 21 in Halifax. Today, Portuguese Canadians are almost half a million strong, representing one of the largest Portuguese diasporas in the world. Living in vibrant communities across Canada, they are builders, musicians, athletes, business leaders, chefs, teachers and politicians, among many other professions.

Through their perseverance and hard work, Portuguese Canadians have enriched Canadian society and have transformed Canada into not only a better country but also one that profoundly reflects our unique diversity and multiculturalism.

As the member of Parliament for Davenport, the riding with the largest number of Portuguese Canadians, I am proud to rise in the House today to celebrate the beginning of Portuguese Heritage Month in Canada. Whether it is by listening to Fado, drinking vinho verde, or eating a bifana or pastéis de nata, I invite all Canadians to join me in celebrating Portuguese culture this month.

Feliz mês de Portugal.

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• (1415)

CARBON TAX

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Prime Minister's own budget watchdog told the finance committee that the government has a secret economic impact analysis that confirms his conclusion that Canadians pay more than they get back in phony carbon rebate cheques. However, the Prime Minister has put a gag order on the Parliamentary Budget Officer, muzzling him from speaking about the secret report, and covering up the truth.

Now we know that the Prime Minister is intentionally hiding the truth about the carbon tax from Canadians. Instead of being open by default as he promised in 2015, and instead of being transparent with Canadians, the Prime Minister has intentionally hidden facts, stonewalled opposition and gaslit Canadians about the truth of the Liberals' policies, which is that the carbon tax makes everything more expensive for everyone and does nothing to help the environment.

Will the Prime Minister take the muzzle off the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer so Canadians know the truth once and for all? The Prime Minister is not worth the cost of the cover-up. It is time for a common-sense Conservative government that would axe the tax and be honest with Canadians.

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HOUSING

Mr. Shafqat Ali (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the Conservative leader was housing minister, he built only six affordable units. Our government is focused on building affordable homes. Under two years ago, I joined the housing minister and the local government officials to announce rapid housing initiative funding: \$53 million for three projects, 110 affordable homes for

Statements by Members

Peel and \$30 million to convert a hotel into homes for Brampton. Two weeks ago, I participated in the grand opening of Birch Place, a housing project with 67 affordable rental units.

Our government is getting shovels in the ground. The Conservative leader has no plan. He does not care about building homes for Canadians. We are focused on working with local governments to build more homes for Canadians.

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ETHICS

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's report on the Liberal green slush fund is shocking.

Liberal cronies overseeing the slush fund voted 186 times to send taxpayer money to companies they own. That represents over 40% of the projects approved. Even worse is that the Liberal swindlers gave themselves \$76 million and hid their conflict from the meetings. The rot started from the top when, in 2019, the Liberals knowingly appointed a person whom the green slush fund was already doing business with to head up the board. They were warned, but they appointed their conflicted cronies anyway.

Tonight, Liberals have a chance to come clean. The former Liberal minister and PMO staffers responsible for hand-picking these slush fund swindlers will testify before committee to explain why they knowingly appointed Liberals with conflicts and did nothing when they funnelled themselves taxpayer money.

As Canadians struggle to pay the bills, Liberal cronies get rich on taxpayer money. Only common-sense Conservatives will stop the Liberal corruption and bring back common sense to Ottawa.

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ETHICS

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Ethics Commissioner confirmed he would reopen his investigation into the business dealings of the Liberal Minister of Employment. The minister is the owner of a numbered company that holds a 50% share in Global Health Imports, where he served as a partner before his election in 2021.

This company is involved in numerous criminal offences, including fraud. Global News reported text messages from the minister's former business partner, Stephen Anderson, that show a mysterious "Randy" directing business operations in September 2022, a time when the Minister of Employment with the same name was prohibited from taking any role with the company.

Statements by Members

The minister has claimed that he has no knowledge of the identity of this other Randy. However, a whistle-blower has revealed that the Randy in question was a partner, a public official and, in fact, the Minister of Employment. The minister's business associates could easily put this scandal to rest by telling us the identity of this mysterious other Randy. However, they refuse to reveal his true identity. Why will the minister not tell us who this other Randy is, what his last name is and whether he is in the room at this very moment?

* * *

● (1420)

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week we are celebrating the 100th birthday of my grandfather, a man who is imbued with audacity, unwavering positivity and spirituality. Sardar Kundan Singh was born in 1924, at a time when equality for women was non-existent; however, this did not deter him. Not only did he educate his sons, but he was also one of the first people in his city to put all four of his daughters through university. He faced immense pressure from friends, family and neighbours wanting to dissuade him. He did not waver, and because of his determination, other families started doing the same.

His fight for the rights of women has been continuous all throughout his life. I am where I am today because of him. He set the example for us on how to live with dignity and self-respect, to always have a sense of humour and to stay in high spirits no matter the circumstances. He is my heart and soul. Even though he lost his vision earlier this year, and he cannot see me, he is listening to me give him the most beautiful honour that I can. I love Papaji to the moon and back.

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government is playing with fire. Last week, it was reported that the chief of defence staff, Wayne Eyre, complained that the use of military personnel to assist in wildfire operations is wickedly wasteful. Is it wickedly wasteful at a time of a climate emergency?

As a Manitoban, I know just how much of a difference the Canadian military has made in fighting major floods and wildfires when all other resources have been exhausted. Now, when we are sending more troops to Latvia, our key military leaders are essentially saying that, when it comes to forest fires and floods in Canada, good luck.

This is unacceptable, as is the response of the Prime Minister. When I asked him about this in question period, he responded with a series of indecipherable platitudes. The Prime Minister should take a stand and make it clear that his government will reject any idea that helping is wasteful when it comes to forest fires and floods.

Finally, we need to reject the way in which we are increasingly sleepwalking into major policy decisions without considering their consequences. At a time when nothing less than the future of our

planet is at stake, Canada is increasingly being part of the problem, not the solution, when it comes to international conflicts and catastrophic climate change. Canadians deserve better.

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[*Translation*]

OLEKSANDRA MATVIICHUK

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the war grinds on in Ukraine. The horrors continue for the Ukrainian people, and we want them to know that we stand with them. It is against that backdrop that Canada is welcoming Oleksandra Matviichuk this week. She is a human rights activist and winner of the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Prime Minister met her on Monday and the Bloc Québécois had that honour this morning. Her message is clear: There is a need for more weapons and more justice for Ukrainians. She is asking Canada to increase its military aid. She is also asking Canada to take up her call for justice on behalf of the 72,000 victims of war crimes. She is calling for the Russian barbarians who committed and ordered these atrocities to be brought to justice before a special tribunal. As she said, “We need Canada's weight to convince other countries that the time has come.”

We want to assure Ms. Matviichuk that she and Ukraine can count on the weight and support of the Bloc Québécois. In the name of peace and justice, *Slava Ukraini!*

* * *

[*English*]

ETHICS

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a new day means a new scandal for the tired Liberal government. This time, it involves the Liberal employment minister, who needs to answer for whether he violated federal law by continuing business deals even after joining cabinet.

In a conversation at his firm about contracts and cash, one of the firm's partners told someone asking for the money that a man named “Randy” would be available in 15 minutes for a partner's call. The employment minister was quick to say that the text conversation was not referencing him; it was someone else. It was another Randy.

It is a small company. He owns 50% of it. He used to be a partner.

Let us see if we can find out who the other Randy is in a game of “Guess Who?” Is he tall? Does he wear glasses? Does he have brown hair, blond hair or no hair? Is he a federal cabinet minister? Does he come from a city that rhymes with “smedmonton”?

Mr. Speaker, the other Randy probably has the same last name and the same job as the employment minister. Will the other Randy please stand up?

• (1425)

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Ms. Anna Gainey (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week, Canada is honoured to welcome to Ottawa the International Civil Aviation Organization leadership: Salvatore Sciacchitano, president of the ICAO Council, and Juan Carlos Salazar, secretary general of ICAO.

Canada is dedicated to supporting ICAO in pursuit of a safe, secure, sustainable, inclusive and accessible global aviation system. We value ICAO's positive impact on international civil aviation.

[Translation]

ICAO is a key component of the UN system and plays a critical role in supporting a multilateral rules-based order. ICAO, located in Montreal right next to my riding, is the only United Nations specialized agency headquartered in Canada. This year marks its 80th anniversary.

[English]

Today, Canada reaffirms its commitment to being a world-class host to ICAO and pledges to continue to work with ICAO and its member states to develop and implement the highest standards for global aviation.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, members of the House knowingly and wittingly assisted hostile foreign states.

Canadians have a right to know who they are and what information is involved. Who are they?

[English]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows very well that no government, including the former government, of which he was a member, is going to discuss particularities of intelligence information publicly. He knows better than that.

However, the good news is that, if the Leader of the Opposition wanted to get the appropriate security clearance, he would be able to see the confidential report of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians. He would then be much more informed than he is now. We would invite him to do so, so that he would not stand up and cast aspersions on the floor of the House of Commons without any information whatsoever.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do not need secrets and confidentiality. That is what got us into this problem in the first place. We need the facts so that Canadians can judge.

Oral Questions

Just as in the case of the green slush fund, the Auditor General revealed \$123 million of spending that broke the rules, \$59 million of projects that never should have been awarded money at all and \$76 million in money gone to companies connected to Liberal-appointed members, including \$217,000 to the chair of the fund that was giving out the money.

Will the government support our common-sense plan to hand over all this information to the RCMP for a police investigation?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that the Conservatives do not want to talk about the economy today, but we know that the economy is the issue that most concerns Canadians. That is why I am so glad to share some great news. Today, the Bank of Canada lowered interest rates. Canada is the first country in the G7 where the rates have gone down, and it is thanks to our economically responsible fiscal plan. Our plan is working.

* * *

• (1430)

[Translation]

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this Prime Minister, and with the support of the Bloc Québécois, Montreal is in a state of chaos, as crime, drugs, and disorder run rampant. Children need police escorts to get to day care.

Will the Prime Minister agree to the Conservatives' request to disallow the Criminal Code exemption for supervised injection facilities in order to ban them next to day care centres and schools?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, it comes as no surprise that the Conservative leader does not want to talk about the economy. We know that the economy is the top concern for Canadians. That is why I am so pleased to share some good news. Today, the Bank of Canada lowered its key interest rate. Canada is the first G7 country to do so.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, interest rates remain 20 times higher than they were when the member promised they would go down. Remember when she said that the big risk was deflation and low rates? She was exactly wrong then, and she is even more wrong now.

Oral Questions

Six years ago, I said there was a carbon tax cover-up. The government would not reveal the true cost of its carbon tax. Then the government published information claiming everyone was better off. Now we find out that there is a secret report showing that, with the economic costs considered, the vast majority of Canadians are paying more.

Will the government end the gag order, stop the carbon tax cover-up and release the report?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really sad and shameful that the Conservatives continue to talk down the Canadian economy and that they are unable to celebrate our great country.

The reality is that this has been a great week for Canada. First, the Oilers made it to the Stanley Cup final, and then, today, the Bank of Canada lowered interest rates. Canada is on a roll. Our plan is working.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has put the Parliamentary Budget Officer under a gag order. In fact, I have a copy of the gag order right here. This is a letter from the environment minister to the Parliamentary Budget Officer. It says, “the Department is providing...unpublished information. As such, I request you to ensure that this information is used for your office's internal purposes only and is not published or further distributed.” Liberals do not want Canadians to know the true cost of the carbon tax.

Why will they not end the gag order, stop the carbon tax cover-up and release this report today?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the person who seems to be labouring under a gag order is the Conservative leader, and that gag order seems to prevent him from saying anything positive about our amazing country.

The fact is that today is a day of really good news. The Bank of Canada has lowered interest rates. Canada is the first G7 country to lower rates. Our government's economically responsible plan has created the conditions that made that possible. Our plan is working.

* * *

[*Translation*]

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the tentacles of foreign interference have extended into the House. The National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians has confirmed that members of Parliament are working under the influence of foreign powers in the very heart of our democracy.

The committee is bound to secrecy. Political parties are not bound to secrecy, and they are certainly not forbidden from taking action. I do not want to hear a list of what the government has done in the past to deal with foreign interference. Obviously, that has not worked.

What is the government going to do today?

• (1435)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from La Prairie for his question and for his contribution to the implementation of the Hogue commission. I would also like to thank him, his party and all the other partners for the important work being done today to support Bill C-70, for example. This bill will strengthen our national security institutions and our collective ability to recognize and counter foreign interference. For that, I sincerely thank him.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is important. The parties need to take the high road. There are members among us who are knowingly or naively working for other countries. That is not nothing. Do they realize how serious that is?

I am appealing to the Prime Minister and the leaders of the major political parties. If anyone sitting here with us is under foreign influence instead of the influence of their constituents, they have no business being here and they must leave.

What is the government doing to make sure that happens?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to me it is a bit surprising that even the Bloc Québécois does not want to talk about the economy. I know that the economy is the key issue for Quebecers.

Today we have good news: the Bank of Canada has decided to lower the key interest rate. That is good for Quebec and good for all of Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the allegation that there are MPs knowingly working for foreign governments to undermine our democracy is deeply serious. That is why I have requested a classified briefing to get more information. The Prime Minister has known about this since March and has done nothing, and the Conservative leader does not even want to know what is going on and refused this information.

Why are these two leaders looking away from foreign interference when it serves them?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleague, the leader of the NDP, for his important work and the work of his House leader in setting up, for example, the commission led by Justice Hogue.

I am very pleased to hear that he is interested, having received, obviously, the appropriate security clearance, in getting all of the confidential information that is behind the important work of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians.

Our government created that committee. We appreciate its work. We value its recommendations. We have always acted to put in place strengthened measures when we receive thoughtful analysis, like we did from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, and we will continue to do that important work.

Oral Questions

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has known since March and has done nothing.

[*Translation*]

The allegations of MPs receiving help from a foreign government are troubling. The Prime Minister has had this information since March 22 and has done nothing about it, while the Conservative leader does not want to know anything about it.

Why are these two leaders content to turn a blind eye to this when they think that foreign interference improves their chances of winning?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thought that the NDP shared our concerns about the cost of living. That is why I find it surprising that the NDP does not want to discuss the Canadian economy. The reality is that today we have good news. The Bank of Canada has decided to lower the key interest rate. It is our responsible economic plan that created the conditions to make this happen.

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NSICOP report makes it clear that the Prime Minister was advised, back in 2018, of the national security threats against Parliament from hostile foreign states. He was advised that measures in place at the time were not sufficient. He was advised to take further action. Three times, the senior civil service asked for his approval for action to protect Parliament: in December 2019, in December 2020 and again in February 2022.

Three times, the Prime Minister withheld that approval. Why?

• (1440)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our hon. colleague knows very well that our government was the first government to put in place a series of measures to strengthen our institutions and our democracy from the threat of foreign interference. He knows very well that threat was identified publicly in 2013 in a CSIS report when the Leader of the Opposition was responsible for democratic institutions. The Conservatives did absolutely nothing, so I find it somewhat ironic that my friend would stand in this place and would say that our government, the first government that has acted in this important area and that continues to strengthen these measures, has not done enough.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the report reveals that parliamentarians, including members of the House, knowingly and wittingly assisted a hostile foreign state in Parliament and in our elections to the detriment of the people of Canada. This is shocking. I cannot believe the following needs to be said. Parliamentarians' duty is not to a foreign state, but to the people of Canada.

My question is simple. Will the Prime Minister release the names of these parliamentarians?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows full well that no responsible government

would disclose names involved in specific intelligence situations. It is not entirely accurate of him to claim that a responsible government, one that focuses on the security of Canada and our democratic institutions, would do such a thing.

I am glad that there are parliamentarians in the House who have the necessary security clearance to access all the intelligence behind that important committee report. I invite them to have a proper look at it.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the extent of foreign interference in Canada has been denied, covered up and downplayed. Now, a report by the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians has lifted the veil on the culpable indifference of this Prime Minister.

This report discloses that parliamentarians, including members of this House, willingly helped hostile foreign countries interfere in this Parliament and in elections, thus working against the interests of Canadians and Canada. This is shocking and unacceptable. Will the Prime Minister, who has the power and, above all, the duty to do this, reveal today the names of his MPs and the facts about their involvement?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I am rather concerned about the irresponsibility of our colleagues across the way. The member is well aware that he is asking for something that has never been done.

I would, however, encourage him to talk to his leader and ask him to accept the government's invitation to get the security clearance needed to see all of the highly classified information that our colleagues on the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians have seen. Perhaps that would be a more sincere way of advancing the cause that he claims to want to move forward today in the House.

* * *

[*English*]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal defence of the carbon tax is in complete shambles. First, they only want Canadians to focus on the direct costs of the carbon tax and to ignore all the secondary effects like smaller paycheques and higher prices, as if Canadians have a choice of which carbon tax costs they have to pay. We now learn that there is a secret report that does show the true cost. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that it proves that he is right, that the vast majority of Canadians are worse off paying the tax than any rebate they receive. The Liberals claim it proves that they are right.

Oral Questions

There is an easy way to settle this. Why will the government not just release the report so that Canadians can decide?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, math is really not the long suit of the party over there. The PBO has specifically said and has repeated time after time, and one would think Conservatives would understand, that eight out of 10 Canadians are better off under the price on pollution in the affected provinces. The fact is, though, that they talk of gag orders. We have not seen the member for Peace River—Westlock in a long time. What about the former chair of the status of women committee? We have not seen her either. They are not, at any time, going to give—

• (1445)

The Deputy Speaker: I just need to remind individuals that we cannot say whether someone is here or not, so please be careful on those lines.

The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, apparently, answering questions does not seem to be the minister's long suit. Their responses here are completely ridiculous. They claim that this report exonerates their position, but they will not release it. This is a little like someone who is accused of a crime, walking into court and saying they have an amazing alibi that proves they are innocent, but they just cannot show it to anybody. If one will not show one's evidence to the jury, one is probably guilty.

Why not do the easy thing? Release the report, and remove the gag order so that Canadians can decide.

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by wishing a happy World Environment Day to all Canadians, especially to the failed former leader of the Conservative Party, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, and to the new leader of the Conservative Party from Carleton, who have voted against the environment over 400 times in the House of Commons. It is clear where they stand on climate change, and it is clear where they stand on environmental protections.

Conservatives continue to mislead Canadians. Our government will continue to support the good work of the PBO. I am sorry, but the Conservative math just is not adding up these days.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that the Liberal carbon tax increases the cost of everything, while failing to bring down emissions. The Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that Canadians are paying more than they are getting back from this so-called rebate. The Liberals are clearly afraid that Canadians will know the truth, and that is that the carbon tax has made life unaffordable.

When will the government stop the cover-up, release the secret report and confirm what we all know, that Canadians are suffering because of this carbon tax?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Conservatives are finally asking a couple of questions that are at least in the

neighbourhood of the economy. The next step for them is to recognize how significant today is. Today is the day that Canada, first among the G7, lowered interest rates. It is the first time rates have gone down since COVID. This is a tremendously important day for Canada, and it is our responsible economic plan that has made it possible.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is finally going to meet with François Legault on Monday to talk about immigration. It is about time, after leaving Quebec to deal with a record influx of newcomers.

Monday should be the deadline for the federal government to stop offloading its responsibility. Quebec is calling for a temporary reduction in immigration and for French requirements in federal programs. Quebec is calling for an even distribution of asylum seekers. Quebec is calling for \$1 billion for taking them in.

On Monday, will the Prime Minister agree to all these requests and finally sign the cheque?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Bloc Québécois wants to fast-track asylum claims. However, the height of hypocrisy was when a Bloc member spoke during a meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance to oppose the government's proposed reforms for fast-tracking asylum claims.

I know that the Premier of Quebec thinks that the Bloc Québécois is useless. I do not share that opinion, but I am becoming less sure.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): I am speechless, Mr. Speaker.

If the federal government thinks that \$1 billion is a lot, then all it had to do was take care of asylum seekers sooner, rather than sit back and watch the bill get bigger and bigger. The government could have also kept the bill lower by doing its job, especially when it comes to work permits.

According to Quebec, asylum seekers represent nearly 20% of social assistance recipients. It is not because they do not want to work. It is because Ottawa is not giving them permission. Minister Fréchette confirmed that asylum seekers are receiving benefits for an average of 10 to 11 months while they wait for a work permit from the federal government. Minister Fréchette said that.

When will Ottawa stop driving asylum seekers into poverty?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the entire opposition opposed our asylum system reforms, which are designed to speed things up. I think this is ridiculous. The Bloc Québécois should take responsibility. We are talking about light blue and dark blue, but it is pretty much the same thing.

Oral Questions

With regard to Monday's meeting, the member will have to wait until Monday.

* * *

• (1450)

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Mill Woods, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Liberals are trying to hide what Canadians already know: The carbon tax is a costly scheme that is making everything more expensive.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has already proven that the vast majority of Canadians are worse off economically because of the failed scheme. What we did not know is that the government actually went out and did its own economic analysis of the carbon tax, but it is refusing to release it.

Why the cover-up?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should be careful what he asks for, but I will reiterate, for the benefit of the House, that eight out of 10 Canadians are better off today than they were before because of the price on pollution.

As a bonus, on World Environment Day, when it comes to the environment and climate change, we are making contributions to achieve our targets, and we can do Canada's part, as I know all Canadians want to do, in combatting climate change.

Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Mill Woods, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all the Conservatives are asking is for the report to be released so Canadians can see the results, because Canadians are the ones who are paying for this expensive, failed Liberal scheme.

When the government goes to the trouble of putting together a report and doing an analysis, but keeps the report a secret and does not even allow the Parliamentary Budget Officer to talk about it, we have to wonder how bad it is.

When will the Liberals end the cover-up and release the report?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, for the Conservatives, that is not what the PBO said. The Parliamentary Budget Officer issued a report, about a month and a half ago, saying that he accidentally overestimated the economic impact of the carbon price on Canadians.

I would like to re-emphasize for Canadians that eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back through the Canada carbon rebate than they pay in the price on pollution. As a reminder, the next payment for the Canada carbon rebate will go out on July 15 in the summer.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neebawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are hiding the truth from Canadians. The environment minister is refusing to release a secret government report that proves the carbon tax is costing Canadians more than they get back.

In fact, the Liberals have placed a gag order on their own budget watchdog, blocking him from speaking about this damning report. Canadians already know the carbon tax is a complete scam.

When will the Liberal minister release his secret report and end his carbon tax cover-up?

Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member opposite that, thankfully, we all passed the FES last week. That means, in the member's riding in Manitoba, a family of four is going to receive \$1,440 with the rural top-up. In my riding, in Newfoundland and Labrador, it is \$1,430. In Alberta, it is \$2,160.

No matter how we do the math, eight out of 10 families are better off with the carbon rebate, especially families in rural Canada. They have the top-up.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this Liberal government, the cost of living is too high and Quebecers are paying the price. Once again this week, the Bloc-Liberal coalition voted against pausing federal gas taxes to give Canadians a break. Worse still, the Bloc Québécois wants to radically increase taxes on the backs of Canadian families. The Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed this week at the Standing Committee on Finance that the government has a secret report that proves the economic impact of the carbon tax.

When will the Prime Minister release the report that proves that the Conservatives and Canadians are right?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is nonsense. Eight out of 10 families get more money back in their pockets than they pay as part of the carbon price because of the rebate, in regions where the price applies. It is very simple. All the proceeds from the price on carbon are redistributed equally to all families. The wealthiest pay more than they get back. Middle-class families get more back than they pay. It is as simple as that. Eight out of 10 families are getting more money back in their pockets, and those are middle-class and low-income families.

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[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, in 2011, the Conservatives changed the food mail program that went from helping people in the north to subsidizing rich corporations in the south. Everyone knows it is not working, but the Liberals refuse to reform it.

Oral Questions

The North West Company and the CEO make millions in profits and bonuses, but people in the north cannot afford to eat. When will the Liberals finally reform the Conservatives' broken nutrition north program so it helps people to afford healthy food?

• (1455)

Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the affordability of food and nutrition is so important in the north. We are committed 100% that 100% of the retail subsidy will go to northerners. We are currently doing an internal review of nutrition north. Once that is done, we will do an external audit. We are committed that 100% of the retail benefit will go to northerners.

* * *

GROCERY INDUSTRY

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, families in Nanaimo—Ladysmith are struggling to keep up with rising food prices, yet the Liberals have done nothing to lower the costs, and the Conservatives would rather protect CEO profits. The NDP is giving them a chance today to help Canadians. They can either support our motion to cap the cost of essential foods, or keep protecting CEO profits while families go hungry. Which will they choose?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague that food prices are difficult for many families across this country, but they got a bit of good news today, and 4.75 is the number that Canadians will remember. However, if the member really wants to help, she should ask all the members, especially on the opposition, to support us in pushing Walmart and Costco to adopt the grocery code of conduct.

On this side of the House, we have been pushing for more competition, because we know that more competition will bring stabilizing prices, will bring more choice for consumers, and will make sure that, over time, Canadians will win on that. We are committed at every step of the way to fight for Canadians. I know that the Conservatives will vote against that, but we will fight for Canadians.

* * *

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we mark the beginning of Pride season, it is a time to celebrate the 2SLGBTQ+ community and reflect on their accomplishments. However, we know that the rise of hate directed toward this community has made many feel unsafe. Could the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth update the House on our government's efforts to create a safer and more inclusive Canada?

Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for her advocacy.

As we raised the Pride flag a couple of days ago, I announced \$1.5 million to offset security costs for Pride festivals

right across the country. It is not the kind of announcement I ever want to make, but the queer community feels directly what security agencies tell us: Hate is on the rise.

The community asked for help, and we responded. At a time when we are seeing less support for queer communities, our government will never waver. On this side of the House, we support Canadians, no matter who they are, for being their authentic selves.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, who is Randy?

The Minister of Employment has a 50% stake in a PPE company embroiled in allegations of fraud. Text messages from the COO reveal that a partner named “Randy” was involved in one of those shady business deals. The minister assures us that it is not him, yet somehow he is unable to identify who the other Randy is amongst a handful of employees.

So, again, who is Randy?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course Canada has among the toughest, most stringent ethics and conflict of interest provisions in the world for public office holders. The minister in question appeared yesterday before committee for one hour and answered all of those questions.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no trace of this other Randy. Global News cannot find him, the COO claims there is this other Randy, but, conveniently, has forgotten his last name and the minister cannot identify him among a handful of employees. This is a farce. Everyone knows who Randy is.

Will the minister just stand up and admit it is him?

• (1500)

[Translation]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat it in French for the member: Canada has among the most stringent ethics and conflict of interest provisions in the world for public office holders.

The minister in question appeared yesterday before the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics for one hour and answered all of those questions.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal minister from Edmonton wants Canadians to think that he is not breaking the law, but he was cashing cheques from a company that was lobbying his government and a company that he owns 50% of was winning government contracts using his name as the minister. He is not allowed to do either.

In a Global News report this week, text messages reveal someone named Randy at his company was part of a \$500,000 fraud. The minister said it was not him, that it was the other Randy. Of course, it was.

Who is the other Randy and what is his last name?

The Deputy Speaker: I would caution members to be careful in using the proper names of individuals in the chamber.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I, of course, just answered that question, so I would invite the member to move on.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have the same suspicion as the Speaker does, that in fact there is perhaps some concern about using the member's name, but while the government House leader wants to hide his member, I am going to run through a scenario here. What are the chances that the other Randy is just the minister from Edmonton in a rubber nose and a stick-on moustache? I would say about 100%. He broke the Conflict of Interest Act, he broke the Lobbying Act, he broke the Criminal Code.

We want to know. Will the real Randy please stand up?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I, of course, just answered all—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. That is enough.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for that. That is beneath the dignity of this place, where we presume all members are honourable.

The member in question spent an hour at committee yesterday answering questions from the member and other members. Of course, I know the member will continue to ask those questions and I will give the same answer. We have a very strict code of conflict of interest and ethics in this country and all ministers are expected to comply with that.

*[Translation]***PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Auditor General confirmed what has been suspected for months. She tabled three reports, each with the same damning finding: The Liberals have completely lost control of the machinery of government. Contracts are being awarded without tenders and without justification, payments are being made to companies before anything is even delivered, funds are being paid out for ineligible projects, and money is being spent without oversight.

This brings us back to the question we have been asking for months. While the Liberals are busy trying to take over governing Quebec and the provinces, who is governing Canada?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for allowing me the opportunity to thank the Auditor General of Canada once again for her important work on this and many other files.

Yesterday, we heard the Auditor General reach findings that are very similar, and at times identical, to the findings of reports that the government published about a year ago. Based on these previous shared findings, we have been taking action for over a year now to end the standing offers with McKinsey and all similar companies.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the McKinsey case reveals a culture of decadence within the federal government.

The Auditor General has confirmed that, out of the \$200 million in contracts awarded to McKinsey, 71% were untendered, 58% were unmonitored and, for 24% of the contracts audited, the federal government has no idea what was done. This is scandalous.

The report makes only one recommendation: that all federal organizations identify actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Will the government finally take real action?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's recommendations are indeed very similar, and often identical, to those that have already been published and have been known for several months.

We have been taking significant action for more than a year now on the issues my colleague mentioned. It bears saying not only that we will continue the work, but that it is important to do so to ensure the integrity of all procurement processes and the confidence Canadians have in those processes.

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● (1505)

INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General released another report yesterday about another Liberal scandal. This time, it is about Sustainable Development Technology Canada's green fund.

Oral Questions

According to the report, administrators gave themselves funding 186 times, \$123 million was paid out inappropriately, and half of that should never have been paid out in the first place.

There is only one way to get to the bottom of this situation. Does the minister agree with our proposal to have the RCMP investigate?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives, that is for sure. We have been very clear. The moment the allegations were made, we launched investigations, one by Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton and one by the law firm McCarthy Tétraut.

Members know that this is an organization created by Parliament 20 years ago that operates at arm's length from the government. In light of the allegations, we suspended the funding, and the chair of the board and the CEO both resigned.

Now we have a new governance model. The activities will be transferred to the National Research Council. We are committed to the highest standards of governance and that is exactly—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the same report, a senior official accuses this government of outright incompetence and says that the scandal rivals the sponsorship scandal, a phrase that brings back bad memories for all Canadians, especially the Liberal Party.

I urge the minister to tread carefully, because on November 11, the whistle-blower said, “The minister said, on the record and multiple times, that he was briefed on the outcome only on August 27, but that's definitively not true. He lied at the ethics committee.”

Who should we believe, the whistle-blower or the minister?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people watching us know that the Conservatives are asleep at the wheel. Those comments serve no purpose.

We launched the investigation through an independent body created by Parliament 20 years ago. Canadians watching at home are reasonable people. They know that a responsible government launches investigations and acts on the findings. That is exactly what we did.

What we are proposing to Canadians today is a new governance model within the National Research Council of Canada in order to continue helping our SMEs, to continue fighting climate change and, above all, to continue moving the country forward.

[English]

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the AG's report proves again that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost or corruption. The report reveals massive corruption at the green slush fund, highlighting the misappropriation of \$76 million through 90 cases of conflict of interest. The directors sat at a table and awarded millions of dollars to their friends and to their own business interests. All the while, more and more Canadians are hungry and homeless.

The question is simple: What plan does the minister have to get that money back?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are so allergic to good news that they go to old news. The big news today is 4.75. That is the number that all Canadians will remember, because we have good economic news, but I am happy to answer the same question again.

What is a responsible government? It is about launching an inquiry. That is what we did, and on the basis of the findings we suspended funding to the organization, and the CEO and the chair resigned. Now, we are proposing a new governance model with the National Research Council, because we want to restore funding to small and medium-sized businesses in this country.

* * *

[Translation]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, water is essential to indigenous communities. Water is life. Water is sacred. Before 2015, the Conservative government refused to listen to the heartfelt pleas from indigenous peoples. There were 105 long-term drinking water advisories at that time.

Can the Minister of Indigenous Services tell us what Canada is doing to protect this vital resource that is so essential in indigenous communities?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Pontiac for her work on access to safe drinking water.

In 2015, the Liberal government completely discarded Stephen Harper's paternalistic approach. Now, we listen to indigenous leaders and work closely with them. We have lifted 144 long-term drinking water advisories, and we are not stopping there.

We also introduced Bill C-61, the first nations clean water act, to make sure things never go back to how they were.

• (1510)

[English]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's report proves that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost and corruption. Most of the government's \$200 million in contracts with its friends at McKinsey broke the rules.

The Liberals are tight with McKinsey. The former ambassador to China and head of the Prime Minister's economic advisory panel came from McKinsey. The policy director to the former minister of public services and procurement was also from McKinsey. The current government serves McKinsey consultants and scandalizes Canadians.

Why did the Liberals repeatedly break the rules to benefit their friends at McKinsey?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that question several times.

A question that has not been answered, however, is why are the Conservatives not sharing today's good news about the interest rate being lowered for the first time in four years, a first among G7 countries?

That was possible not only because we have responsible management from a fiscal, economic and social standpoint, but also because Canada, in 2025, is going to have the strongest economic growth of all the G7 countries. We have made investments in dental care, in health care, in child care across Canada, and in particular in Quebec, as well as in housing, including in my own riding, Québec.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that the Liberal minister would do everything to avoid talking about or even mentioning McKinsey in the response.

This question is about McKinsey. The company supercharged the opioid crisis, advised totalitarian regimes and held a corporate retreat down the road from a concentration camp. It has a vile track record, yet the Liberals have constantly turned to this company, supercharging its profits. They have turned to McKinsey to make critical decisions about this country's future.

Now that it has finally been caught by the Auditor General, will the NDP-Liberal government finally ban this vile company from government contracts, yes or no?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it may indeed be that our colleague was distracted when I spoke about the matter many times during question period.

I am happy to repeat the same answer to the same question, which is that we thank the Auditor General for her report. It contains recommendations and views that have been understood and

Oral Questions

heard in many other reports in previous months. We have been acting on those recommendations for more than a year now.

There is nothing more to add, except that today is an important day for Canadians and their economy. For the first time in four years, there has been a fall in the interest rate, the first decrease across all the G7 countries.

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after nine years under this government that is not worth the cost or the corruption, we found out from the Auditor General yesterday that the government awarded 70% of its contracts, untendered, directly to McKinsey with the support of the Bloc Québécois.

This shows a complete lack of ethics and responsibility. It is thinly veiled corruption. It is scandalous.

Why is the Prime Minister awarding so many untendered contracts to McKinsey? Why?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, members on the other side of the House clearly have a listening problem, because I have answered this question many times today.

I say it is a listening problem because, a few days ago, other members and I heard the Leader of the Opposition and chief insult-hurler tell Quebecers in my region that the Canadian dental care plan does not exist. However, there are 9,000 seniors in my colleague's riding of Lévis—Lotbinière who are already enrolled in the plan. More than 60%, 62% to be precise, of dental care providers in Quebec are already enrolled.

* * *

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opportunities for indigenous tourism are unlimited. In spectacular Northwest Territories, people have come to experience the unparalleled northern lights and our northern hospitality. Last November, we launched the first stream of the indigenous tourism fund, which currently supports over 150 projects. At least 50% of the tourism growth program will be invested in indigenous tourism attractions.

Can the Minister of Tourism tell us how our government is supporting reconciliation through infrastructure investments and indigenous tourism?

Oral Questions

• (1515)

Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indigenous tourism is a pillar of the government's tourism growth strategy, and Canada has the potential to become a leader in the world when it comes to authentic indigenous tourism. That is why NACCA will be delivering new funding to support large, scaled-up indigenous tourism projects. It will enable indigenous communities to scale up their projects and grow their own economy.

While Conservatives have always looked down on indigenous communities, we will continue to support indigenous tourism growth through an indigenous-led process.

* * *

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, air passengers who have been grossly mistreated by the big airlines are having to wait years to have their complaints heard. The backlog of complaints is over 70,000 right now. We just learned of a couple from British Columbia who finally received compensation, only to have Air Canada turn around and sue them. The Liberals promised the strongest air passenger protections in the world, but the reality is the new rules make it easier for the airlines to sue their customers.

Strongest in the world? What world is the minister on?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians work very hard to save some money to travel to go see their loved ones and to take well-deserved vacations. That is why they deserve good service from the airline companies. The Conservatives did not do anything at all until we came here and put rules in place. The airlines have to do better, way better.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is World Environment Day. I am so honoured that visiting Ottawa the next few days are British Columbians who work night and day to protect our southern resident killer whale population, yet the government makes decision after decision after decision that further threatens their survival.

There are only 75 whales of this population left in the Salish Sea. The approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline and building the Trans Mountain pipeline increase the risk of spills and the certainty of increased noise. Also, there is the doubling of the Roberts Bank port in Vancouver over the objections of scientists who told the government it would threaten the survival of the southern resident killer whales.

Does the government understand the goal is to protect, not exterminate?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate a happy World Environment Day to the member for

Saanich—Gulf Islands, to all Greens, to Liberals, to NDP members and to the Bloc Québécois. Unfortunately, the Conservatives continue to deny the existence of climate change altogether, but just last year, the government announced important measures to help this country continue to lead the way in the fight against climate change. We published draft methane regulations to support cleaner energy; we introduced the world's first-ever cap on oil and gas emissions; we finalized our new EV availability standard to increase the supply of ZEVs across the country, and we committed to working with all stakeholders to deliver on a clean, green economy of the future.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano and Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar, representing the International Civil Aviation Organization as council president and secretary-general, respectively.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: I would also like to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Barb Ramsay, Minister of Social Development and Seniors for the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: I would also like to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Lisa Dempster, Minister of Labrador Affairs and Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, with the support of the whips and House leaders of all recognized parties in this place, to recognize an important event that took place outside of these four walls last week: the annual soccer game between members of Parliament and the pages. It is important to let the record show that, despite the different capacities and the variety of ages of the MPs, we were able to eke out a very strong 5-3 win against the pages. I want the record to show that.

We are two weeks out from our summer break, and I think I speak—

The Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of order. Just after we said congratulations to the pages for their great job in singing *O Canada*, it is a shame that we have to say that they lost at soccer. I really think the hon. member should apologize for that.

• (1520)

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I was going to wrap up by saying thanks to our pages and everyone who was involved. I know we cannot table objects, but we do have something that we will be presenting to the pages outside of this place.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

The House resumed from June 3 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 3:20 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion to concur in the 19th report of the Standing Committee on Finance.

Call in the members.

• (1545)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 796)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Deltell	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Gallant
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Jivani	Kelly
Khanna	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Maguire
Majumdar	Martel
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz

Muys
 Patzer
 Poilievre
 Rempel Garner
 Rood
 Scheer
 Seeback
 Shipley
 Soroka
 Stewart
 Stubbs
 Tochor
 Uppal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Williams
 Zimmer— 113

Orders of the Day

Nater
 Perkins
 Redekopp
 Roberts
 Ruff
 Schmale
 Shields
 Small
 Steinley
 Strahl
 Thomas
 Tolmie
 Van Popta
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Williamson

NAYS

Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jones

Orders of the Day

Jowhari	Julian
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Medicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Pauzé
Perron	Plamondon
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Rayes	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Singh	Sorbara
Sousa	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 202

PAIRED

Members

Davidson	Desilets
Falk (Provencher)	Guilbeault
Hepfner	Kayabaga
Lalonde	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Paul-Hus	Petitpas Taylor
Richards	Trudel — 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the main motion.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

● (1550)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, we believe that for this important issue it should be a recorded vote.

● (1600)

And before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the member for Ottawa South's photo is not showing up, so I do not think we can count his vote today.

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

(Division No. 797)

YEAS

Members

Angus	Ashton
Bachrach	Barron
Boulerice	Cannings
Collins (Victoria)	Davies
Desjarlais	Erskine-Smith
Garrison	Gazan
Green	Hughes
Idlout	Johns
Julian	Kwan
MacGregor	Masse
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McPherson	Morrice
Singh	Zarrillo — 26

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg

Business of Supply

Duclos
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
 Ehsassi
 Ellis
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
 Ferreri
 Findlay
 Fonseca
 Fortin
 Fraser
 Fry
 Gainey
 Garon
 Généreux
 Gerretsen
 Gladu
 Gould
 Gray
 Hallan
 Hardie
 Holland
 Hussien
 Iacono
 Jaczek
 Jivani
 Jones
 Kelloway
 Khalid
 Khera
 Kmiec
 Kram
 Kurek
 Kusmierczyk
 Lambropoulos
 Lantsman
 Larouche
 Lauzon
 LeBlanc
 Lehoux
 Leslie
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lightbound
 Lobb
 Longfield
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 Maguire
 Maloney
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mazier
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 Melillo
 Mendicino
 Michaud
 Moore
 Morrison
 Motz
 Muys
 Nater
 Noormohamed
 O'Connell
 O'Regan
 Pauzé
 Perron
 Poilievre
 Qualtrough
 Redekopp
 Roberts
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Rota
 Sahota
 Saks

Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Epp
 Fast
 Fillmore
 Fisher
 Fortier
 Fragiskatos
 Freeland
 Gaheer
 Gallant
 Gaudreau
 Genuis
 Gill
 Goodridge
 Gourde
 Hajdu
 Hanley
 Hoback
 Housefather
 Hutchings
 Ien
 Jeneroux
 Joly
 Jowhari
 Kelly
 Khanna
 Kitchen
 Koutrakis
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kusie
 Lake
 Lamoureux
 Lapointe
 Lattanzio
 Lawrence
 Leboutillier
 Lemire
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Lloyd
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Majumdar
 Martel
 May (Cambridge)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 McKay
 McLeod
 Mendès
 Miao
 Miller
 Morantz
 Morrissey
 Murray
 Naqvi
 Ng
 Normandin
 Oliphant
 Patzer
 Perkins
 Plamondon
 Powlowski
 Rayes
 Rempel Garner
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Rood
 Ruff
 Sajjan
 Samson

Sarai
 Scarpaleggia
 Schiefke
 Seeback
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Shipley
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Sorbara
 Sousa
 Ste-Marie
 St-Onge
 Stubbs
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thomas
 Tochor
 Turnbull
 Valdez
 van Koevorden
 Vandal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vignola
 Virani
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Wilkinson
 Williamson
 Zahid
 Zuberi— 285

Savard-Tremblay
 Scheer
 Schmale
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Shields
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Simard
 Small
 Soroka
 Steinley
 Stewart
 Strahl
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien
 Thompson
 Tolmie
 Uppal
 Van Bynen
 Van Popta
 Vandenbeld
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Villemure
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Weiler
 Williams
 Yip
 Zimmer

PAIRED

Members

Davidson
 Falk (Provencher)
 Hepfner
 Lalonde
 Paul-Hus
 Richards
 Desilets
 Guilbeault
 Kayabaga
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 Petipas Taylor
 Trudel— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—MEASURES TO LOWER FOOD PRICES

The House resumed from June 4 consideration of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford relating to the business of supply.

The question is on the motion. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

● (1610)

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

*Business of Supply**(Division No. 798)*

YEAS

Members

Angus	Ashton
Bachrach	Barron
Boulerice	Cannings
Collins (Victoria)	Davies
Desjarlais	Garrison
Gazan	Green
Hardie	Hughes
Idlout	Johns
Julian	Kwan
MacGregor	Masse
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McPherson	Morrice
Singh	Zarrillo— 26

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anand	Anandasangaree
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Desbiens	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Généreux

Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Gray	Hajdu
Hallan	Hanley
Hoback	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Jivani
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khanna	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusmierczyk	Lake
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lawrence
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lightbound	Lloyd
Lobb	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maguire	Majumdar
Maloney	Martel
Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean
McLeod	Melillo
Mendès	Medicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Morrissey	Motz
Murray	Muys
Naqvi	Nater
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Patzer	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Rayes	Redekopp
Rempel Garner	Roberts
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rood	Rota
Ruff	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schieffe
Schmale	Seeback
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Shields	Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Small	Sorbara
Soroka	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs

Private Members' Business

Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Turnbull
Uppal	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Van Popta	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weiler	Wilkinson
Williams	Williamson
Yip	Zahid
Zimmer	Zuberi — 286

PAIRED

Members

Davidson	Desilets
Falk (Provencher)	Guilbeault
Hepfner	Kayabaga
Lalonde	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Paul-Hus	Petitpas Taylor
Richards	Trudel — 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1615)

[*Translation*]

FOREIGN HOSTAGE TAKERS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The House resumed from May 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-353, An Act to provide for the imposition of restrictive measures against foreign hostage takers and those who practice arbitrary detention in state-to-state relations and to make related amendments to the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-353 under Private Members' Business.

● (1625)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 799*)

YEAS

Members

Aboulttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold

Bérubé	Bezán
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	Desbiens
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hallan
Hoback	Housefather
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Jivani
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Khanna
Kitchen	Kmieciak
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	MacGregor
Maguire	Majumdar
Martel	Masse
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	McPherson
Melillo	Mendicino
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzner
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiple
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Singh	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola

Private Members' Business

Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer— 173

Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

Tassi
Thompson
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Yip
Zuberi— 141

Taylor Roy
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anand
Arseneault
Atwin
Bains
Battiste
Bibeau
Blair
Boissonnault
Brière
Casey
Champagne
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Coteau
Damoff
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Ehsassi
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Gerretsen
Hajdu
Hardie
Hussen
Iacono
Jaczek
Jones
Kelloway
Khera
Kusmierczyk
Lamoureux
Lattanzio
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLeod
Miao
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sorbara
St-Onge

Ali
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baker
Beech
Bittle
Blois
Bradford
Carr
Chahal
Chatel
Chiang
Cormier
Dabrusin
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser
Fry
Gainey
Gould
Hanley
Holland
Hutchings
Ien
Joly
Jowhari
Khalid
Koutrakis
Lambropoulos
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacDonald (Malpeque)
Maloney
May (Cambridge)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Miller
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sousa
Sudds

PAIRED

Members

Davidson
Falk (Provencher)
Hepfner
Lalonde
Paul-Hus
Richards
Desilets
Guilbeault
Kayabaga
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Petipas Taylor
Trudel— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

The House resumed from May 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-377, An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (need to know), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-377 under Private Members' Business.

● (1635)

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

(Division No. 800)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Angus
Ashton
Baldinelli
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Bergeron
Bérubé
Blanchet
Block
Bragdon
Brock
Calkins
Caputo
Chabot
Champoux
Collins (Victoria)
Dalton
Davies
Deltell
Desjarlais
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Aitchison
Allison
Arnold
Bachrach
Barlow
Barron
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas
Boulerice
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings
Carrie
Chambers
Chong
Cooper
Dancho
DeBellefeuille
Desbiens
Doherty
Dreeshen
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Fast

Private Members' Business

Ferreri
Fortin
Garon
Gaudreau
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Gourde
Green
Hoback
Hughes
Jeneroux
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Kwan
Lantsman
Lawrence
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Maguire
Martel
Mathysen
Mazier
McLean
Melillo
Moore
Morrice
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Plamondon
Rayes
Reid
Roberts
Rood
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson
Zimmer — 173

Findlay
Gallant
Garrison
Gazan
Genuis
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hallan
Housefather
Idlout
Jivani
Julian
Khanna
Kmicic
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lake
Larouche
Lehoux
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
MacGregor
Majumdar
Masse
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McPherson
Michaud
Morantz
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Pauzé
Perron
Poilievre
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Romanado
Ruff
Scheer
Seeback
Shipley
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anand
Arseneault
Atwin
Bains
Battiste
Bibeau
Blair

Ali
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baker
Beech
Bittle
Blois

Boissonnault
Brière
Casey
Chahal
Chatel
Chiang
Cormier
Dabrusin
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclous
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser
Fry
Gainey
Gould
Hanley
Holland
Hutchings
Ien
Joly
Jowhari
Khalid
Koutrakis
Lambropoulos
Lapointe
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLeod
Mendicino
Miller
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Qualtrough
Rodriguez
Rota
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thompson
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Yip
Zuberi — 143

Bradford
Carr
Chagger
Champagne
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Coteau
Damoff
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Ehsassi
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Gerretsen
Hajdu
Hardie
Hussen
Iacono
Jaczek
Jones
Kelloway
Khera
Kusmierczyk
Lamoureux
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacDonald (Malpeque)
Maloney
May (Cambridge)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Miao
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
Oliphant
Powlowski
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Saks
Sara
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sousa
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid

PAIRED

Members

Davidson
Falk (Provencher)
Hepfner
Lalonde
Paul-Hus

Desilets
Guilbeault
Kayabaga
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Petitpas Taylor

Private Members' Business

Richards

Trudel— 12

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

[Translation]

**NATIONAL STRATEGY ON FLOOD AND DROUGHT
FORECASTING ACT**

The House resumed from May 31 consideration of the motion that Bill C-317 be read the third time and passed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-317 under Private Members' Business.

● (1650)

[English]

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

(Division No. 801)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arnold
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	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
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	Desbiens
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong

Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hoback	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Jeneroux
Jivani	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khanna	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lake
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lawrence
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lightbound	Lloyd
Lobb	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire
Majumdar	Maloney
Martel	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saainich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCaughey (Edmonton West)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean	McLeod
McPherson	Melillo
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Morrissey
Motz	Murray
Muys	Naqvi
Nater	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Patzer
Paupé	Perkins

Private Members' Business

Perron
 Poilievre
 Qualtrough
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Rood
 Ruff
 Sajjan
 Samson
 Savard-Tremblay
 Scheer
 Schmale
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Shields
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Simard
 Singh
 Sorbara
 Sousa
 Ste-Marie
 St-Onge
 Stubbs
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thomas
 Tochor
 Turnbull
 Valdez
 van Koeverden
 Vandal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vignola
 Virani
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Wilkinson
 Williamson
 Zahid
 Zimmer — 313

Plamondon
 Powlowski
 Rayes
 Reid
 Roberts
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Rota
 Sahota
 Saks
 Sarai
 Scarpaleggia
 Schiefke
 Seebach
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Shipley
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Small
 Soroka
 Steinley
 Stewart
 Strahl
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien
 Thompson
 Tolmie
 Uppal
 Van Bynen
 Van Popta
 Vandenbeld
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Villemure
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh
 Weiler
 Williams
 Yip
 Zarrillo

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Davidson
 Falk (Provencher)
 Hepfner
 Lalonde
 Paul-Hus
 Richards

Desilets
 Guilbeault
 Kayabaga
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 Petitpas Taylor
 Trudel — 12

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

[*Translation*]

PANDEMIC PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS ACT

The House resumed from June 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-293, An Act respecting pandemic prevention and preparedness, be read the third time and passed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-293 under Private Members' Business.

Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

● (1700)

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to seek unanimous consent to change my vote. I made a mistake. I want to vote no.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to seek unanimous consent to change my vote. I want to vote no.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to seek unanimous consent to change my vote. I want to vote no. My colleagues asked me to say it in song, but I will refrain from doing so.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 802)

YEAS

Members

Alghabra
 Anand
 Arseneault
 Ashton
 Bachrach
 Bains
 Barron
 Beech
 Bittle
 Boissonnault
 Bradford
 Cannings
 Casey
 Chahal
 Chatel
 Chiang
 Collins (Victoria)
 Coteau
 Damoff
 Desjarlais
 Dhillon
 Dong
 Duclos
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Fillmore
 Fonseca
 Fragiskatos

Ali
 Anandasangaree
 Arya
 Atwin
 Badawey
 Baker
 Battiste
 Bibeau
 Blair
 Boulgerice
 Brière
 Carr
 Chagger
 Champagne
 Chen
 Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 Davies
 Dhaliwal
 Diab
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Ehsassi
 Erskine-Smith
 Fisher
 Fortier
 Fraser

Private Members' Business

Freeland	Fry	Dancho	DeBellefeuille
Gaheer	Gainey	Deltell	Desbiens
Garrison	Gazan	Doherty	Dowdall
Gerretsen	Gould	Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Green	Hajdu	Ellis	Epp
Hanley	Hardie	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Fast
Holland	Housefather	Ferreri	Findlay
Hussen	Hutchings	Fortin	Gallant
Iacono	Idlout	Garon	Gaudreau
Ien	Jaczek	Généreux	Genuis
Johns	Joly	Gill	Gladu
Jones	Jowhari	Godin	Goodridge
Julian	Kelloway	Gourde	Gray
Khalid	Khera	Hallan	Hoback
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk	Jeneroux	Jivani
Kwan	Lambropoulos	Kelly	Khanna
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Kitchen	Kmiec
Lattanzio	Lauzon	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Kurek	Kusie
Lightbound	Long	Lake	Lantsman
Longfield	MacGregor	Larouche	Lawrence
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Lehoux	Lemire
Martinez Ferrada	Masse	Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)	Lloyd	Lobb
McGuinty	McKay	Maguire	Majumdar
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McPherson	Martel	Mazier
Mendès	Mendicino	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Miller	Morrice	Melillo	Michaud
Morrissey	Murray	Moore	Morantz
Naqvi	Ng	Morrison	Motz
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Muys	Nater
Oliphant	O'Regan	Normandin	Patzer
Powlowski	Qualtrough	Paupé	Perkins
Rays	Robillard	Perron	Plamondon
Rodriguez	Rogers	Poilievre	Redekopp
Romanado	Rota	Reid	Rempel Garner
Sahota	Sajjan	Roberts	Rood
Saks	Samson	Ruff	Savard-Tremblay
Sarai	Scarpaleggia	Scheer	Schmale
Schiefke	Serré	Seeback	Shields
Sgro	Shanahan	Shiple	Simard
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sinclair-Desgagné	Small
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh	Soroka	Steinley
Sorbara	Sousa	Ste-Marie	Stewart
St-Onge	Sudds	Strahl	Stubbs
Tassi	Taylor Roy	Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Turnbull	Thomas	Tochor
Valdez	Van Bynen	Tolmie	Uppal
van Koeverden	Vandal	Van Popta	Vecchio
Vandenbeld	Virani	Vidal	Vien
Weiler	Wilkinson	Viersen	Vignola
Yip	Zahid	Villemure	Vis
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 164	Vuong	Wagantall
		Warkentin	Waugh
		Webber	Williams
		Williamson	Zimmer — 144

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Chong
Cooper	Dalton

PAIRED

Members

Davidson	Desilets
Falk (Provencher)	Guilbeault
Hepfner	Kayabaga
Lalonde	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Paul-Hus	Petitpas Taylor
Richards	Trudel — 12

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

• (1705)

Mr. Stéphane Lauson: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to seek the unanimous consent of the House to change my vote on C-377. I am voting against the bill.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 88 minutes.

The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île is rising on a point of order.

* * *

FRENCH, LANGUAGE OF THE QUEBEC NATION

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the House recall Quebec's rich history, punctuated by bold gestures to defend and ensure the vitality of its only official language, French;

That it unreservedly affirm that the strength of the Quebec nation certainly does not lie in bilingualism, but in its distinct character, with its unique culture and resolutely francophone specificity.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

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

[Motion agreed to]

[English]

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 Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, Mental Health and Addictions; the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, Health; the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk, Government Priorities.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

CERTIFICATES OF NOMINATION

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 111.1, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a certificate of nomination and biographical notes for the proposed appointment of Christine Ivory as Parliamentary Librarian.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

I request that this certificate of nomination and biographical notes be referred to the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament.

* * *

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 20th report of the Standing Committee on Finance in relation to Bill C-69, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

CANADA-PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA RELATIONSHIP

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh interim report of the Special Committee on the Canada-People's Republic of China Relationship, entitled "The Special Committee on the Canada-People's Republic of China Relations condemns the verdict of Hong Kong's High Court on pro-democracy activists".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

* * *

PETITIONS

PESTICIDES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition from a number of constituents who are concerned about the use in Canada of a herbicide called glyphosate, or a trade name often known as Roundup. The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer has classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans".

The petitioners are concerned and ask that the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Health specifically, ban the sale and use of glyphosate to protect human health and the environment and develop a comprehensive plan to reduce pesticide use in Canada.

• (1710)

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present two petitions.

Government Orders

The first, signed by 12,770 Canadians, calls for the Canadian government to follow in the footsteps of its democratic allies in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands to rightly recognize the slogan “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” for what it is.

The petition calls for definitive action from the government to provide clarity to law enforcement agencies and provincial and territorial attorney generals, as well as for it to examine and provide clarity on the legality of other slogans, such as “globalize the intifada” and “long live October 7”. It asks and demands that the government convene a national anti-Semitism summit focused on taking immediate action.

I am grateful to the leaders at Canadian Women Against Antisemitism, particularly Talia and Revi, who made their way here to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members they are to speak only on the petition itself and not put in their points of view or add to their statement.

CHINOOK SALMON FISHERY

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have in my hands a petition signed by numerous Canadians who are bringing attention to the closure of the Chinook salmon fishery off the coast of Vancouver Island, notably in the Port Renfrew area.

Petitioners point out in this petition that all of the scientific evidence seems to suggest there is no reason for the closure, as well as that significant economic damage will be done, including the total writeoff of the entire fishing season, which is costing the coastal community over \$20 million.

Petitioners are asking the government to reconsider this closure, considering all of the other options available, including putting closure zones around the southern resident killer whales instead of closing off the entire area.

PRISON NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have another petition to present, which is signed by, again, a number of Canadians calling for an end to the prison needle exchange program. Prison guards will be affected by the fact that inmates who request a needle kit will be able to take a needle kit back to their cell, and these will be potentially used as currency and to further exacerbate the addiction problem of inmates in prison, presenting a public safety risk to correctional officers in the form of a physical weapon and potentially even a biological weapon.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

[Translation]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FIRST NATIONS CLEAN WATER ACT

The House resumed from February 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-61, An Act respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nation lands, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to Bill C-61 today. The types of responses we have been getting from virtually all sides of the House and the general goodwill toward the legislation are really quite encouraging.

It is important to highlight that there was a very tangible commitment made back in 2015 to deal with this important issue. It goes well beyond reserves. It is about, in essence, the fact that everyone deserves to have access to clean and safe drinking water. This is something the Prime Minister has been talking a great deal about, and I believe that as a government, we are on the right track to achieve just that.

In the discussions that have been taking place, I was quite encouraged. I will start off by quoting one of my colleagues, who I know is very proud of the legislation before us today. He has often talked with our caucus colleagues about the issue. Just a couple of days ago, this is what the member for Sydney—Victoria said in the chamber when he raised the issue of Bill C-61:

Mr. Speaker, June is National Indigenous History Month in Canada. It is a month to celebrate indigenous culture and indigenous contributions to our country. As we celebrate National Indigenous History Month, all parliamentarians could indeed make history by sending the first nations clean water act to committee for study.

Bill C-61 would recognize first nations' inherent right to water, ensure that there are minimum standards for first nations' clean water and protect first nations' water sources from pollution and contamination now and into the future. This historic and crucial legislation would ensure that first nations have the funding and self-determination to lay the groundwork for a water institution led by first nations.

All Canadians would expect access to clean water. Surely on this, the first sitting week of National Indigenous History Month, parties from all sides of the House can agree to support first nations' need for clean water. Let us turn the page on this shameful legacy in Canadian history and give unanimous consent to get the important legislation to committee.

Government Orders

It was very encouraging and, a bit later that day, we were able to do just that. An official opposition member rose in his place on a point of order and said, “There have been discussions among the parties, as you suggested earlier, and if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion”, and the member then read the motion.

That brings us to today. That motion is allowing us to not only debate the legislation but do what the member for Sydney—Victoria was suggesting: recognize National Indigenous Heritage Month and get Bill C-61 to committee.

The Conservative member then proposed the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, Bill C-61, An Act respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nation lands, be called for debate at second reading on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, and at the conclusion of the time provided for Government Orders on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, Bill C-61 be deemed read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

That is what I mean by the goodwill that has been demonstrated by all political parties in the chamber on what is such a very important issue.

● (1715)

It reminds me of a couple of things. One is more of a personal story that many Winnipeggers often talk about, and that is Shoal Lake. Shoal Lake has been supplying the city of Winnipeg for over 100 years through an aqueduct, using the basic law of gravity, and we have benefited from that water. A first nation was very strongly and negatively impacted by that many years ago. It was literally cut off. For over two decades, Shoal Lake 40 has been under a boil water advisory.

Thinking about it, just outside their windows, the first nations members could look out and see this beautiful, pristine lake, Shoal Lake. That lake was providing the city of Winnipeg its drinking water, yet the reserve itself was on a boil water advisory. I think that highlighted the issue for many Manitobans and, I would suggest, for all Canadians. Liberals made a commitment back in 2015 to rectify it. Some of our critics will say it was supposed to be done a whole lot quicker.

At the end of the day, we put the issue of boil water advisories on the front burner. For generations, nothing was done until the Prime Minister and this government made the financial commitments. I would suggest it was even more than that and indicate that there is a moral responsibility. As a result, we did see a tangible commitment, not only for the water treatment facility, but also on Freedom Road.

I can say that if we take a look at Shoal Lake, in particular individuals like Chief Erwin Redsky and other band members, we will be impressed with how the community drove the issue. Ultimately, as a government, we responded to it. As I say, for over two decades it was a problem. Today, anyone who goes there will see a pristine, well-constructed water treatment facility.

When I say that, I do not say that lightly, because that particular facility has been recognized for its architecture and the manner in which it was constructed. It was built on time and on budget. What I would like to highlight, when we think about that, is that it was

the indigenous leadership that ultimately pushed to make the project take place in the first place. If we take a look at the labourers, the contractors and the individuals who were directly involved in the building of the facility itself, it was all indigenous-led.

A couple of weeks back, I was on Parliament Hill and I met with Sharon Redsky, someone I classify as a dear friend. She was talking to me about Shoal Lake and some of the things that have taken place. There is a sense of pride there as a direct result of this. For the first time in generations, Shoal Lake has water it can drink. The same water that has been providing for the city of Winnipeg is there now for Shoal Lake. Opportunities have been created as a direct result of the construction of the water treatment facility and, in fact, the construction of Freedom Road. This has had a profoundly positive impact on the lives of many, so it even goes beyond the important issue of water.

● (1720)

This is one of the reasons it is so critically important that, as a government that is committed to getting rid of the long-term boil water advisories, it is not just the federal government moving in and saying that this is the way it has to be, this and that, and then a few years later say “Oh, look, we did the job”, but that we recognize the important role of indigenous leadership driving these programs and supporting them wherever we can.

I would suggest, when we take a look at some of the numbers, that what has been accomplished is very impressive. In partnership with communities, the government has lifted over 73% of long-term boil water advisories since 2015, which works out to approximately just over 140 facilities. There is now clean water in more than 96% of first nations.

To conclude, suffice it to say that we have gone a long way, and we will continue to move forward on this very important legislation and issue.

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Madam Speaker, I do appreciate the comments from the parliamentary secretary across the way. In particular, he mentioned quite a bit about Shoal Lake, which is in my riding. I had the opportunity to visit the community recently and see some of the infrastructure improvements.

I want to ask the member a bit about the process of the bill and how we got to this point. He mentioned that there is broad support for the bill and the ideas set out in it, but that does not mean there is unanimous support for the bill from all stakeholders and all first nations across the country by any means. We have heard some public concerns being raised by some first nations that do not feel that they have been adequately consulted or that have questions about the vagueness of certain aspects of the bill, which I will speak to in more detail later.

However, we see a trend with this government bringing legislation pertaining to indigenous communities towards the end of the spring, and it seems that there is always a rush to pass it. Why did it not bring this forward sooner so that we could have a more fulsome debate and get it passed through committee sooner?

Government Orders

• (1725)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, as parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, I get a very good sense of the legislative agenda. If we take a look at the legislative agenda and factor in things such as budget debates, we will find that there is a very limited number of days and a substantial legislative agenda.

I would welcome the opportunity for more time, and it is one of the reasons I constantly advocate for changing the Standing Orders. For example, Friday could virtually start at eight in the morning and end at midnight, as far as I am concerned. Members would be able to speak endlessly on important pieces of legislation, which I think would help facilitate more debate.

I think that the issue of getting more debate on legislation so that we could actually see more legislation being passed needs to rest, in good part, on reforming our Standing Orders, and if we are successful—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, my question is on behalf of the people of Treaty 6, 7 and 8 who have been stalwarts and champions in the protection of clean water for generations and, before the treaty, for thousands of years.

My question is directly pertaining to the lack of this government's ability to properly consult with those who are directly affected by this legislation. We know, for example, that the minister herself has claimed that she is meeting and co-developing this legislation, but first nations themselves have said to me that is not the case. When will the minister meet with Treaty 6, 7 and 8 members to ensure that they establish a bilateral treaty table on water?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is important to recognize that the legislation is a significant step forward. The member talks about consultation; I can assure him that it has been a number of years, I believe it is close to five years now, that this legislation has been worked on. The consultations have been taking place for about five years, and without that consultation, we would not have the legislation that we have before us today.

As the previous questioner said, it is not like the bill is unanimously supported; not all stakeholders and parliamentarians are behind the legislation. I think that a vast majority see the true value of the legislation, which is at a state that is good to go to committee. Hopefully, the committee is able to deal with it in a timely fashion so that we can get it back to the House.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member is part of a government that promised in its 2015 electoral campaign to end all drinking water advisories by 2020. Here we are in 2024, and there are still countless long-term drinking water advisories. Why has the government been so slow to act on something so critical as water?

• (1730)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, in all fairness, I do not believe the government has been negligent at all on the issue. It has demonstrated its intentions virtually from the get-go, with the Prime Minister talking about establishing a new relationship with

indigenous people and the Government of Canada, one of mutual respect, and that takes time. It has to be done properly.

We were very ambitious, in 2015, in making these commitments and they are materializing, maybe not in the exact time frame we had said back then, but I truly believe we have made significant progress. There is still more to come, but it is tangible, it is there and it is happening. Ultimately, I think that is where we are having an impact in a very positive way.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, there are some very good things in Bill C-61, that the member presented in his speech.

The bill promotes first nations' right to self-determination and self-government. Perfect, we are on the same wavelength.

However, there are some problematic things going on. I am not talking about what happened 10 or 15 years ago. I am talking about what is happening right now. There are problems with the Kearl mine in Alberta. What is more, 40 out of 41 first nations reject the Chalk River project and the government is not stepping in. This involves drinking water. The first nations are calling for the Chalk River development to be stopped and they are demanding their voices be heard.

I am all for easing our conscience, but maybe it is time to put words into action.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is important for us to recognize the fact that indigenous leadership has been stepping up in a very significant way, and where it can, the government is enabling and empowering that leadership with positive results. For example, I just received a text with respect to Shoal Lake 40. I am very proud of the fact Ontario Public Works has awarded the Shoal Lake 40's water treatment facility, and the opportunities it provides for local procurement and employment, the 2022 project of the year for small municipalities and first nations award.

I am suggesting we have to make sure it is done right, with a lot of consultation. Working with and supporting indigenous communities and leadership is really important on this issue and we will continue to do so in the years ahead.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, treaties have been the foundation of Canada's attempt to take unceded land from indigenous peoples since the onset of the historic treaties. First nations feel as though these treaties are important and sacred when they are followed, but when not followed they pale in comparison to the desperate situation so many are facing.

Why has there been no recognition of the inherent treaty rights to water for the first nations in Alberta, Saskatchewan and parts of Manitoba represented by treaties 6, 7 and 8?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I would like to highlight what the member for Sydney—Victoria did.

This is National Indigenous History Month, which affords members, and all people of Canada, a better understanding and appreciation of history and the important role we all have to play when it comes to issues such as truth and reconciliation and clean drinking water. Although there are still drinking water advisories out there, we have advisory committees working to get rid of them.

The government, over the last number of years, has put Canada on the right track by supporting and enabling indigenous leadership to deal with this very serious problem, and we are getting closer to the finish line.

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to be able to rise and talk to such an important issue as drinking water on first nations, dealing with Bill C-61. Before I get too far into my remarks, I would like to let members know that I will be splitting my time this evening with the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George. I look forward to hearing his comments on this very shortly.

This is obviously an important topic. It is one that, unfortunately, we are still talking about as a Parliament all these years later. We have seen the current government make a lot of big promises and announcements of a lot of big spending, and, unfortunately, most recent information from the government indicates that there are still 29 drinking water advisories that remain in 27 first nations across the country, 10 of which are in the Kenora district that I am representing. Those are namely Fort Hope, Neskantaga, Nibinamik, Fort Severn, Bearskin Lake, Muskrat Dam, North Caribou Lake, Sandy Lake, North Spirit Lake and Deer Lake, all still living under long-term drinking water advisories.

We know this is unacceptable. We know that it is a shame for Canada nationally and internationally to have this issue continue to plague us, and I am glad that we are here today finally debating Bill C-61. I do want to address that right off the hop, because we have heard the Minister of Indigenous Services and some other voices on the government side criticizing Conservatives, saying that we are blocking Bill C-61, which is absolutely ridiculous.

In fact, as the previous Liberal speaker mentioned, we passed a Conservative motion to expedite the passage of the bill to get it to committee, where we can do some important work on it and move it through the parliamentary process. It was a Conservative initiative to do that, but unfortunately, it has not been prioritized by the governing Liberal Party.

This is a trend we see every June, really. The government, at the last minute, tries to rush through legislation that pertains to first nations or indigenous peoples across the country. Consultation has not been adequate, the government has not gone through the proper steps, and it expects Parliament just to stamp it so the government can check a box before we rise for the summer. This is a very concerning trend. In fact, the government has had, by my count, 33 sitting days where the government has steered the agenda, and it has

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had the opportunity to bring this forward. Of course, this is not counting opposition days, even though some of those opposition days have been extended to include Government Orders. The government has had ample opportunity to bring this legislation forward.

Nonetheless, we are happy that we are here debating it today. As mentioned, there is some broad support for the aspirations and the intent of the legislation, but there is not unanimous support from stakeholders, first nations communities, leaders and groups right across the country.

I want to share some of the comments that have been made publicly in that regard. Chief Rupert Meneen of Tall Cree First Nation in Alberta has said that Bill C-61 “does not address existing needs and gaps in services, infrastructure, and monitoring on First Nations”. The chief goes on to say that as treaty peoples, they do not accept it.

Chief Bobby Cameron from Saskatchewan said, “As it stands, the federal water act announced today is not true reconciliation, it is an attempt to legalize the status quo”. Our first nations need more time. Don't rush this so quickly. It's as simple as that.

I will share one more that is out there. This is from a policy adviser to the Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services, representing 47 first nations in Alberta. Policy adviser Norma Large said it pretty simply: “The bottom line is that this bill is not meeting the mark”.

We have the government, on one hand, saying that it has co-developed this legislation, that there is support for it and that we need to rush it through the House of Commons with as little debate possible to get it through committee as quickly as possible, and I think there is goodwill on all sides of this House to expedite this legislation.

• (1735)

We have to make sure that we are addressing the concerns that are being raised. We cannot overlook or ignore the concerns of first nations peoples across the country. It is my hope that all members of the committee from all parties would ensure that we have the proper time and resources to do that, so we can bring first nations leaders to the table and share some more specifics about this legislation.

We also see some vague terms and things that are being kicked down the road in Bill C-61. There is a lot of work, and important work, that needs to be done that is not being addressed by this legislation that would be put off to future regulations. One example of that is the protection zones. The definition of a protection zone would be determined through future regulations as set out in this legislation. Of course, there should be collaboration with first nations, and territorial and provincial governments, to ensure that it is done right, but that work should already be under way. We need to have first nations leaders come to the committee to share their thoughts on what that should be and what that looks like for them in their communities so that we can get a jump on that important work and ensure that we are addressing those needs.

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To quote from Bill C-61, the minister is to “make best efforts” to begin required consultation, which sounds great. That is a good sentiment, and I think everyone would share the sentiment. Yes, the minister should make best efforts. However, what does that mean? What is the tangible effect of making best efforts? That is at the very core of the concerns that we have heard, as has been raised by other members of the House during this debate already. We are just getting going in this discussion. The bill has not even been to committee yet, and we are already hearing of first nations who do not feel that they have been consulted with, so it is certainly not a good start in that regard.

With the time I have remaining, I just want to speak more to the bill specifically. The process is one thing. I hope that we will all agree to move this forward, and move it forward in a way that brings in voices from first nations and ensures that proper debate can happen.

To the bill itself, much of it is very simple and straightforward, including things such as ensuring that the quality and quantity of water on the first nations will, at the very least, meet provincial and territorial standards if nothing else. That is something that, when folks read it, they would question why that would not be the case already. Unfortunately, we have seen this, not just when it comes to drinking water, but also with housing as well. There are concerns that houses on first nations have not been built up to code in the area of jurisdiction, and this is just another example of first nations communities being shortchanged and overlooked by the government.

Simply, Conservatives recognize that clean drinking water is a necessity of human life and that the government must work with all first nations and indigenous communities to develop adequate, safe, clean drinking water for all communities. As I mentioned off the top, the lack of drinking water has really been a national shame for far too long.

This ties in with consultation. More important, we have to recognize that a one-size-fits-all solution, this top-down approach from Ottawa, is not going to work. That is why a consultation and the boots on the ground work. It means a meeting with first nations leaders to understand the unique circumstances and needs in the communities, ensuring that those voices are being heard so that we can develop solutions in partnership that work for those first nations.

That is the vision that the Conservative Party has. I think it is one that is shared by members across party lines in the House. We stand ready to work to expedite this along. Of course, we are hoping that, at committee, our colleagues from the other parties will work with us to ensure that all first nations are heard before this bill gets passed.

• (1740)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member referred to the consultation process and had questions about it. I just want to amplify that, over the last five years, there has been a great deal of consultation that has taken place. One of the questions he had was in relation to treaties nos. 6, 7 and 8 first nations. Earlier this year, I know the minister had the

opportunity to tune into what it was those first nations were saying about the legislation and the issue of getting rid of the boil water advisories.

We all understand and appreciate, as well as respect, the important leadership role that first nations are playing on this file, and we are working to enable and support that leadership. I believe that the minister has clearly demonstrated just how important that fact is. It might have potentially slowed down some projects more than others, but I think that is by far the best way to go.

Would the member not agree that working in consultation is so critically important?

• (1745)

Mr. Eric Melillo: Madam Speaker, I would certainly agree that working in consultation is the best way forward, but I would disagree with the level of consultation that the member claims the minister to have done. I do not doubt that there has not been any consultation, but when we hear that this is not true reconciliation and that communities do not accept this, it is clear that many nations have been overlooked in this process so far. They do not feel as though their voices are being heard.

It is very important that we have the time at the indigenous and northern affairs committee to bring all voices to the table to ensure that we get this legislation right.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, at one point, my colleague said that it was important to think about both the quantity and quality of water. I completely agree with him.

Here is an example. In Nunavik, which is in northern Quebec, there are 14 communities where homes are not supplied with water, for example, from underground aqueducts. However, the situation is getting even worse there because, in addition to that, the melting permafrost is complicating everything.

Does my colleague agree with me that the issue of water quality is also linked to climate change?

[*English*]

Mr. Eric Melillo: Madam Speaker, I would agree that there are a number of factors, including changing conditions, that do impact that. We have seen in my riding that a number of communities are facing very different seasons, such as shorter winter seasons, for example, that are impacting a number of things, including drinking water.

I think that the member rightly recognizes that it is about quantity and quality, ensuring that there is an adequate level of both of those things when it comes to clean drinking water. It is important, overarching, that the government works with each community to understand what that looks like for their community.

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Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I often find it ironic to hear in this place criticism from the Conservatives of the Liberals, and vice versa, when so many times both parties have failed indigenous people. As a matter of fact, this legislation, Bill C-61, comes to this place because of a litigation of a Harper-era piece of legislation known as Bill S-6, which failed indigenous people, so much so that they had to take their concerns to court, have the Conservatives defeated, and then have this legislation be able to stand. This is better than what the Conservatives have tabled, for sure.

Would the member have anything to say to the many nations that had to litigate against his party's former legislation?

Mr. Eric Melillo: Madam Speaker, I was not a member at that time, so I cannot speak specifically to how that played out, but I can share the concern with the member that this was brought forward at the end of litigation. It even took the government a year longer than it was supposed to take to table this legislation to address that.

The current government has been dragging its feet. I am sure that we can agree that it needs to do better.

• (1750)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour that I rise today to discuss an issue that is so important, an issue of paramount importance, an issue that cuts to the very heart of our values as a nation, and that is the necessity of clean, safe and reliable drinking water for our first nations communities. It is with this urgency that I address Bill C-61, an act respecting water, source water, drinking water, waste water and related infrastructure on first nations lands.

For decades, first nations communities have suffered under the shadow of inadequate water infrastructure and services. This is not just an issue of policy. It is an issue of basic human rights and dignity. Clean drinking water is a fundamental necessity of life. It is not a privilege but a right that should be accessible to every single Canadian, irrespective of where they live. The lack of safe water in first nations communities is a national disgrace, and it is high time that we address this issue with the seriousness and commitment it deserves. As we know, this is an issue that the NDP-Liberal government has ignored for far too long. This debate is an important step toward ensuring that all first nations communities have access to something that many of us take for granted.

I will bring us back to 2015, when the member for Papineau, at that time the gentleman that was running to be our Prime Minister and who, indeed, became our Prime Minister, stood before Canadians with a handkerchief in his hand, and dabbed away a fake tear, and said that Canada's relationship with first nations is the most important relationship of his government.

We have seen, time and again, that the government has stumbled along the way. To understand this piece of legislation, one must look at the historical context. Decades have passed with the government pouring billions into solving this crisis, yet the problem still persists. From the plan of action for first nations drinking water in 2006 to the first nations water and waste water action plan in 2008 and the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act in 2013, efforts

have been made, but sadly, these Liberals have fallen short of delivering concrete, sustainable solutions.

The Conservative Party recognizes that clean drinking water is a basic necessity of human life. It is essential for health, dignity and the overall well-being of individuals and communities, yet despite being in one of the most resource-rich countries in the world, far too many first nations communities still do not have access to this fundamental right. This is nothing short of a national shame. It is an outrage that has persisted for far too long.

We have heard comments from our colleagues across the way, rightly so, I think, that there are successive governments on whose shoulders the blame squarely falls. Since 1995, over \$11 billion has been spent on improving water quality in first nations communities. Despite these substantial investments, as of today, there are still countless first nations communities across Canada that are under long-term drinking water advisories. This means that, for years, families have not been able to drink the water directly from their taps, relying instead on bottled or boiled water just to meet their daily needs. This is unacceptable. This is shameful. It highlights a significant failure by the government to provide basic living conditions for all Canadians.

We need a new approach, a comprehensive and actionable plan that addresses both the immediate and long-term needs of these communities. I hope that Bill C-61 can be a positive step to achieving this goal. With that said, I am encouraged that Bill C-61 appears to aim at addressing this disparity. The time for half measures and temporary fixes are over.

As has been said, the bill is not a perfect bill. We still have questions regarding that. To that end, Conservatives believe that the federal government must work in collaboration with provinces, territories, municipalities and first nations to develop a solution that is guided by a clear and agreed upon timeline. Conservatives also commit to working closely with indigenous communities to ensure that these investments are both sustainable and effective.

Furthermore, we understand that the lack of safe water for first nations communities is a complex issue that cannot be resolved with a one-size-fits-all approach. Each community has its unique challenges, circumstances and needs. There are over 630 first nations communities across our nation.

Therefore, it is vital that the solutions to safe water are led by first nations themselves. We must support their autonomy and provide them with the resources and authority to develop and implement water management plans that are suited to their specific needs. By prioritizing first nations leadership and knowledge, we can ensure that the solutions are not only practical, but also culturally appropriate and locally targeted.

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• (1755)

In addition to addressing water safety, it is also necessary to acknowledge the broader context of reconciliation and health and safety for first nations communities. I have said this before: Under the current government, I believe “reconciliation” has become a buzzword. The government has pitted first nation against first nation, and first nation against non-first nation. It has picked winners and losers. It says it has consulted, yet there are still many first nations that have said they have not been invited to the table.

Reconciliation is not a single act but an ongoing commitment to understanding, healing and partnership. It requires acknowledging the historical injustices faced by indigenous peoples, including inadequate access to essential services. Unfortunately the current government has categorically failed when it comes to reconciliation. The government purports to be there for indigenous peoples, but it did not accomplish a single TRC call to action in 2023. In fact there are 94 calls to action, and 81, which is the vast majority, are still unfulfilled.

I want to also mention that many first nations communities continue to face significant barriers to accessing comprehensive health care services, including mental health care, especially in rural, remote and northern communities. The lack of access is a critical issue that directly impacts the well-being and quality of life of indigenous individuals. The disparities in health care services contribute to higher rates of chronic illness, mental health challenges and lower life expectancies in these communities. It is crucial to invest in health care infrastructure and services that are responsive to the needs of first nations communities. This includes culturally competent care that respects and integrates indigenous knowledge and practices.

Mental health care is a particularly urgent need. The trauma experienced by indigenous peoples due to historical injustices like residential schools has long-lasting effects on mental health. The link to Bill C-61 is that health and access to safe drinking water are fundamental human rights. Ensuring that all Canadians, including indigenous Canadians, have access to these necessities is a moral and ethical obligation. Failure to ensure access is a failure of governance.

On that note, let me take a moment to talk about Grassy Narrows First Nation, a community that has been suffering from mercury contamination for over five decades. The recent lawsuit filed by Grassy Narrows against the federal government underscores the severity of the crisis. For more than 50 years, the people of Grassy Narrows have endured the devastating health impacts of mercury poisoning. The contamination has caused significant neurological damage, economic hardship and the loss of cultural practices tied to the river and its resources.

Conservatives are supporting Bill C-61 to get it to committee. We are happy to get it to committee where we can hopefully have a great working relationship with our colleagues across all parties, but we do have concerns.

My hon. colleague from Kenora mentioned that the bill, with respect to consultation, says that the minister is to make best efforts to consult. What does that mean? Does it mean dialing the phone once and leaving a voice message? True consultation is not about

just ticking a box; it is about making sure that we have indigenous leadership and indigenous representation at the table when we are discussing the bill and when we are developing it. It means truly understanding. It does not mean talking, but it means listening. Only through listening will we truly understand the needs of indigenous communities.

If the legislation is truly to succeed, the government must undertake a thorough review and overhaul of its approach to managing water quality advisories. There is no getting around it. The current system is not working, and it is time for a real change. We need to hear from all stakeholders and address their concerns head-on if we want Bill C-61 to actually achieve its stated goals.

That is not the only challenge we face. At the committee level, we need to dig deeper into several pressing questions. Some communities face barriers to long-term access to safe drinking water that money alone cannot solve. What are these barriers? How can we partner with the indigenous communities to overcome them?

We need to put away all of our biases and our political stripes when we come to the committee. We need to work in good faith to try to make sure that we can collectively end the boil water advisories.

• (1800)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member concludes with a remark about all of us coming together at committee, and I really and truly hope that does take place.

His critique of the current government is interesting. In 2015, there were actually 105 boil water advisories, and as a government, we have actually ended 144 long-term boil water advisories. Think about that and then think about the legislation the Conservatives under Stephen Harper brought in. I was provided an interesting quote about Stephen Harper's legislation: “This legislation does not propose any solutions. Rather, the legislation puts first nations in the direct path of an oncoming freight train.” This is from Grand Chief Craig Makinaw, Confederacy of Treaty 6. It was recorded in Hansard in 2013.

Yes, there is room for improvement, but trying to give a false impression does a disservice when there is a government that is actually taking action that is moving us forward on this very important file.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, the question to my hon. colleague across the way is this: Why did it take nine years to accomplish this? Why did it take first nations' having to take the government to court for it to do anything?

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We will take no suggestions or advisement from the gentleman across the way on first nations relationships. All we know is that the current government needs to act. Its members need to stop talking and start acting in solving the boil water advisories.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would find it hilarious if this were not such a sad topic. The member actually cited the legislation that the Conservative government of the day put in place and that was litigated against, as a record of good benefit to his party. What irony it is that he mentions Bill S-8 as one of the best things that the Conservatives ever did.

I do not have a question, but I am going to inform the member: That legislation was litigated against as being paternalistic and as being legislation that breached the rights, the charter rights, of first nations people. We need to actually have truth and facts in this discussion. Does the member recognize that in order for us to solve the problem, you have to first recognize that you have done harm yourself? On behalf of the party, can he apologize to the first nations that had to take him to court?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I hope the hon. member is not thinking that I have done harm.

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, if the hon. colleague had been listening to my speech, he would have heard that I said there was enough blame to go around successive governments.

An hon member: He said that.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I did say that. If my hon. colleague wanted to cast aspersions against me and my speech, he should probably have listened to what I had to say to begin with.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, in the bill, funding is a key element of this whole issue. The construction, administration and maintenance of water management infrastructure requires significant, recurring and predictable funding.

Does the member feel that this bill seriously addresses the issue of funding? In his opinion, is the language in the bill still somewhat superficial with regard to funding, or is something really significant being proposed that would enable adequate funding to be put in place?

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty: Madam Speaker, I apologize to our hon. colleague as I am not sure whether she is asking my point of view or whether she is asking whether the language in the text of the bill is confusing. We do definitely have concerns with some of the language within the bill. These are things I hope our colleagues are able to raise, and I hope they can get amendments at committee.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Edmonton Griesbach.

I really welcome the legislation and the debate. I have been interested in the issue for some time. As a matter of fact, the House environment committee is currently completing a rather broad and

lengthy study of water policy in Canada, specifically federal water policy. We did have a unit, a module if I can call it that, on the issue of first nations water. We heard great testimony, but given time constraints and the breadth of our study, in some ways we could only scratch the surface. Therefore I am really looking forward to getting to know the bill much more deeply.

I hope to attend the committee meetings. I am looking to maybe substitute for another Liberal member so I can be part of the committee study on Bill C-61. If I cannot do that, I will avail myself of my privilege as a parliamentarian to sit at committee, even without formal status and the right to ask questions.

There is one thing that makes me bristle a little in this debate generally, not just today but over time, and that is when the debate veers into certain partisanship. I just do not feel it is a partisan issue. I do not feel it is an issue that should revolve around cross-party criticisms or finger pointing. The important thing is to really work together to find a solution to a very stubborn problem that has plagued first nations and governments wanting to solve the problem for quite a long time.

It is a very important issue for a number of reasons, the main one being that clean drinking water and water for sanitation are very much fundamental to good health. It is a health issue for our first nations. Water generally is central to many things, not only human health but also the health of the environment and the dynamism of the economy, but, in this case, we are talking about the health of indigenous peoples. It is also an emblematic issue. What I mean by that is if we cannot get this right, how can we have—

• (1805)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, as a matter of courtesy to first nations, the Speaker made a ruling in relation to the use of possessive language when speaking of indigenous people. I would request that you intervene to clarify that, please.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I did not hear what the hon. member said, but I would invite him to retract it.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I do not remember, to be honest, but I will retract anything that could be heard as offensive.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I am referring to the use of possessive language such “our” or “my”. In this case, it was the use of “our first nations”.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I understand and I apologize. I am aware of that. I slipped a bit.

It is an emblematic issue because if we cannot solve this problem in conjunction with first nations, how can we have confidence that we can manage our water resources more generally in this country? It is an important issue because it involves the health of first nations, and it is an emblematic issue because it says a lot about how we can manage water in general in this country.

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It is one of the most stubborn and complex issues to face any government in Canada, and it not only requires money, but also requires major investments. For example, what I have read recently is that, as we know, one of the issues in terms of bringing clean drinking water to first nations is sustainable financing for maintenance of first nations water systems. I have read somewhere that the funding requirement over a 10-year period, from 2016 to 2026, is about \$430 million, yet there is only about \$291 million available. Therefore, there is a need to increase funding for maintenance of first nations water systems. Now, what I have heard, on the positive side, is that since 2021, Indigenous Services Canada pays 100% of maintenance costs; whereas before, it only paid about 80%.

What has been required all along in dealing with this issue is not only the financing, but also the will to make it a priority. This is not to cast aspersions on any previous government. I do believe that there has been a serious commitment to resolving the issue by this government. I did not see this for myself, but I am told that at one point, the minister in charge at the time basically put up a map in her office and pinpointed where all the problem drinking water systems were. She would be able to see this map every day and would be reminded that this is a major government priority. Therefore, the will to do something about this problem is fundamental to solving the problem.

As I said, I intend to be a part of a committee study, and one of the issues that I hope to learn more about as we study the bill at committee is how we can better protect source water. Clean drinking water not only is dependent on the kind of system that is in place or built in a first nations community, but also is a function of the source water. As a matter of fact, the kind of system they build is a function of the source water as well. How do we protect source water?

I first became aware of the issue of source water about 10 years ago when I sat on the environment committee. It was a minority Conservative government at the time, and we undertook a study of the impact of the oil sands on the Athabasca Watershed. There were concerns downstream from the oil sands operations, basically in Fort Chipewyan, that the drinking water was being contaminated by the oil sands industry. That, in itself, is a source water problem and a source water issue.

How do we protect source water so that first nations can have confidence in their drinking water? How do we protect source water when a lot of the source water is in provincial jurisdiction and a province is managing economic development in its jurisdiction? How do we get the province to co-operate with the federal government and first nations to protect the source water? As a matter of fact, the whole issue of source water and the oil sands came up again at the environment committee when we were studying the leaks and spills at the Kearl tailings pond. Again, the first nation in Fort Chipewyan is very concerned about how the oil sands and how this particular spill could be impacting the first nation's source water downstream.

• (1810)

How do we protect source water? How do we manage the interface between jurisdictions to make sure that we can protect source

water in the best interests of those who are downstream and are consuming that water?

I hope to learn more about this when I attend the committee study of Bill C-61. I am pleased to say that there has been progress since our government took power in 2016. There were 144 long-term drinking water advisories in place in November 2015. There are now 29 left in 27 communities. Sometimes an advisory will be lifted, but then it will recur or one will recur elsewhere in the same community.

There has been progress. I do not think we should say that there has been no progress because that does not do any good. It just discourages Canadians and governments from doing what they can to solve the problem once and for all.

The bill is very important for three particular reasons. One, it affirms the inherent right of first nations to self-government in relation to water, source water, drinking water, waste water and related infrastructure. Two, it creates a legal framework for protecting source water adjacent to first nation lands, which is what I was referring to.

• (1815)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague's speech was very interesting. I think he is suffering from extreme optimism. Canada, which has the largest supply of drinking water in the world, is unable to provide its citizens with safe drinking water. My colleague said that progress has been made and we should be happy with that.

The Liberal Party's promise in 2015 was to provide clean drinking water to indigenous communities. It has not been able to keep that promise. It is all well and good to say that progress has been made, but why is it that, after nine years in power, the government introduced a bill saying that more action is needed? There is a lack of seriousness, much like there was with the electoral reform promise the Liberal Party made in 2015.

I would like my colleague to explain, as optimistically as he likes, what legislation needs to provide, nine years down the line, in order to give people access to a resource as basic as clean drinking water.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, I do not believe that I was being overly optimistic. I was very clear and I said that the challenges were enormous. The fact remains that there are far fewer boil water advisories than there were in 2015. The situation is far from perfect.

Additional funding is required to solve all these issues. There are systems that are on the verge of being operational. In 1% of cases, a feasibility study is under way. We have made quite a bit of progress, but the purpose of the bill is to consolidate the progress that has been made so far. The bill is not going to correct the situation entirely. Funding will.

Government Orders

We are getting on with the job. As for this bill, it will create a framework for the future while consolidating the progress that has been done so far.

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his commitment to see this through to committee stage and to hopefully see some meaningful amendments. I also want to thank the member not only for retracting his statement in my point of order earlier, but also for dividing his time. It really means a lot to me to be able to speak to this important issue. In regard to the definition of first nations lands in the legislation, I am told by treaty organizations that the definition is too narrow and that it does not fully acknowledge treaty rights and interests that extend those colonial boundaries, also known as reserve lands.

Would the member be amicable to seeing amendments to the definition portion of this legislation, particularly when it comes to the definition of first nations lands beyond just the narrow description provided by the Indian Act, which is reserve lands?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, the answer is yes, from my point of view. I think this is a major problem. We have oil sands operations on Treaty No. 8 land, yet somehow we cannot control the damage that is being done to those treaty lands. There is a problem somewhere. The member knows much more about this than I do. If the problem is in the definitions, and if there is a way to expand those definitions, then I would be in favour of that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts about the relationship that has been established and the general commitment the government has made, with regard to boil water advisories. At one point, when we first took office, there were 105 boil water advisories. We have actually gotten rid of over 140.

What are the member's thoughts about the general movement, in terms of the government recognizing the issue, and about actually putting financial resources and things like today's legislation in place to protect the water?

• (1820)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Madam Speaker, we have invested more over a long period of time.

The other point I would like to make is that the government actually created a department to deal specifically with indigenous services. It reorganized government so that it could better attack this problem, and I think that is important.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to have the opportunity to rise in this place as a member of Parliament.

The fact is that, in this country's history, the opinions of indigenous people and their leaders have been largely neglected. It is no secret that indigenous people have, for generations, attempted to build a bridge between those who occupy and those who seek peace and betterment for all people. That is the true nature, spirit and intent of the historic treaties that were signed. Pipes were lifted so that nations could build together.

The treaties that we often speak about are fundamental to Canada's establishment. As a matter of fact, they are more fundamental than even the mace that we honour in this place. There would be no mace, no Parliament and no members of Parliament without the consent and treaties of indigenous people. We make promises to one another, particularly to share this place, its resources and our country's mighty prosperity, but we continue to fail to meet them.

First nations have been consistent and stalwart in their message that the treaties are a path forward, not just for peace today but for peace tomorrow for the young children who are still growing up without clean water. I have many relatives, friends and family members who continue to suffer without clean water today.

I myself grew up in a small rural northern community adjacent to a reserve known as the Métis settlement, where we shared some similar realities, including the lack of clean water. I know what it is to turn on a tap and not have clean water come out. People grow up in that circumstance for so long that they do not even know the miracle of what clean water is when it comes out of a household tap. I am ashamed of that. I finally moved away from the small community where I had so much love but suffered so much poverty. When I turned on a tap at a friend's house, put a cup underneath that tap and took a drink directly from it, I was amazed.

I am still amazed that one of the wealthiest countries around the globe, Canada, a G7 country, could bear witness to such atrocities for our children. Our own children still do not have the dignity of being able to quench their thirst with clean water in the convenience of their own home. Mould, inadequate housing, a lack of infrastructure, no operations and maintenance and a lack of technical ability have all come together in what has become the worst outcome. The reserve system is largely an apartheid system, and it has driven indigenous people into a desperate reality.

They are proud people whom I have had the great benefit of learning from. I owe so much of who I am to the better good nature of those who continue to suffer. That is why I am so honoured to be in this place, so I can speak to their truths and hope I can encourage all my colleagues to rectify this immensely difficult circumstance.

We often talk about the need to pass good legislation in this place, but it is more important to listen, learn and write good legislation. These are the important pieces in making a country stronger, and this is one pathway toward a better future. When Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7 and Treaty No. 8 tell me that the government has not fully listened to their concerns, that pains me. When I hear that the bill does not fundamentally recognize their treaty rights to water, that hurts me.

There is a Cree word, *nîpîy*, meaning "water". This word is not just the noun of the thing we drink, the thing we swim in or the thing our relatives with fins live in. It is a spirit that is so deeply fundamental to who we are as humans that we could not possibly abuse it. Worse yet, to deny access to it would mean to deny access to the very fundamentals of life, of spirituality and of a nation.

Government Orders

• (1825)

It is imperative that we take the opportunity presented to us in Bill C-61 to do what is right. As a matter of fact, the history of the legislation is so mired in colonial attitudes that it is now time. Since the inception of similar legislation presented by the Conservatives in 2013, it has been litigated by first nations and taken down by the courts. The current government entered a settlement agreement to rectify some of the pains caused by that legislation. The courts have now ordered that the government table a piece of legislation in its stead. Bill C-61 stands now in its place.

Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past. Let us not force first nations people back to the courts to plead an injustice that we can rectify here in this place today. The consequential months that the legislation will be in committee will be important for first nations as they see their relative *nipiy*, water, debated as if it were something that had not been known to us all as humans for so long. There is a fundamental right to water for all persons. We must recognize this in the legislation. We must go further to even recognize that the treaty to which this country stands has an obligation to ensure that these rights, the treaty and inherent rights of first nations to their lands, include water. We desperately need to establish a treaty table with the treaty organizations that represent Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7 and Treaty No. 8 in order for them to exercise not only their constitutional rights but also their rights as a nation to define for themselves the future for their children, because there is no future without water.

That is how fundamental this question is, and I cannot beg my colleagues more than to see that for what it means. If we say “water”, we might as well say “life”, because that is the truth. Denying water will deny life.

We can rectify this. That is why I decided to come into this place: to ensure that these fundamental truths and fundamental rights are truly adhered to. The treaty groups need to see legitimate co-development. They need to see a legitimate relationship that honours the treaty people for who they are: stalwarts of water, of land and of a better future. This is not only for first nations but also for all of us. If we protect water, particularly source water, we will do it justice for the next generation and for generations to come. That is what first nations are calling for.

First nations must see a guarantee of the protection of water off reserve. I mentioned the issue of the apartheid system, which is the reserve system; it continues to say first nations land is the small postage stamp we see on a map. All land in Turtle Island is first nations land, all of it. We must recognize that and ensure that we protect the land with protection zones, which could be large enough to ensure that the quantity of water needed to quench that thirst is truly met for generations to come. We must abandon any attempt at dump-and-run legislation that would allow corporations to continue to harm water and leave untreated, poisonous chemicals in our waters.

I will end with this: First nations see Bill C-61 as being of historical significance and national import; we must get this right. First nations are calling to our attention the opportunity, and we do not often get this. I must beg the chamber to take this piece of legislation as seriously as it takes the very existence of this country; with-

out it, this country will fail, not just today but for generations to come.

• (1830)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will go back to the issue of source water and what I was saying before in my speech about the community of Fort Chipewyan. The community is concerned in terms of the quality of its water and the impact that water might be having on the health of members of the community.

Alberta Health Services has the data to be able to do a longitudinal study of cancer rates in Fort Chipewyan. It was recommended by the environment committee many years ago that it be done, yet it has not been done. How should we go about getting the Alberta government to do that? If it will not do it, is there a way for the federal government to do it?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I very much appreciate the question from my hon. colleague.

When it comes to the direct impacts of the lack of good-quality water on first nations communities, they are huge. Indigenous people in Canada are far more likely to suffer chronic illness, disease and even things as terrible as cancer because of the lack of very basic necessities, such as water. It is imperative, and I would recommend, that the federal government use its immense power under section 91(24) of our Constitution, which grants this place an immense amount of power to come into force on laws and agreements with first nations and that could see to it that provinces can no longer ignore their legitimate rights.

I will add one more piece, because this question is so important. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, recognizes and affirms the inherent treaty rights of first nations people. Those rights are rights to water, health, justice, self-government and so many more. We must honour it. We must use our powers in this place for good and to make sure that first nations, Métis and Inuit are protected and their rights affirmed.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am feeling a bit intimidated given my new status as a water warrior. I figure I really need to ask a question that lives up to my title.

I would like to thank my colleague from the neighbouring party here. He is raising awareness about the fundamental issues surrounding access to water. We share the exact same position.

I would like him to discuss the urgent and unacceptable nature of the fact that we are still discussing the need to provide first nations with access to water. Countless people still do not have access to drinking water in first nations communities. I would like him to comment on the fact that this is taking so long.

Government Orders

We should not be talking about this anymore. Everyone should have access to water in this extraordinary land that is home to 20% of the world's drinking water reserves. This is a disgrace. I would like my colleague to comment on the fact that this has taken so long and we are still—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give a member time to ask another question.

The hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach.

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, *kinana'skomitina'wa'w* to the hon. member. I am thankful for that question, and I want to recognize the member's status as a water warrior.

It is really important that we lift up those who protect water; women, particularly in many indigenous cultures across Turtle Island, are revered as water protectors. They have the power to bring life into this place and are from the very same source as water, and they protect it.

It is important not only that we protect water but also that we protect people's access to it. The member has allowed me the very good opportunity to speak to the urgency of this issue. When we do not do this, it directly harms those in the next generation. They will grow up knowing that their governments and others do not care for them. They will be dehumanized by that truth.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Edmonton Griesbach for his absolutely brilliant speech and deep wisdom on the bill before us.

You have raised a couple of concerns about the bill, and one is proper consultation. It seems that, with indigenous people, we are always given candies and are supposed to be glad and joyous about it. I sense that you have a different perspective on the lack of consultation. Could you expand on what needs to happen for support?

• (1835)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that I cannot expand on it, but the hon. member for Edmonton Griesbach will.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, I want to lift up the member for Winnipeg Centre's advocacy and work in relation to this important piece of legislation.

It is critical that we get not only the consent but also the input and consultation of indigenous groups. They have been so helpful. They have offered a place for us to discuss this issue by way of establishing a bilateral treaty table. If we could establish that today, before the bill goes to committee, we can imagine the power that would have. We could even summon and bring in some of those chiefs, and even better than that, meet them where they are and truly reignite the flames of co-operation and participation that the treaties speak of.

Let us recognize this place, Parliament, the Government of Canada, the Crown, and our deep need to become true treaty partners in the relationship we attempted to forge all those years ago. It is never too late to do the right thing.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a privilege to stand in our House of Commons to debate topics, and tonight we have an incredible topic to discuss.

Before I start, I have to recognize the Brooks Bandits in my community for winning the cup this season.

When we talk about water, it is life. We have heard that said tonight. Rain is the critical piece because, without it, we do not have fresh water where we need it. Rain is the critical start to it. Since humans evolved a couple of hundred thousand years ago, the use of fresh, clean water has been vital. Human migration has led to sources of fresh water. People always move to where they can get fresh water, such as rivers, lakes and freshwater sources, because it is so critical.

As migration began to settle into specific areas, water was also conserved. Where people did not have running water and lakes, they looked for springs. Then they learned how to drill or dig wells. Part of the culture was to always look for fresh water to survive.

The Romans understood that they needed to build aqueducts to catch rain, which carried water through towns and cities. The longest aqueduct in the ancient world was over 400 kilometres long.

Modern advances in sanitation, industrialization and sanitation-based practices have led to an explosion of the use of water, and with it, a growth in populations. As populations grew, people moved into rural and remote areas, where they always experienced difficulty finding water. However, indigenous people in this part of the world knew where fresh water was. It was essential not only to their survival as human beings, but also to their spiritual needs.

In the world I live in, in recent times as a municipal leader, regional water was an issue because we had communities on boil water advisories. The consultations we held in a small area of communities did not happen overnight. It took months. It took years for people to understand that, to get rid of a boil water order, we needed to have hours of consultation.

I will mention that I will be splitting my time today with the member Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

Consultation is so critical. At one point in time in our regionalization, we had a water treatment plant in the city I was the mayor of, but we needed to give that resource up to become part of a regional water system. I remember that the editor of the local newspaper never forgave me for giving up what he said was a resource for one community to be used regionally. It took a long time for that consultation process to happen. It took three years before those communities would no longer have any boil water advisories. That takes consultation, something that has been missing in this situation and something we need more of.

Government Orders

The recent government's history is that, in 2001, the then Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development began surveying water and waste water systems in indigenous communities across Canada to establish a baseline of information on existing drinking water infrastructure. That was just over 20 years ago. However, we knew the situation had existed for a long time, not just for over 20 years.

In 2003, the Government of Canada announced the first nations water management strategy and allocated \$1.6 billion between 2003 to 2008 to it. It launched a plan of action for first nations drinking water, which was built on the first nations water management strategy, and it allocated an additional \$60 million between 2006 and 2008 to address the findings of the 2005 report of the commissioner of the environment. That was only 20 years ago.

In 2008, the government introduced the first nations water and waste water action plan. According to a summary of the investments, “An additional \$330 million was allocated to support the FNWWAP, which reinforced the PAFNDW while adding new objectives, including a commitment to consult with First Nations on new legislation as well as the commissioning of a national engineering assessment of the status of First Nations water systems across the country.”

● (1840)

In 2013, the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act was created by the government to support the development of federal regulations to improve first nations' access to clean, reliable drinking water and the effective treatment of waste water.

I did not see anything, in all those dates that I read, about consultation. What I referred to in our communities and our municipalities took years, but I am not hearing about consultation. From 2015 to the present, the federal government spent \$5.7 billion. Over \$11 billion was spent between successive governments, and we are still facing the same problem: the boil water orders, unsafe drinking water in a developed G7 country.

It took the Liberal government nine years to introduce the legislation to protect clean water for first nations. In the press conference when the minister announced the proposed bill, she referenced a first nation that she says would benefit from the bill, without having met with it enough for consultation.

I say that, because I have met with the Blackfoot Confederacy chiefs who say they did not get consulted at any significant level on the proposed piece of legislation. What little they had suggested, they believed the minister had ignored. Those are not my words. They came from the chiefs of the Blackfoot Confederacy, which is a huge part of southern Alberta.

Canada is blessed with clean, fresh and safe drinking water. It is home to 20% of the world's fresh water. We have rain. We have 7% of the world's renewable water supply, yet safe clean drinking water has been unavailable for many of our indigenous communities.

This is not acceptable. An effort to provide fresh clean water for indigenous communities across the country—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: I have a point of order.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I was expecting that.

I will just remind the hon. member for Bow River that the possessive language is highly offensive in terms of first nations.

The hon. member for Bow River has the floor.

Mr. Martin Shields: I am sorry, Madam Speaker. Please object if I make a mistake with that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Edmonton—Griesbach is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Madam Speaker, it is a point of order on the use of possessive language, and I just want to invite the member to reflect on it. I know it is likely not purposeful or malicious, so I just wanted to reflect that it does harm to indigenous persons who are pursuing their sovereignty and their independence.

● (1845)

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, it may not be the last time—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: You will learn. You will get it.

Mr. Martin Shields: Yes, sometimes old dogs learn new tricks.

It is incumbent and the collective responsibility of everyone, especially the Government of Canada, to empower first nations and indigenous communities across the country to achieve self-determination on this issue. In order to get this right, the government must listen to all first nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

One size does not fit all. That is why the consultation is important. It is critical. We need to listen to many voices across our country. Many first nations communities, like the Blackfoot Confederacy, want that opportunity to express the concerns that they have. There are several provisions in the bill on clean water in general that require clarification: the quantity of water available for use and whether this quantity would be in conflict with provincial water licences; for which purposes the sufficient quantities of water would be guaranteed and if these purposes are to be altered, and that has been mentioned earlier; the definition of a protection zone, what lands are to be included in a given zone and the process of consultation agreement for these zones to be authorized; and the long-term maintenance, training and staff funding guarantees.

The study of Bill C-61 at committee is approaching. It is my hope that all parties will allow the opportunity to hear from all first nations that the government missed in its consultations. Other affected parties are concerned with freshwater legislation, such as provinces, which should be consulted as well, so unintended consequences may be avoided.

Government Orders

There are many questions that need to be answered on Bill C-61. The committee stage of the bill is not the time to rush through legislation. We need to get this right. This has gone on far too long. We need to make sure the legislation is not rushed and that we get it done right. It is our duty.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think it is important for us to recognize the month of June as National Indigenous History Month, and recognize the significant movement forward on such an important piece of legislation. I think all members would reflect positively on those two things.

In regard to the issue of consultation, I do not know how many times the Prime Minister has been to Winnipeg. More often than not, meeting with and talking to indigenous leaders is a priority. Ministers who have come through the city of Winnipeg, and outside Winnipeg, are doing consultations.

I mentioned Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. The current Minister of Immigration was at the announcement of the water treatment plant. Shoal Lake 40 First Nation is the type of example we could lift up. Hopefully its members will get invited to the committee to have further discussions on the important piece of legislation before us.

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his statement on this particular issue. I am not indigenous, but I know consultation and I know how important it is in the experiences I have had.

Oftentimes, people in this country put groups of people together as one. We cannot treat all indigenous people in this country as one group. We have to listen to the variety of voices and cultures to understand how critical the issue is to them. It is not just about the physical survival of water; it is also about the spiritual value of water, which has many connotations in many different parts of our country.

Consultations and listening to those expressions is important in order for indigenous people to be heard. They need to be heard and we need to give them the opportunity. It has taken a long time to get the bill to where it is. We must take the time to make sure all those voices are heard.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts is currently studying the Auditor General's report 2 on the housing situation on reserves. Now we are talking about drinking water. These are obviously two necessities that are not privileges, but should be rights. We therefore agree with the principle of this bill.

Yesterday, the former clerk of the Privy Council, who was also the deputy minister of indigenous affairs for several years, told us that he thought that one possible solution was to create a Crown corporation that would solve all the problems on reserves.

Does my colleague really think that the solution is still in the hands of the federal government, when, year after year, it has proven that the solutions are in the hands of first nations and that they must be given self-determination so they can finally meet their needs?

• (1850)

[*English*]

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, absolutely not, because I have seen innovation with housing on Siksika Nation. Its people contracted a construction company from Ontario. It builds cement houses in 30 days. They are beautiful homes from start to finish, and they are turnkey.

Siksika Nation is innovative; it knows how to find solutions. We need to get out of the way and not build bureaucracy, because it has great innovation skills and can do a lot of things. We just get in its way. We want to see beautiful houses built, and the company is building phenomenal housing with cement in 30 days. It is incredible. Siksika Nation did not need us to do it; it did it itself.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, when the Conservatives were last in power, they pushed through a very unpopular bill about first nations drinking water that was not well thought out, Bill S-8. It eventually had to be repealed as a result of a multi-billion-dollar lawsuit.

Can the member assure the House today that the Conservatives will help make sure the bill will not go down the same path?

Mr. Martin Shields: Madam Speaker, it seems as though everybody wants to sue the government in power all the time. However, I want there to be legislation that is as good as it can be so that it limits the possibility of such a challenge happening.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, it was in the 2015 election that the Liberal Prime Minister made a promise that he was going to end drinking water advisories in indigenous communities by March 2021. He was very specific. He gave a date and a timeline.

Then, in 2020, as the government was approaching that self-imposed deadline, the former minister of indigenous services said that “by spring 2021, the number of [communities under long-term drinking water] advisories...could [amount] to 12”. It is three years after that promised deadline, and we have 29 long-term drinking water advisories. Twenty-seven indigenous communities across Canada do not have access to clean drinking water.

I do not understand how a government that said this issue was so important and gave it a timeline to be resolved could have failed so poorly. It changed its goalpost and still has not met its goalpost. We live in a country that is blessed to be the home of 20% of the world's freshwater supply, yet the Liberal government continues to drag its feet on its fundamental obligation to indigenous communities.

Private Members' Business

While reflecting on this bill, I actually realized that I have had to live under some short-term water advisories, in my time, due to natural disasters. The first time was after the 2016 forest fire that tore through Fort McMurray. Much of the community was under a boil water advisory for about a month and a half. For some people the advisory lasted a few months. Then again, in 2020, when we had massive floods in the Fort McMurray area, we were under a boil water advisory. While it was only for a month, it was a month when people had to think twice before they brushed their teeth or before they opened their mouth in the shower. That is what people have had to live with in indigenous communities across Canada for generations as a direct result of failures from successive governments.

The Neskantaga first nation, in Ontario, has had a boil water advisory since 1995. For almost 30 years, generations of children have had to grow up in that community not knowing what it was like to be able to open the tap and drink water. Those children have become adults who have taken that memory with them as they go forward. This is a failure of our country, Canada, where we have had Liberal governments, Conservative governments and a Liberal government again.

The government can blame everything it wants to on all the previous governments, but the Liberals have been in power for the last nine years, and there is a community that, for almost 30 years, has not had clean drinking water. The Liberals have sat on their hands, and to me, that is not acceptable. I was in elementary school when that community last had clean drinking water. We can do better, and we must do better. That community deserves it.

I sit here as a mom, and I cannot imagine the amount of extra work and stress a mother would have to go through, having to sterilize bottles simply so that she can feed her child because they happen to live under a boil water advisory. She cannot just wash her bottles in the sink. She has to instead boil the bottles to sterilize them to make sure that they are safe. Those extra steps have to be taken because the government has failed these people. It is about time that we stop and truly realize that this has been a failure. There have been a series of failures. We must do better. We can do better.

Indigenous people from across Canada share stories where they have had to go through all kinds of extra trials and tribulations as a direct result of boil water advisories. In doing research about this, I read stories about people like Rebecca Wynn, a grade school teacher who has to take medication before her showers to combat the extreme skin irritation she gets from the unsafe amount of chlorine that is injected into her town water supply. She has to take pills before she showers. That is something that no person should have to do, but they have been subjected to it because the government has failed to make sure that clean drinking water is available to them.

• (1855)

There are children who go to school and worry about whether they are going to be safe and whether it is safe to drink the water. I hope all parties can agree that this is something we can, must and should do. We cannot allow this bill to be delayed, like we have seen from the Liberal government up to this point.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 6:58 p.m., pursuant to order made on Monday, June 3, Bill C-61, an act respecting water, source water, drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on first nation lands, is deemed read a second time and referred to a committee.

[English]

Accordingly, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

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[Translation]

CANADA LABOUR CODE

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC) moved that Bill C-378, An Act amending the Canada Labour Code (complaints by former employees), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to my bill, Bill C-378, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code in respect of former employees. It is designed to give former employees two years to file a complaint about workplace harassment or violence.

First, I am going to share a bit about my background so that members can have a better understanding of my interest in this bill as well as its legitimacy. The idea of introducing a bill that would give a former employee more time, namely two years, to file a harassment complaint under the Canada Labour Code came to me quite naturally. When I was the labour minister in Quebec's National Assembly, I revamped many of Quebec's labour standards. That was in 2018, under Bill 176.

Both then and now, Quebec's labour standards make no distinction between current and former employees. The standards used to allow current and former employees alike just three months to file a complaint. We felt that this time frame failed to make adequate allowance for the time it takes victims to bring a complaint. I therefore decided to take action and extend the time frame from three months to two years.

I soon transposed the thought process I had followed within the provincial government to the federal level. After leafing through the Canada Labour Code, I realized that, unlike Quebec's labour standards, the Canadian code did draw a distinction between former and current employees. At the federal level, for example, current employees who want to make harassment complaints are not held to any limitation period. Former employees, however, have three months. This time limit for former employees dates back to 2021, when Bill C-65, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code regarding harassment and violence, came into force.

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Some might say that three months is better than nothing, but to me, that seems like far too short a time frame for a former employee to make a complaint. That is essentially what I want to focus on. Although still far too short, this three-month time frame nonetheless offers some recourse to former employees who had none prior to 2021. I want to highlight this progress, brought about by Bill C-65. In our opinion, however, former employees deserve much more generous recourse, and I am looking forward to collaborating with all my colleagues in a non-partisan way to achieve this goal together so we can mitigate the problems Canadians face in their professional lives.

Quebec is among the most empathetic provinces, though others are close behind it, but it is still far ahead of the federal government. Let us take a moment to understand how this works elsewhere in Canada. As I said, Quebec does not make any distinction between current and former employees, and it already gives employees two years. Five other provinces do the same, but they give them one year. They are Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador. British Columbia gives former employees six months and has no time limit for current employees. The three other provinces, Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia, do not provide former employees with any recourse. As for the territories, we did not find any data on their time frames for making a complaint.

Internationally, Canada's time frame is far less generous than those of many other countries, such as Belgium and France. In Belgium, former employees have five years to file a complaint, and the time frame can be suspended if the courts refer the matter back for internal handling. In France, the time frame is one year for contraventions punishable by fines. It increases to five years from the date of the last offence for more serious offences and can be increased to six years if the matter is taken up by a human rights tribunal or a criminal court.

- (1900)

In the United States, former employees have six months after the incident to file a complaint. That deadline can be extended to 10 months, if an employment discrimination law is applied by a local or government agency. In Australia, the deadline goes from six months to two years, and decision-makers are given a lot of discretion in that regard. In fact, the Australian Human Rights Commission imposes a six-month deadline but enables the president of the commission to hear complaints filed after the deadline, depending on the reasons for the delay. Again in Australia, complaints that fall under the Sex Discrimination Act can be filed up to two years after the date of the last incident.

I would like to remind the House that, here in Canada, employees have only three months to file a complaint. It is important to point out that, in some cases, complaints can be filed after the three-month deadline under Bill C-65, which amended the Canada Labour Code in 2021. Part 2 of that legislation states the following, and I quote:

Extension

(5) On application by a former employee, the Head may, in the prescribed circumstances, extend the time period referred to in subsection (4).

The law thus allows for an extension of this three-month period, but that extension is conditional. Therefore, the burden is on the former employee to justify this application for an extension. This basically amounts to a burden of proof. They must file an application and justify it with circumstances such as trauma or a health problem. According to the application guide issued by the government, the person must provide documents such as a report from a social worker, an organization specializing in domestic violence, a police report, a doctor's note or even a solemn declaration made before a notary.

Clearly, the legislator anticipated that victims might find themselves in these kinds of circumstances and even provided for the possibility of granting more than the standard three months. In a way, the government is recognizing the potential difficulties victims may experience. Everyone can easily understand that asking for justification for a harassment complaint adds extra pressure.

The Canada Labour Code defines harassment and violence as follows:

...any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct or comment.

A three-month time limit seems too short for such difficult experiences. Employees who were harassed may not always realize it right away. The road is a long one between experiencing harassment, realizing what happened, living through the accompanying trauma, and deciding to file a complaint. The trauma can surface long after the incident and even long after the termination of employment.

We had hoped to obtain some statistics on where things stand today. Unfortunately, and to our astonishment, this will be difficult. Apparently, the federal department responsible for compiling and publishing the annual results on workplace harassment and violence skipped some years. In fact, we have no summary for 2022 or 2023. The last report dates back to the 2021 annual report entitled "Taking action against harassment and violence in work places under Canadian federal jurisdiction".

Honestly, it would have been extremely helpful to us and relevant to our debate today to know the number of complaints rejected because of the three-month deadline. We have no access to these data now because the necessary reports were not published and, more importantly, because the government did not think that compiling this information was important.

As I continued to look for that data, I turned to the office of the Minister of Labour and Seniors. A request was made, but we have not received a real answer to date.

Finally, I asked for the help of researchers at the Library of Parliament.

- (1905)

Here is what those experts told me on November 3, 2023, with regard to the reports that must be tabled by the government.

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While employers are required to report the average time to complete the informal resolution process, this information was not made public in the 2021 annual report. Further, there is no requirement to collect data on the number of former employees who make complaints, nor on requests for extensions. Thus there are no statistics available on the requests for or approvals of extensions for reasons of trauma or health by former federally regulated employees.

Quite frankly, I would be extremely surprised if no complaints had been dismissed because they were submitted after the three-month deadline. I would be very surprised. Actually, I do not believe that at all. I therefore invite the government to be more rigorous and to divulge that information.

Cindy Viau, the director general of Quebec's Groupe d'aide et d'information sur le harcèlement au travail told me that what was done in Quebec under my leadership corrected a shortcoming that was caused by the short time frame. She told me why we absolutely need to extend this deadline. She said:

The increased time limit at the provincial level (to two years) clearly showed how important it is for victims to have more time to take action. In our experience in recent years, the two-year time limit that was adopted seems to be much more in line with the needs of victims. We still find that a majority of victims of harassment take medical leave following the events and that the end of their employment will come close to or near their medical leave. In that sense, people who turn to our organization still find it really difficult to report within such a short period of time, 90 days. One explanation shining a light on this particular need of victims of workplace harassment emerges when we look specifically at post-traumatic stress disorder. The National Institute of Mental Health aptly summarizes the reality of people who develop this mental disorder. Symptoms generally appear within three months of the event, and although some people may recover within six months of the onset of symptoms, many will take a year or longer to recover.

In addition, at the provincial level, we note from our experience that very few people [and this is interesting] who contact us find it difficult to initiate the complaint process within the two years set out in the Act respecting labour standards. Since the time limit was changed in 2018, we have only on very rare occasions had to explain to a victim that they had missed their deadline to file a complaint.

This change that I brought about at the provincial level is recognized and appreciated. I am asking that it be transposed to the context of the Canada Labour Code for former federally regulated employees.

I will close by saying that we are making policy. We are committed to making a difference. We want to improve people's lives. I think that taking this kind of action, passing this kind of legislation, can make a difference in people's lives. At night, when my day is done, I look at myself in the mirror and think to myself, I may have changed someone's life today. That is a good thing.

● (1910)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I respect the articulation that the member across the way has put on what I see as a fairly positive piece of legislation. Given her background as a former labour minister at the Province of Quebec, I would be interested in getting her perspective. I would ask for her best guesstimate.

Harassment takes many different forms in the workplace, and I suspect that, even in the province of Quebec, it gets under-reported. If she were to guess, in terms of the Quebec legislation, what percentage of those who are actually being harassed does she believe actually present themselves? It does take a great deal of courage for

someone to come forward and say, "I was offended, and this is the reason, and this is how it happened, in the form of harassment."

Does she have any sense of what kind of reporting back there is, based on the legislation, or is there a need for additional public information or advertising on the issue?

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question and his comments. I do indeed have the numbers. Unfortunately, I do not have them with me, but I would be happy to send my colleague the data he is looking for on complaints received, which are compiled by the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail, or CNESST, Quebec's labour board, which is well known in Quebec. The CNESST compiles all this information.

My colleague used the word "courage", which is very important and stands out to me. As he said, it takes courage to make a complaint. In civil society, it takes courage for victims, in particular women, who are experiencing domestic violence, intimate partner violence or various other difficulties, to go to the police to give a statement and file a complaint.

It takes a lot of courage, but it also takes time. If the person does not have the time to do it, three months may go by without them realizing what has happened, but by then it is too bad, nothing can be done. It takes courage, but it takes time too.

● (1915)

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I found my colleague's speech very inspiring, especially when she talked about her time as a minister in Quebec City and said that she wants to put what she did there into a bill.

I found that inspiring because I know that when she was in Quebec City, she also voted in favour of carbon pricing.

She talked about courage earlier. I think she could have the courage to bring to this Parliament what she did in Quebec City when she helped set up a carbon exchange. I would like to hear her thoughts on that.

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Madam Speaker, I am trying to put myself in the shoes of the victims who are listening to my colleague this evening as he tries to divert attention away from such an important bill, a bill that would give victims more time by extending the time limit from three months to two years. These victims hear him talk about carbon pricing while I am talking about giving victims more time.

He should be ashamed of his question and his efforts to divert—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech and for her private member's bill.

For the NDP, it is not complicated. When a thing is good for workers, we vote for it. When it is not good for them, we vote against it. Some things are as simple as that.

To protect workers, especially women, I think it is important to give them the time they need to process and make sense of the trauma caused by situations of harassment, which can also include sexual harassment and violence. Extending the time frame will give them time to heal and recover, to get back the joy they lost and to get ready to face the system again, and maybe even the employer or manager who committed the harassment.

I think that her initiative will be extremely helpful to many workers. The NDP thanks her for this initiative in particular.

Mrs. Dominique Vien: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments, and I truly regret that, this evening, the four women on the Bloc Québécois benches allowed their colleague to ask a question that had so little to do with this bill. I was truly floored.

I thank my colleague from the NDP for his comments. I had the opportunity to talk with the NDP member, who hinted that the NDP members were enthusiastic about this bill. I hope that everyone, including the members from the governing party, will be willing to work together to get this bill passed. It is a good bill.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when I look at the legislation before us and its principles, I see it as a positive thing. When we take a look in terms of the government's actions, virtually from 2015, what we have witnessed is a government that understands the needs of workers in all regions of our country and has brought forward several substantial pieces of legislation in support of workers.

When the member brought forward Bill C-378, I had the opportunity to quickly go through it. I like what it is suggesting, and I suspect it would be very good to see it get to the committee stage. However, there are a number of questions that I have. Even though I might not necessarily be at the committee, and likely will not be at the committee, I appreciate the fact that the member is going to provide me with answers to some of the details that I posed in my question to her here. I say this because I believe that the bill is in the best interests of the workers.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to sit at a local restaurant that I go to on a weekly basis. Perhaps half a dozen to a dozen times, I have had individuals come to me, some of them actually in tears, talking about their work environment. More often than not, but not exclusively, it has been minority women who were subjected to a significant intimidation factor. It comes in different forms. I can speculate on some of it, and I can also report on some real-life situations, as I have had the opportunity to listen to victims and do what I could to support them. That is something that I think is important for all of us. This is the reason I posed the question to the introducer of the legislation that we have before us.

It takes a great deal of courage, and I encourage individuals who have been a victim of some form of harassment in the workplace environment to share their experience, whether it is with a family member or with members of a community in which they live or actively participate. I find that talking about it is very helpful, and I would encourage people to share those experiences. I believe, at the end of the day, that the more people share those experiences and the more we see individuals taking action, it ultimately enables more

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people to do likewise, and we will have better working environments throughout the nation.

We could see the legislation go to committee and, ultimately, it would come back, much like when we passed the anti-scab legislation. I will draw a comparison here and say that in Canada we have two provinces, Quebec and British Columbia, that have anti-scab legislation. The national government has now passed legislation to bring into Canada, at the federal level, anti-scab legislation. I believe that, by the federal government taking such an action, we help encourage and set a standard that will hopefully see other provincial jurisdictions do likewise. For example, the province of Manitoba is now looking at anti-scab legislation. The fact is that when we brought in the legislation, it received all-party support, which I believe speaks volumes. With Bill C-378, I think there is the potential to get all-party support for it as well.

As the Prime Minister and members of the Liberal caucus have talked about in the past and continue to hold today, if there are ideas to the benefit of Canadians, we are prepared to entertain and look at ways in which we can support them, even if it means attempting to move amendments.

● (1920)

This is something we have consistently done since 2015, even on the issues we are talking about today. I think of Bill C-3, for example, which came out of the pandemic and the pressures that were being put on health care providers in particular. Many people were protesting and, in essence, in a different way, instilling in health care providers a fear of doing their job of supporting our health care system when there was a great deal of concern during the pandemic and in the days that followed. Bill C-3 dealt with that by making protests that instilled fear in individuals like health care workers illegal.

I think of Bill C-65, which mandated training about harassment and violence in the workplace. As the member before me made reference to, the government has brought in a relatively modest change, which the member is now trying to have increased from three months to up to two years. These are the types of changes that would protect the interests of the worker.

We need to take a bigger look at it and take a holistic approach to the working environment. I am not sure whether Hansard will get the tail end of my question to the member, because it was getting a little lengthy, but what I was trying to amplify is that it is important workers know their rights, and that there are many different agencies and support networks to reinforce and support them.

What I was referencing in the tail end of my question was to what degree there is a sense of public awareness and to what degree we might be doing something collectively, or the government or governments should be doing, to promote, whether through advertising or other means, the rights of workers. This is something important that needs to be taken into consideration.

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With respect to the rights of workers, everyone in the workplace should have the right to be free of harassment and any sort of violence. That is really important. There is a responsibility on employers, whether it is directly through the employer or it is through the manager, to ensure that there are opportunities that are not intimidating for workers to bring things forward. When that takes place, I believe it is healthy for the entire workforce in a particular environment, especially if workers can see there is a genuine attempt to deal with an issue such that the individual who has been slighted is being listened to and the concern is being addressed.

I appreciate the member's bringing forward the legislation. I suspect it will go to committee; we will ultimately see what takes place at committee stage.

• (1925)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Madam Speaker, first, I want to commend the sponsor of the bill, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis for introducing this private member's bill. I sit on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities and I can tell my colleague that she can count on the support of the Bloc Québécois during the study of this bill in committee.

The sponsor of the bill referred to the time when she was the Quebec minister of labour in 2018. At the time, I still had the good fortune of being the labour leader at the Centrale des syndicats du Québec. Work was done in Quebec to advance labour laws, especially at the Conseil consultatif du travail et de la main-d'œuvre. The sponsor of the bill would surely agree that it was in our DNA to advance labour law in Quebec.

The summary of the bill being studied today is simple. It seeks to amend “the Canada Labour Code in order to provide a former employee with more time to make a complaint relating to an occurrence of harassment and violence in the work place after they cease to be employed”. Currently, the employee has three months. The bill seeks to change the prescribed period to two years.

My colleague is absolutely right. Once again, Quebec has been at the forefront of labour legislation. Quebec amended its Act respecting labour standards. I, too, found it surprising that the Canada Labour Code refers to employees and former employees separately in the context of harassment and violence. Frankly, the Canada Labour Code has only recently begun to deal with these issues, unlike Quebec. I would venture to say that it is clear from looking at the Canada Labour Code that it needs some love. It is a shame that we have to make these changes one at a time, because reforming the Canada Labour Code at the federal level would correct a lot of inequities. That said, I am not going to digress from tonight's subject, which is the bill.

Quebec's Act respecting labour standards differs greatly from the Canada Labour Code. Here is what it says:

“An employee who believes they have been the victim of psychological harassment may file a complaint in writing with the Commission.” There is indeed a commission in Quebec that deals with the complaints. “Such a complaint may also be filed by a non-

profit organization dedicated to the defence of employees' rights on behalf of one or more employees who consent thereto in writing.” Later on, it says, “Any complaint concerning psychological harassment must be filed within two years of the last incidence of the offending behaviour.”

I was listening to the discussions where members were talking about courage. It is exactly right that it takes courage, but it also takes means. Psychological harassment and violence in the workplace are phenomena that have been widely documented in every workplace, both unionized and not unionized, and in both the public sector and the private sector. Often, there are quite a few investigative processes to go through before a complaint can be filed, and the individual filing the complaint may struggle to cope.

Domestic violence is one thing, but we know that violence often occurs between peers. Filing a complaint is a laborious process that takes time and means. We need ways to ensure that the person filing the complaint can be sure that the process will be fair, impartial and objective. Quebec has found ways to do just that. Quebec has its Act respecting labour standards, and most collective agreements now also provide mechanisms for setting up joint workplace committees to deal with these issues. In short, once again, Quebec is a leader.

It is good that we are able to fix this. Canada has taken a small step, and now it needs to update it.

• (1930)

Canada ratified Convention 190 of the International Labour Organization, or ILO, in 2023. The convention officially took effect in 2024. It reads as follows, and I quote:

This Convention applies to violence and harassment in the world of work occurring in the course of, linked with or arising out of work: (a) in the workplace, including public and private spaces where they are a place of work; (b) in places where the worker is paid, takes a rest break or a meal, or uses sanitary, washing and changing facilities; (c) during work-related trips, travel, training, events or social activities; (d) through work-related communications, including those enabled by information and communication technologies; (e) in employer-provided accommodation; and (f) when commuting to and from work.

This cursory recap is simply intended to show that the conventions adopted by the ILO, a tripartite organization made up of worker, employer and government representatives, play an important role in labour law. I was pleased to accompany the Minister of Labour and Seniors when this convention was ratified. What the sponsor of Bill C-378 is asking for is a minor correction to the Canada Labour Code, because now that the convention has been ratified, we need ways to implement it and we need to ensure that our laws reflect these measures. The relevant section of the Canada Labour Code must also ensure that we have the wherewithal to conduct reviews and analyses.

It is absolutely true to say that the last analysis report on the issue dates back to 2021. In 2023, we were at least provided with statistics on the number of incidents and the number of employees. Public servants and employees of the big banks alone account for roughly half of the complaints. That is a significant number. The fact that the time frame is only three months reflects a lack of understanding of everything that is involved in filing a complaint. It is also important to be aware of the facts.

I was pleased that Canada ratified the ILO convention. I consider it a major step forward. Now, as the saying goes, the government needs to walk the talk. The least we can do is fix the Canada Labour Code so as to create equity between employees and former employees. One day, perhaps, the definition of former employees will be removed.

With all due respect, I will say that I am pleasantly surprised that the Conservative Party suddenly seems to be siding with workers. We saw this recently with the bill on replacement workers, which passed with unanimous support. Now we are seeing it again with their sincere intention to amend the Canada Labour Code.

I remember Stephen Harper's Conservative government, whose unjust bills attacked the rights of workers, the right of association, the right of representation, the right to organize. They also attacked fundamental constitutional rights, such as the privacy of labour organizations. I am talking about two pieces of legislation.

I would say that usually in Quebec our labour law stands on its own, but, at the time, we saw some serious attacks against the union movement in Quebec, against unions that advance important issues. There were setbacks. We had to mobilize to counter these bills from the then Conservative government, and people remembered in 2015.

I hope that it is not just the election campaign that is prompting the Conservative Party's sudden pro-labour stance. The Bloc Québécois has always been pro-labour. It is in our DNA. I think the member is sincere and her intention is sincere. Naturally, we will be supporting this bill.

• (1935)

[English]

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about an important private member's bill that seeks to amend the Canada Labour Code concerning complaints by former employees. The bill, if enacted, would mark a significant step forward in protecting the rights and dignity of workers across our nation.

As the labour critic for the New Democratic Party, I have had the privilege of advocating for the rights and well-being of workers. It is with this responsibility in mind that I address the bill, which aims to extend the protection against harassment and violence in the workplace to former employees.

Let us begin by acknowledging the harsh reality many workers face today. Harassment and violence in the workplace are not merely issues of discomfort or inconvenience. They are violations of human dignity and safety that could have profound and lasting impacts on individuals. The scars left by such experiences do not simply vanish once an employee leaves their job. The trauma can linger, affecting their mental health, their confidence and their overall well-being.

The bill would address these realities by amending the Canada Labour Code to extend the time frame in which former employees can file complaints about workplace harassment and violence. Specifically, it would allow former employees to bring forward complaints for up to two years after their employment has ended.

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This is a crucial change, and I want to emphasize why it is so important.

First, the amendment would recognize that the decision to report harassment or violence can be a difficult and complex one. Often, employees may feel trapped in their situation, fearing retaliation or further harm if they come forward. By extending the time frame to two years postemployment, we are giving individuals the space and the safety to report incidents when they are ready, without the immediate threat of losing their livelihood.

Second, the bill would hold employers accountable for their actions and for the environment they cultivate, even after the employee has left. It is not enough for an employer to simply let time pass and hope that issues will be forgotten. By maintaining their obligations towards former employees, employers are encouraged to address problems promptly and thoroughly, fostering a safer and more respectful workplace for everyone.

Further, the bill is a testament to basic justice and fairness. It sends a clear message that no worker should be left without recourse simply because they have moved on to another job. It affirms that their rights and dignity are worth protecting, regardless of their employment status. This aligns with the core values of the New Democratic Party, in which the fight for workers' rights is a foundation of our values. The provision, which would allow former employees to make complaints as if they were still employed, is particularly significant, because it would ensure that the full weight of the Canada Labour Code applies to these cases, providing a framework for addressing their concerns.

This is not just about extending a deadline, as we have heard from the Liberal side. It is about ensuring that the mechanisms for justice are accessible and effective for all workers. However, while the bill is a positive step, there are gaps and potential areas for improvement that we must consider, hopefully at the committee stage, to make the legislation stronger and, indeed, to strengthen it for workers.

One significant gap is the lack of specified support mechanisms for former employees who have come forward with complaints. The bill should outline access to counselling, legal advice or other support services to assist former employees through the complaint process. Enforcement and compliance are also critical areas that need strengthening. The bill must ensure real enforcement mechanisms to hold employers accountable. Clear penalties for non-compliance and measures to ensure that complaints are thoroughly investigated and resolved are essential to the bill's success.

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Protection from retaliation is another vital aspect. While the bill would extend the lifetime for complaints, it should also include specific protections against retaliation for former employees who come forward. This could include protections for their professional reputation and future employment prospects. Public awareness and education are crucial for the effectiveness of the legislation. The bill should include a comprehensive plan for publicizing these extended rights and educating both current and former employees about the changes. Perhaps including the Canada Labour Congress, federations of labour and district labour councils across the country would help in this regard.

● (1940)

The scope of coverage is another area that I feel needs to be broadened. Hopefully that will be explored at the appropriate time. The bill focuses on harassment and violence, but it does not address other potential grievances that former employees might have, such as racial discrimination, wage theft and unfair dismissal. Expanding the scope to include a broader range of employment issues could provide more comprehensive protection.

Timeliness and efficiency in resolving complaints are also essential. The bill should ensure that the processes for handling complaints are timely and efficient. Delays in resolving complaints can prolong the distress for former employees and may discourage others from coming forward.

The responsibilities of employers need to be clearly defined. While the bill would hold employers accountable for addressing complaints, it should also specify what proactive measures employers must take to prevent harassment and violence in the first place. This could include mandatory training programs, regular reviews of workplace policies and creating a culture of respect and safety. Data collection and reporting provisions would also be valuable additions to this bill. Collecting and reporting data on complaints made by former employees can help identify trends, assess the effectiveness of the legislation and make future improvements.

As I have mentioned before, coordination with stakeholders is important, but so is coordination with provincial bodies. Coordination with provincial laws is an important consideration that I do not believe has been adequately covered in this bill. Since labour laws can vary significantly between provinces, we should look at ways to help coordinate with provincial labour laws to ensure consistent protection for all workers across Canada.

Finally, including a mechanism for regular review and feedback on the implementation of the bill could help identify any issues and make the necessary adjustments. This could involve input from workers, employers, labour organizations and other stakeholders. In my role as labour critic, I have heard from countless individuals who have experienced workplace harassment and violence. Their stories are heartbreaking and infuriating, but they are also calls to action. We must do more to protect workers and ensure that their voices are heard. This bill is a step in the right direction.

We must also recognize the broader context in which this bill would operate. I spoke about it briefly previously, but I will say it explicitly, particularly in light of the ongoing federal Black class action lawsuit, which is a landmark legal action addressing systemic discrimination and harassment faced by Black employees

within the federal public service. For decades, these workers have reported experiencing pervasive racism, barriers to advancement and a hostile work environment that undermined their dignity and professional growth.

Black employees had to create a class action lawsuit to seek the kind of justice and comprehensive redress I have been speaking about in my remarks today as a New Democrat. I think this further highlights the urgent need for legal protections and accountability measures. By extending the time frame to file complaints and holding employers accountable, I believe this bill would provide an indirect support to those aims of the class action lawsuit, which would ensure that those who have suffered long-standing discrimination would have the opportunity to seek redress and contribute to the creation of a fair and more inclusive workplace for all.

In summary, this amendment to the Canada Labour Code is a necessary and overdue measure to protect workers from the lasting impacts of harassment and violence. These are measures that New Democrats, the only labour party in the country, have been fighting for for decades. It would hold employers accountable, empower former employees and align with the NDP's fundamental principles of justice and fairness.

I am proud to support this bill going to committee, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. I urge colleagues in this chamber to consider the human impact of this legislation and think about the workers who have had to suffer in silence, and who have felt powerless and abandoned. I urge members to think about the message we send them when we say that their experiences matter, that their safety and dignity are paramount. This is not a partisan issue. It is a matter of basic human rights.

● (1945)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased and honoured to rise this evening to speak to Bill C-378, a private member's bill born of the initiative and experience of my brilliant colleague from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

I want to commend my colleague from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis for her initiative. She is leveraging her experience in the provincial government here in the House of Commons in a noble and relevant way in order to improve Canadian labour relations.

This bill seeks to enable people who have worked and who have left their job or who have ceased to be employed to file a complaint regarding harassment or violence within two years of leaving. Right now, the deadline is just three months. In her bill, the member suggests extending the deadline to two years. This proposal is based on her experience in Quebec, which I will talk about later, but also on conclusive evidence. Harassment and violence can have long-term and even delayed effects.

I am reminded of the sad and unfortunate story of a woman who was a victim of sexual violence and did not report it immediately. It took years before she filed a complaint. Unfortunately, the case was never heard. What a sad state of affairs. In cases of violence and harassment in a professional environment, we believe that two years is how long it takes for the person to assess the consequences of what they have suffered and file a complaint. We are talking about making a complaint here. This is not about writing a blank cheque and claiming everything has been sorted out. A well-calibrated assessment process is required.

In Canada, there has been a three-month time limit in place since 2021. Various provinces have laws on this subject. In Quebec, the deadline is two years. In Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador, the deadline is one year. It is six months in British Columbia. As the member so aptly put it earlier, other countries such as Belgium and France have a time limit of five or six years. In Australia, it can be as little as two years. In the U.S., in several states, the time limit is six months.

This is not new for Canada, but it is important to understand that this initiative flows from what happened in Quebec in 2018. I will elaborate on that.

Thanks to the well-deserved support, assistance and confidence of her constituents, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis served in the National Assembly for nearly 14 years. She was an MNA, a minister, an opposition MNA and a member of the government. I even had the pleasure of sitting down with her when I was a journalist and asking her some questions. We were both journalists at one time.

That being said, why am I talking about this? Because the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis is introducing this bill today thanks to her experience as minister of labour in Quebec, and all Canadians can now benefit from that experience. She took the time to work closely with employers, departmental officials, public service officials and union leaders to make sure that she was introducing a bill that would work in Quebec. It does.

In 2018, during the final days of the Couillard government, the National Assembly passed her bill unanimously. Unanimous motions in the National Assembly are not that unusual, but bills that pass unanimously are a little rarer. Everyone agreed on Bill 176 because the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis had done a serious and thorough job of it for the common good.

Today, six years later, we have a law that works. Like all legislation, it requires review, but it has stood the test of time. I would even say that it transcends partisanship. In fact, the law was created under the auspices of a government of a certain political stripe, but,

Private Members' Business

for the past six years in Quebec, a government of another stripe in the National Assembly has been leading the work and leading Quebec. That is democracy.

● (1950)

When a bill is good, it stands the test of time and rallies the support of all parties.

Earlier, one of my Bloc Québécois colleagues referred to a completely different subject, when we are talking here about people's work. We are talking about cases of harassment and violence. This is more about human beings than about tax management. He decided to share that thought, and that is on him.

He talked about the carbon exchange. I am not passing judgment, just presenting the facts. After 10 years, we have noticed some things, even in Quebec. The Quebec environment minister himself, Benoit Charette, said that, since the carbon exchange is an exchange between two states, namely, Quebec, which has 8 million people, and California, which has 30 million people, Quebec is still paying California \$230 million this year under that system. I am not passing judgment, just presenting the facts.

Someone else spoke of this subject with some judgment. His name is Sylvain Gaudreault, former member of the National Assembly for Jonquière. He is a former senior minister, a leadership candidate, and one time leader of the official opposition. I respect him a lot and hold him in high regard. Even though he supports it, he described the carbon exchange as a \$230-million “flight of capital”.

If some people want to fight that battle, let them, but facts are stubborn. Quebecers listening to us today may just be finding out that the carbon exchange, paid for with their tax dollars and all that, amounts to \$230 million going to California, as the Quebec environment minister says.

One thing is sure. Since 2018, workers who have experienced an injustice in the workplace, including harassment and violence, have had a tool that allows them to file a complaint even after two years. We know that when it comes to violence and harassment, the effects are not always immediate. They can begin later. Thanks to the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, Quebec workers are very fortunate to be able to use this tool, which was adopted in 2018 on the initiative of this member, who is now proposing the exact same approach to the House that has worked so well in Quebec.

What happened? The government side and the second opposition party, the NDP, are in agreement. I am very proud to be a member of the official opposition. I am very proud to be a Conservative member, and I am very proud to sit with the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis. She brings experience, expertise and a wealth of knowledge. Above all, she brings what she has given to Quebecers and is sharing it with everyone. That is a good thing.

All too often, we have debates that go around in circles, that do not lead anywhere and that are more ideological and dogmatic than pragmatic. In this case, we have a golden opportunity to make progress that will benefit workers.

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I know I will have another minute. I look forward to speaking for another minute when we resume this debate.

• (1955)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Madam Speaker, in today's day and age, there are not many Canadians in any part of this country who have not been impacted directly or indirectly by the mental health and addictions crisis we face here in Canada.

Sadly, over the last little while, I have had to be quite aggressive in my frustrations on the topic when we have seen the disaster, the crime, the chaos and the disorder unleashed in the streets of British Columbia. When it came to the poor judgment of the B.C. provincial NDP government to request the federal government to exempt, from the Criminal Code in British Columbia, the consumption and use of hard drugs in public places, it went about as well as one would think it would go.

There were stories of nurses scared to go into work for the fear of meth smoke being blown into their face. There was a nurse who shared a story through the B.C. Nurses' Union, echoing those concerns, who stopped breastfeeding her twin 11-month-old children because she feared that if the meth smoke got into her system, it could affect her children.

We heard stories from Abbotsford about soccer parents, as coaches and volunteers with their kids, who had to scour the fields in advance of their kids playing soccer, in Canada, in 2024, because there were so many syringes and needles laying around their parks. On public transit, people were shooting up and people were smoking hard drugs right on a subway or on a bus, and there was nothing the police could do. Thankfully, the B.C. NDP realized what a disaster that was and asked for the pilot experiment to be pulled back. It took two weeks for the Liberal government to agree.

The most frustrating part is that despite the examples we heard from the B.C. Nurses' Union, despite the stories we heard from soccer clubs and parents and despite the many examples of transit users in B.C. fearing to go to work or to go to school on public transit because of witnessing the consumption of hard drugs right before them, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, the Liberal and NDP government here, collectively in their coalition and even the NDP were openly advocating that this experiment that failed in B.C. be brought to cities like Toronto or Montreal like they have been requesting. With the chaos the Liberals have seen in B.C., with the results they have seen there and with B.C.'s admission of failure by cancelling the exemptions that the

Prime Minister granted, the Liberals still will not rule out expanding this to other parts of the country.

We talk about the so-called safe supply. There is no such thing as safe supply. Doing hard drugs is never safe. The government has spent tens of millions of dollars over the course of the last nine years on the so-called safe supply, which the RCMP and multimedia outlets outlined as not actually going anywhere but to drug traffickers, making the situation worse. However, we have very little money, if any, anywhere in the country to fund treatment for an off-ramp to end people's addictions, to provide them support, to provide them treatment and to provide them a change. When will the government get with the program, stop funding its failed radical policies and invest in treatment?

• (2000)

[Translation]

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we are obviously very concerned about the overdose crisis we are currently experiencing in Canada. Loss of life, emergency room visits and hospitalizations affect not only the individuals involved, but also their family, their friends and communities across Canada.

This crisis is a complex public health issue, and no one organization or level of government will be able to resolve it on its own. We all need to work together and focus on finding solutions to put an end to all the harm and the needless deaths of Canadians.

[English]

Addressing this crisis also means that we need to address stigma so that people who use drugs do not hide their drug use, which increases their risk of harm and death. Sadly, stigma can also act as a barrier to accessing and receiving health and social services. When people are not afraid of being arrested, they are more likely to ask for help. We also know that people who use drugs need to see a health care provider rather than face the criminal justice system. The best path toward recovery is the health system, not the prison system.

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[Translation]

That is why our government supports the kinds of approaches that divert people who use drugs from the criminal justice system into appropriate health and social services wherever possible. We are also committed to continuing to work with the provinces and territories to find solutions to meet their specific needs. The opposition is going to impose its solutions on the provinces and territories rather than help them determine what is best for their communities.

[English]

That is why the Government of Canada is supporting a number of programs and policies that are aimed at connecting people to appropriate health and social supports while maintaining public safety. For example, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada recommends alternatives to prosecution for personal drug possession offences, except in the most serious cases, raising public safety concerns.

Building pathways away from the criminal justice system is one part of a much broader approach across the health, social and criminal justice systems, with the goal of reducing harms and saving lives, while keeping communities safe. Our federal drug strategy, the Canadian drugs and substances strategy, and our actions on the overdose crisis, continue to be comprehensive, equitable, collaborative and compassionate.

• (2005)

[Translation]

We are taking a whole-of-government approach that includes improving access to a full range of strategies to help people access the prevention, education, risk reduction, treatment and recovery services and supports they need, when and where they need them, while also protecting public safety.

For example, as part of budget 2024, we pledged \$150 million over three years for an emergency treatment fund to help municipalities and indigenous communities mobilize quickly and respond to their needs in order to save lives and reduce harm.

[English]

We remain fully committed to working with all partners and stakeholders, to explore every option available to reduce harms and save lives, while balancing public safety.

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, the contrast could not be more clear. On one side, the Liberals and the NDP want to legalize hard drugs. They want to spend tens of millions of dollars on so-called safe supply, with free taxpayer-paid drugs being distributed. That has been proven, time and time again, to end up in the hands of traffickers and those with nefarious efforts, to only expand the number of people addicted to drugs so that they can make money.

By contrast, Conservatives are saying we should end taxpayer funding of hard drugs and put all of that money into treatment, into an off-ramp of hope for a second chance at life to get better and get on a better track, physically, socially and economically. What we can do is help Canadians stop their addictions and stop the need to struggle. Years and years later, 42,000 people have been killed by overdoses and addictions in this country; 2,500 in B.C. alone. Enough is enough.

[Translation]

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, my colleague opposite is confusing decriminalization with legalization. From the outset, both during the tour of the Standing Committee on Health and in its meetings, we have heard that, in order to help people who use drugs, we need to offer them a range of services and support measures.

These people did not choose to become drug users. Nobody wakes up one morning and decides to become a drug user. They need a variety of options so that, when they are ready, they can choose the option that works best for them. There is no one-size-fits all solution for all users.

That is why we believe in the four pillars, and that is why we are here to help people, to provide them with all of these services and to save lives.

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Madam Speaker, on May 24, I raised the following question, which I will repeat verbatim for the purpose of context:

...pulmonary arterial hypertension, also known as PAH, is a disease that blocks arteries in the lungs, causing high blood pressure in the lungs and damaging heart tissue. Patients diagnosed with PAH have, on average, three years to live.

In the [U.S.], a drug called sotatercept was recently approved by the FDA. This drug increases quality of life and lifespan for PAH patients and even...reverses the damage caused by the disease.

When will this life-saving drug be approved for use in Canada?

At that time, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health promised to get back to the House at a later date with a detailed answer. I am hoping he will be able to do so today. Here are some of the details that I think might be relevant to the discussion.

In the United States, the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration, holds the power to determine whether new drugs will be permitted. To be approved, a drug must complete three trial phases that, collectively, determine whether the drug is both safe and efficacious. Phase 3 trials on sotatercept were completed in 2023 and were published in a peer-reviewed journal in September, 2023.

The published results were impressive, including the observation that the drug “significantly improved multiple important secondary outcome measures, including reducing the risk of death from any cause or PAH clinical worsening events by 84% versus background therapy alone”. FDA approval for therapeutic use of sotatercept was granted on March 26.

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These promising results are probably the reason why, in March, Health Canada assigned sotatercept to its priority review policy, a policy within Health Canada designed to allow for the more rapid approval of efficacious therapies for life-threatening conditions. According to section 1.5 of Health Canada's guidance document relating to the program, "The performance target for the screening and review of the original submission is 215 calendar days (10 days processing within the Submission and Information Policy Division, 25 days screening with the Submission Management Division of the appropriate Directorate, 180 days submission review)". It is a total of 215 days.

Of course, the review could produce a negative result. However, in the event that the review described above is positive and that Health Canada is satisfied that the published clinical results cited above are valid, would it be safe to assume that sotatercept will become an approved therapy for Canadian PAH sufferers within 215 days of the end of March, that is to say by the end of November of this year?

● (2010)

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his very thoughtful question. I appreciated the question when he asked it in the House, and I have had an opportunity to speak to him in the hallways about it as well.

The question is regarding the urgent need for effective treatments for pulmonary arterial hypertension, or PAH, as he outlined. This serious condition significantly impacts the lives of many Canadians and can impose severe health risks. We are aware of the recent approval of the drug sotatercept by the FDA in the United States, which offers a new option for those affected by PAH. Naturally, the question arises, as the member is asking, when can Canadians expect to be able to access this new medication here in Canada?

Our number one priority is the health and safety of Canadians, which includes supporting them in accessing the necessary medications for the health conditions they face. The process for approving new drugs in Canada is thorough and designed to ensure that any therapeutic product made available on the Canadian market meets our high standards for safety, efficacy and quality. While understanding the need for more therapeutic options, we must also ensure that the benefits of any drug outweigh any potential risks.

The approval process for a new drug, like this particular drug that we are talking about, involves several key and necessary stages.

To market a drug in Canada, manufacturers must first file a submission with sufficient evidence of the product's quality, safety and efficacy. Health Canada reviews the data, which comes from clinical trials, research studies and other sources, to determine whether the product's benefits outweigh its risks. This rigorous evaluation is necessary to ensure that when a new drug, like sotatercept, is approved, it is safe and effective for use by Canadian patients.

I can confirm that Health Canada is currently reviewing this specific drug submission under priority review. Priority review is a pathway that supports access to safe, effective and high-quality products. By accelerating the review process, we are committed to

ensuring that potentially life-saving treatments reach patients without unnecessary delays.

It is important to note that timing for the completion of Health Canada's reviews depends on many factors, including timelines for receiving requested additional data or information, discussions with the sponsors, and the acceptability and completeness of the information submitted. Given these considerations, the timing of when a decision will be made on this submission is not available at this time. However, we expect a decision to be made in the coming months.

In conclusion, Health Canada recognizes the important role that sotatercept could play for patients with pulmonary arterial hypertension, which is why it was granted priority review status. A decision will be made once all of the required information has been thoroughly evaluated by Health Canada and upon ensuring that the benefits of this particular drug outweigh the risks of its use. We are committed to a comprehensive review process to ensure that the products Canadians consume are safe and effective.

● (2015)

Mr. Scott Reid: Madam Speaker, last Friday I had the opportunity to sit in the Speaker's chair for an hour. I had no idea until that moment how hard it is to remember the names of people's ridings, so you have my empathy.

I appreciate what the parliamentary secretary said in his response. It sounds like the November deadline, which I speculated and hoped would be achieved, is likely to be achieved.

I am hoping the parliamentary secretary has information as to whether or not the manufacturer has provided all information and whether the process has begun. I do not know if that is available to him, or if that was in his briefing deck, but if it is, I would like to get confirmation that, indeed, the process has begun and the manufacturer is not lagging behind. It is a relevant consideration, because Canada is a relatively small market, and this is a relatively small production run. I would just seek any reassurance he can give on that subject.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Madam Speaker, again, I thank the member for his thoughtful and considerate way of approaching this really important issue.

As I mentioned in my response earlier, there is a priority review that is going on, which requires an expeditious review of the process and the timelines that are associated with it. It requires, of course, the sponsor or the manufacturer of the medication to provide all the necessary data for Health Canada to review.

The information that I have available to me is that there is no indication that the process is not taking place. I understand that it is taking place. I am hopeful that, for the sake of Canadians who are suffering from PAH, the review will be completed and approval granted in the requisite time. However, that is not my decision. No politician should be making those types of decisions. That is the decision of officials at Health Canada, ensuring that the health and safety of Canadians remain paramount.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am here tonight to ask the government to answer to Canadians for the state of despair, hunger and homelessness that Canadians are experiencing. After years of the Liberal government, propped up by the NDP, Canadians are struggling with hunger and homelessness as they never have before in this country.

This country is a noble nation. We have always been a beacon of hope and opportunity for people seeking refuge from all around the world. Today, that national legacy is at risk of being lost.

How can Canada continue to be a land of opportunity and freedom when so many Canadians are no longer able to feed and house themselves? According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, chronic homelessness is up 38%. The number of individuals living in unsheltered locations has increased by 88%. That is almost double the number of unsheltered people in 2018. The level of suffering in this country is shocking, especially considering that the government has added half a billion dollars of new annual spending to reduce homelessness, an increase in spending by the government of 374%.

Why, if the government is spending more, is life getting harder for Canadians? Canadians are afraid for their financial future and what it will bring. We know that 76% of the mortgages that exist today will be renewed by 2026, and Canadians are worried about their mortgage interest rates. They worry that their payments will double, or even triple, because of increasing interest rates.

Canadians can expect a payment shock, according to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. The Liberals have added \$61 billion of new spending to their new budget, which the Governor of the Bank of Canada confirmed was not helpful in bringing down interest rates. Canadians, especially young Canadians, just want to be able to afford a home, to be able to afford shelter and basic food.

How many homes has the government actually built with its \$4.4-billion housing accelerator fund? It is zero. Even worse, housing starts are down and home prices keep going up in most jurisdictions across Canada.

The facts are as follows: When the Prime Minister was first elected, he promised to expand the middle class, but in fact, it has significantly reduced. He has increased homelessness by more than a third; he has priced middle-income Canadians out of owning a home, and he has allowed food bank use to jump by 50% over the past three years, with over two million Canadians a month accessing food banks.

I hope that my hon. colleague can respond to the matter at hand so that Canadians can finally get a straight answer. When will the NDP-Liberal government cap its inflationary spending and build the homes that Canadians need to live in dignity?

- (2020)

Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question she has posed. I appreciate the opportunity to highlight the work that our government is doing to tackle affordability in Canada. I would like to start by welcoming the Bank of Canada's

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decision to lower the interest rate. It was a very significant moment today. It is truly great news for Canada and for Canadians.

In fact, Canada is the first country in the G7 to have an interest rate cut take place. It is the result of the federal government's economically responsible plan. It is a plan that the government has been working really hard on to create the economic conditions that would make it possible for the Bank of Canada to lower the interest rate. It does not happen in a vacuum. It is as a result of the economic plan and the agenda the government has been working on. We are seeing the fruit of that hard work now.

On the matter of housing and building more homes faster, the Liberals are absolutely committed to tackling housing affordability by building more homes. The best way to bring down home prices is to increase supply and increase it quickly. The \$4-billion housing accelerator fund is already cutting red tape across the country, with 179 agreements with municipalities, provinces and territories, which will enable the construction of over 750,000 new homes over the next 10 years.

In fact, in budget 2024, that work is built on by proposing to top the fund up with \$400 million to build more homes faster in more communities. Budget 2024 also proposes an additional \$15 billion in new loan funding for the apartment construction loan program, bringing the program's total to over \$55 billion. This investment will help build more than 30,000 additional new homes across Canada, bringing the program's total contribution to over 131,000 new homes by 2032.

To support this new housing, we are investing in the infrastructure community's need to grow, which is why budget 2024 proposes to provide \$6 billion to launch a new Canada housing infrastructure fund that would allow our communities and municipalities to build infrastructure, like sewer systems, and access to electricity and natural gas, in order for people to enjoy their homes.

Furthermore, budget 2024 takes action to unlock new pathways for young renters to become homeowners, and to protect middle-class homeowners from rising mortgage payments. For example, budget 2024 announced the government's intention to strengthen the Canadian mortgage charter to allow 30-year mortgage amortization for first-time homebuyers purchasing newly constructed homes. To help our younger generation purchase their first home faster, we are proposing to increase the homebuyers' plan withdrawal limit from \$35,000 to \$60,000.

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Yes, there are a lot of measures here in place, but it is a big task to ensure the government enables the building of more homes across the country in all communities. This will be done not just in large urban centres, but in smaller communities in the country as well. It will require multiple initiatives, like the ones I have outlined, for that to happen. What will not help are mere slogans. Just to say that we will build homes, as we hear from the Conservatives and as we hear from the member opposite, is not going to build a single home. These measures will.

• (2025)

Ms. Leslyn Lewis: Madam Speaker, over the last nine years, we have seen the government engage in inflationary spending that has driven up interest rates, and Canadians are paying the price of that. I will remind the member that 76% of Canadians who have mortgages now will have their mortgage renewed in 2026.

Canadians have had enough of a government that has failed to ensure affordable housing, energy bills and food. Canadians are desperate. A whole generation of Canadians have lost hope on the dream of owning a home and having even the same standard of living that their parents enjoyed.

Only Conservatives are committed to reducing taxes, fixing the budget and building homes that Canadians can afford.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Madam Speaker, I did not hear any concrete solutions from the member opposite. Yet again, it was just a slogan. I can assure the House a slogan is not going to help improve the lives of Canadians.

When the member opposite refers to inflationary spending, she is saying that the Government of Canada, during the pandemic, which was the worst crisis of our lifetime, should not have spent the money to help Canadians and to help Canadian businesses. That is the spending she is arguing against. That is the spending she is blaming for the challenges we are facing with the increase in inflation and the increase in interest rates.

That is the aftermath of coming out of a pandemic. The government had no choice but to ensure that we protected Canadians. We had to make sure that Canadians had enough money to put food on the table and that businesses survived. That is what we did, and that is why our economy is growing. We are able to see the impact of that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:27 p.m.)

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